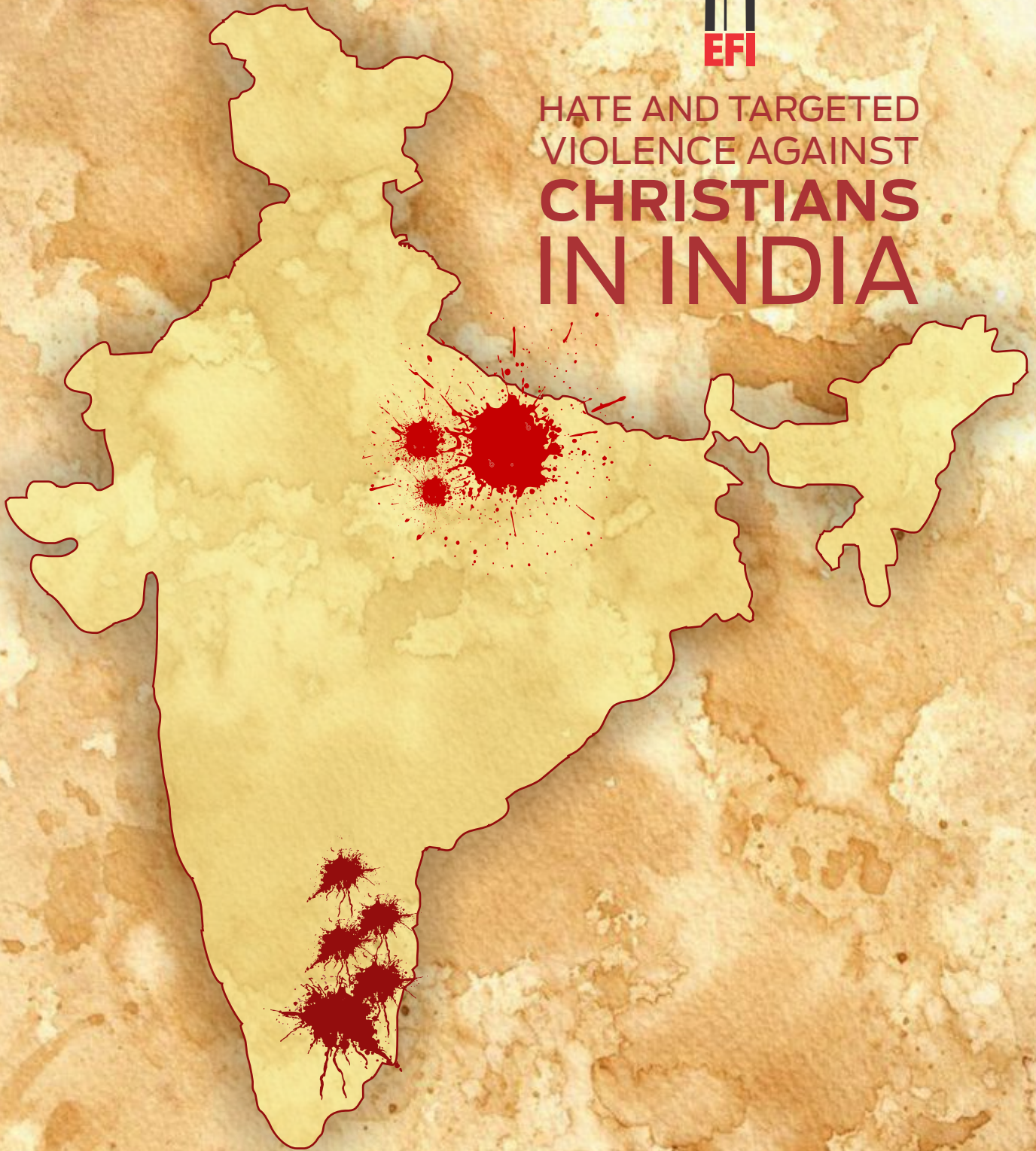




HATE AND TARGETED  
VIOLENCE AGAINST  
**CHRISTIANS**  
**IN INDIA**



**REPORT 2018**

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION OF  
THE EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP OF INDIA



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sincere acknowledgments and appreciation to the team of the Religious Liberty Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of India for contributing towards this report and making it possible.

We would also like to thank the local activists and organizations who facilitated our desk and field research. In particular we thank Dr. John Dayal, Advocate B. D. Das, Mrs. Surinder Kaur, Rev. Abhishek John, Rev. Amit Manwatkar, Rev. Jagdish Sahu, Mr. Jitendra Rathor, Ms. Sonia Daniel, Mr. Deepak Narula, Mr. Manish Walter, Rev. P. David, Mr. D. Jaiswar, Rev. Anil B. Lall, Rev. Akash Nandi, Rev. Shibu Thomas, Mr. R. Tiwari, United Christian Forum, Christian Legal Association, and Alliance Defending Freedom India.



Evangelical  
Fellowship of India



Religious Liberty  
Commission

Report by:

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION OF  
THE EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP OF INDIA

805/ 92 Deepali Building

Nehru Place

New Delhi—110019 INDIA

Email: [mail@efirc.org](mailto:mail@efirc.org)



# CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary and Analysis

2. Graphs

3. Photos

2. Recommendations to the Government of India

3. List of Incidents



# Executive Summary and Analysis

Targeted violence and hate crimes against the Christian community in India continued unabated in 2018. The Religious Liberty Commission (RLC) of the Evangelical Fellowship of India has recorded 325 incidents where Christians have been targeted using violence, intimidation or harassment. More than the numbers, what is disturbing is the sudden spurt of violence in a few districts of Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous province, and in Tamil Nadu in the extreme south of the subcontinent.

This is by no means an exhaustive compilation as it is based on voluntary reporting and civil society investigations. Most cases go unreported either because the victim and witnesses are terrified, or the police, especially in the northern states, just turn a blind eye and refuse to record the mandatory First Information Report if the crime.

With general elections due in April-May 2019, attempts at religious polarization is at an all-time high. Hate speeches, sometimes even by Union Ministers have acted as a catalyst in the dividing of people along religious, ethnic and even linguistic lines. The menace of cow vigilantism has not been subdued but has grown with impunity. Targeting of Minorities, Dalits and Women have visibly increased. The small Christian community, 2.3 per cent of the 1.30 billion population, which seems to be targeted on issues of conversion, is also collateral victim of the hate crimes against the much larger Muslim community, which is about 15 percent.

According to the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, the year 2018 witnessed 84 incidents of mob lynching resulting in the loss of 60 lives and the injury of 102 people. The CSSS survey was based on reports of mob lynching as reported by five newspapers in India. While most of victims of lynchings were Muslims and Dalits, at least one Christian was lynched in Jharkhand for buying beef, as documented by the Karwane-Mohabbat studies.

Many western governments and international human rights agencies and freedom of faith monitors have expressed apprehensions about a strong possibility of increased communal (sectarian) violence in India before the general elections.

Appearing recently before the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Dan Coats, the Director of US National Intelligence, said, "Parliamentary elections in India increase the possibility of communal violence if Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) stresses Hindu nationalist themes,". A written document presented to the Committee by Coats states, "BJP policies during Modi's first term have deepened communal tensions in some BJP-governed states, and Hindu nationalist state leaders might view a Hindu-nationalist campaign as a signal to incite low-level violence to animate their supporters,".

## About the EFI-RLC

Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI), founded in 1951, is the national alliance of evangelical Christians. Its membership includes over 54 protestant denominations and related congregations (over 65,000 Churches), over 200 Church related mission agencies and organizations and thousands of individual members. As a central network of evangelicals and a service organization, it represents the Evangelical voice and builds capacity to promote participation in nation building.

The RLC is a Commission of the EFI and was established to facilitate reconciliation, to promote religious liberty and fundamental freedoms for all, and to seek justice for those who are abused and oppressed.

## Spotlight on Uttar Pradesh

An analysis of the data shows that over 40% of the documented incidents (132), took place in the state of Uttar Pradesh making it the state where Christians were targeted the most. The state of Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state of India and is home to almost 17% of the total population of the nation. Christians make up 0.18% of the total population of the state.

The state is currently led by Yogi Adityanath, who along with being the Chief Minister, is also the high priest of the Gorakhnath temple situated in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. The Chief Minister is also the founder of the Hindu Yuva Vahini, a Hindu youth militia that has been involved in communal violence and in targeting religious minorities.

Uttar Pradesh, according to the website Factchecker.com, has had the most incidents (645) of communal (sectarian) violence in India over the last four years i.e. (2014 – 2017) as well as the most deaths (121) in these communal incidents.<sup>1</sup>

The state saw 94 incidents in total against Christians, between the months of September and December 2018 alone. In comparison, the number of incidents against Christians recorded in the state in 2017 were only 50 for the entire year.

This increase can be attributed to the systematic campaign against Christians and Congregations in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, particularly the district of Jaunpur which by itself reported 45 incidents against the community.

Jaunpur is about 60 kilometers from Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Mr. Narendra Modi. Starting from here the incidents have also spread across other districts including: Azamgarh, Pratapgarh, Siddharth Nagar, Barabanki, Ghazipur, Gorakhpur, Agra, Kanpur and Varanasi.

In July 2018, clearly one-sided media reports of “large-scale, fraudulent conversions of Hindus” by pastors -- particularly pastor Durga Prasad Yadav in Jaunpur District in Uttar Pradesh -- went viral on social media and messaging platforms. These accusations were followed by police charges which was then followed by multiple area reports of disrupted worship meetings, pastors and evangelists arrested and Christian leaders fleeing their homes to avoid arrest.<sup>2</sup> Pastor Yadav, since then, has approached the High Court and has secured the right to conduct worship at his Church in January 2019.

Starting 11 September, in Jaunpur district in Uttar Pradesh, following a long systematic media disinformation campaign against Christians and their worship services in the area, the police and members of right-wing Hindu organizations raided several Churches in the district interrogating the pastors and leaders. Zee TV and the mass circulated Hindi newspaper Dainik Jagran alleged conversion of entire villages of Hindus through fraudulent and coercive means.<sup>3</sup>

As a result, Churches have been targeted by right-wing groups and the police alike using the convenient allegation of “conversions through force or fraud”. The media has seemingly become a willing partner with political elements who are leading the assault from the front.

Both the police and the right-wing mobs have disrupted worship services and indulged in harassing the worshippers. Videos have surfaced on social media, in which the police are seen

---

1. Fact Check: Over 389 People Have Died in Communal Riots in the Last Four Years:

<https://thewire.in/communalism/no-big-communal-riot-in-last-four-years-says-bjp-minister>

2. Hindu Extremists Accelerate Clampdown on Christians in Uttar Pradesh, India, September 17, 2018

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/09/hindu-extremists-accelerate-clampdown-on-christians-in-uttar-pradesh-india/>

3. Statement by EFIRLC on 13 November 2018 titled “Uttar Pradesh tops the list of states targeting Christians in India”

blocking roads and discouraging people from attending worship services and asking them to go away.

Right-wing mobs regularly beat up pastors and misbehave with people who come for Church meetings as well as indulge in vandalism. A large disinformation and smear campaign using the vernacular press and the electronic and social media has been seen which acts as a catalyst in the targeting of Christians and their Churches.

Pastors and lay Christians have been arrested or detained regularly on the pretext of investigations. The arrests, many of them late night, have been a source of harassment rather than help for Christians who are already under much pressure because of opposition from Hindu right-wing groups.

## Other States and trends

The state of Tamil Nadu came as a distant second compared to the state of Uttar Pradesh and registered 40 incidents while Telangana stood third with 24. Bihar and Jharkhand recorded 17 and 16 incidents respectively and Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh witnessed 12 incidents each.

Stopping and disruption of Church worship services or prayer meetings was the most commonly recorded incident especially in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Altogether 81 incidents of this kind were documented.

70 cases involving physical violence with sometimes arrests of the victims of the violence rather than the perpetrators was also documented. About 81 incidents were a mix of Christians being arrested and / or falsely accused or being beaten up at the same time. 44 incidents of threat and harassment were also documented during this period.

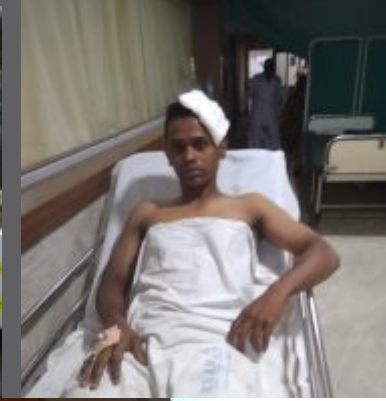
Incidents of social boycott were particularly reported from the tribal areas of the states of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh where the right-wing Hindu groups have been observed creating a rift within the tribal society and causing a fracture of relationships between tribal Christians and their non-Christian tribal brethren.

Many arrests have been reported from Jharkhand under the new Freedom of Religion Act which was passed and enforced in 2017 by the BJP government in the state. Sections 295-A and 153-A have been invoked and used to lock up Christians frequently in many states of the country and often are tools of harassment rather than the truth.

Justice D Y Chandrachud recently spoke at a lecture organized by the Bombay Bar Association. "We" in the preamble is an inclusive and ever expansive "we", he said. Speaking about the Constitution of India, he said, "The charter of Fundamental Rights begins with non-discrimination on account of religion, race or caste...the Assembly granted autonomy to religious minorities...secularism was finally assigned the value of a basic feature of the Constitution by the Supreme Court in the celebrated case of S. R. Bommai," "When we deny the power of love to people on grounds of religion and caste, the Constitution weeps."



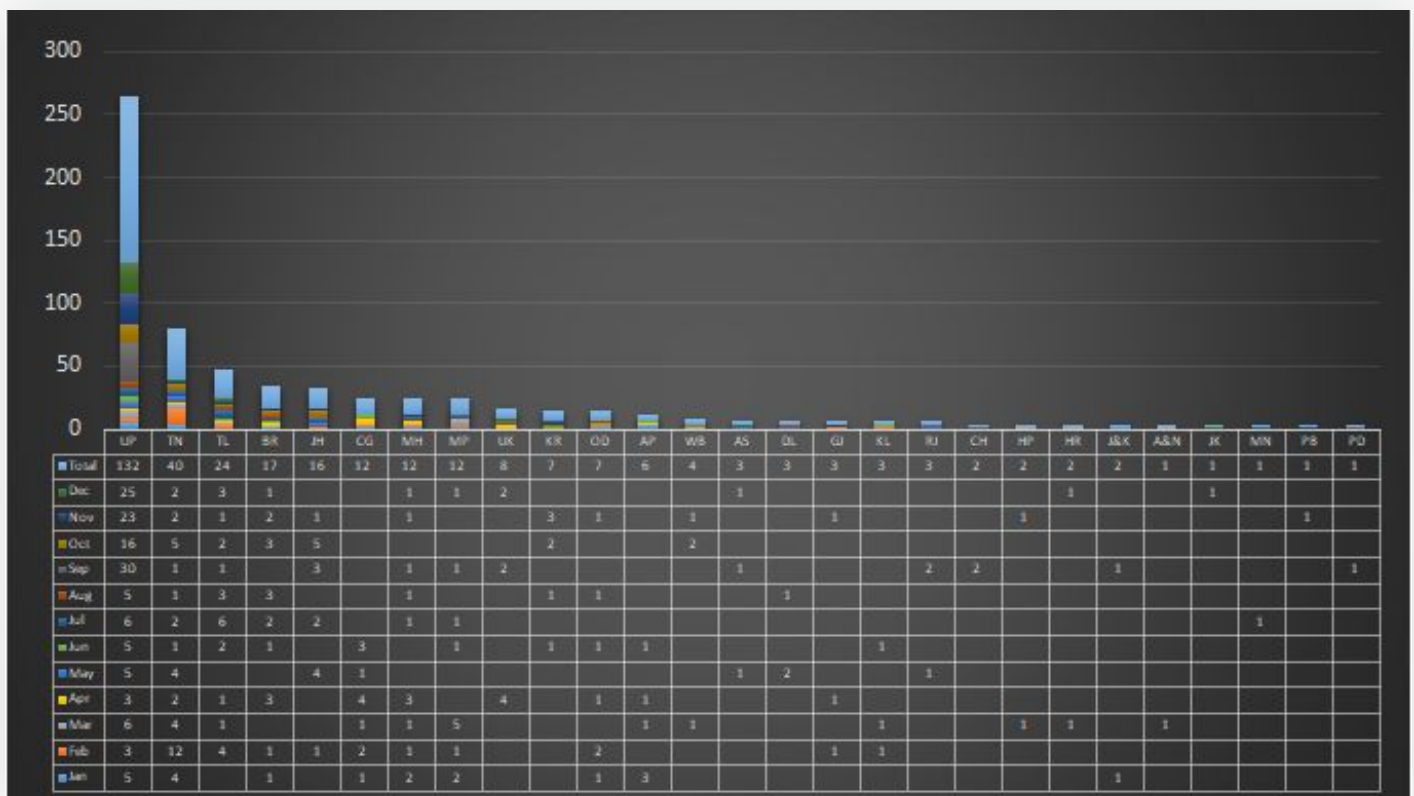






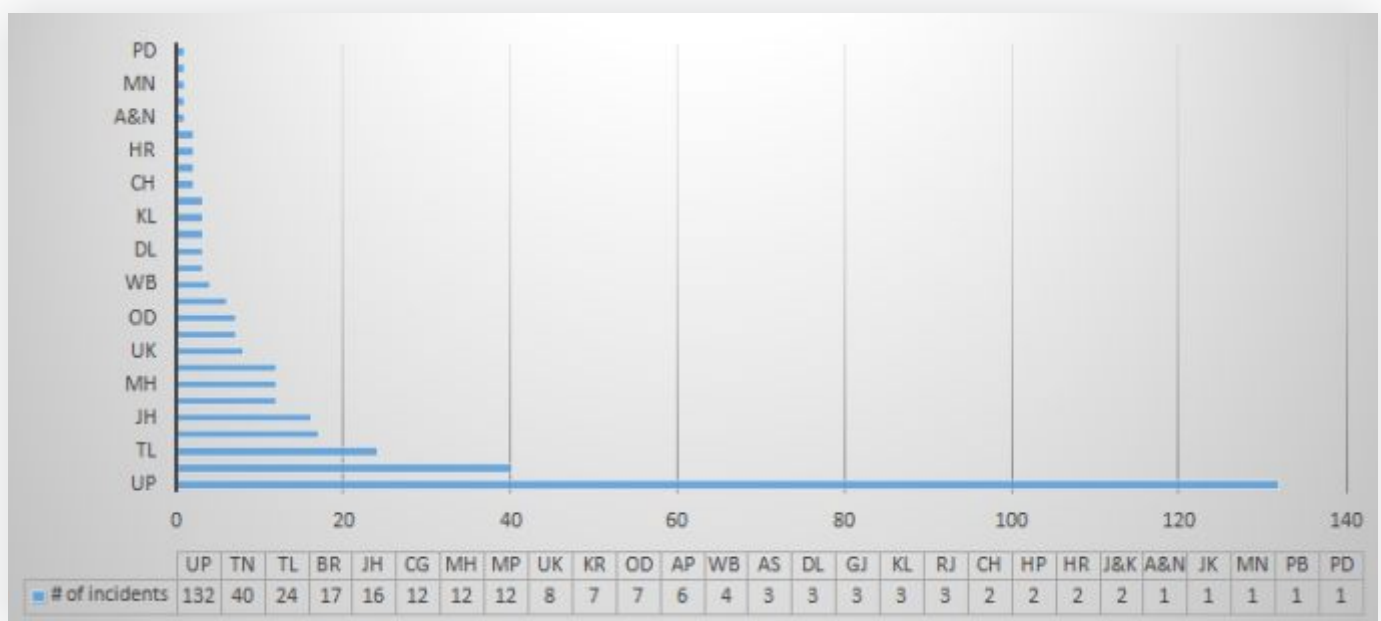
# Number of Incidents across Months

| State       | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Total |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| UP          | 5   | 3   | 6   | 3   | 5   | 5   | 6   | 5   | 30  | 16  | 23  | 25  | 132   |
| TN          | 4   | 12  | 4   | 2   | 4   | 1   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 5   | 2   | 2   | 40    |
| TL          |     | 4   | 1   | 1   |     | 2   | 6   | 3   | 1   | 2   | 1   | 3   | 24    |
| BR          | 1   | 1   |     | 3   |     | 1   | 2   | 3   |     | 3   | 2   | 1   | 17    |
| JH          |     | 1   |     |     | 4   |     | 2   |     | 3   | 5   | 1   |     | 16    |
| CG          | 1   | 2   | 1   | 4   | 1   | 3   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 12    |
| MH          | 2   | 1   | 1   | 3   |     |     | 1   | 1   | 1   |     | 1   | 1   | 12    |
| MP          | 2   | 1   | 5   |     |     | 1   | 1   |     | 1   |     |     | 1   | 12    |
| UK          |     |     |     | 4   |     |     |     |     | 2   |     |     | 2   | 8     |
| KR          |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     | 1   |     | 2   | 3   |     | 7     |
| OD          | 1   | 2   |     | 1   |     | 1   |     | 1   |     |     | 1   |     | 7     |
| AP          | 3   |     | 1   | 1   |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 6     |
| WB          |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2   | 1   |     | 4     |
| AS          |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 1   |     |     | 1   | 3     |
| DL          |     |     |     |     | 2   |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     | 3     |
| GJ          |     | 1   |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     | 3     |
| KL          |     | 1   | 1   |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     | 3     |
| RJ          |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 2   |     |     |     | 3     |
| CH          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 2   |     |     |     | 2     |
| HP          |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     | 2     |
| HR          |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   | 2     |
| J&K         | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 2     |
| A&N         |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1     |
| JK          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   | 1     |
| MN          |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |     |     |     | 1     |
| PB          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     | 1     |
| PD          |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     | 1   |     |     |     | 1     |
| Grand Total | 20  | 29  | 24  | 23  | 18  | 17  | 21  | 16  | 46  | 35  | 38  | 38  | 325   |



# State wise number of incidents

| State       | # of incidents |
|-------------|----------------|
| UP          | 132            |
| TN          | 40             |
| TL          | 24             |
| BR          | 17             |
| JH          | 16             |
| CG          | 12             |
| MH          | 12             |
| MP          | 12             |
| UK          | 8              |
| KR          | 7              |
| OD          | 7              |
| AP          | 6              |
| WB          | 4              |
| AS          | 3              |
| DL          | 3              |
| GJ          | 3              |
| KL          | 3              |
| RJ          | 3              |
| CH          | 2              |
| HP          | 2              |
| HR          | 2              |
| J&K         | 2              |
| A&N         | 1              |
| JK          | 1              |
| MN          | 1              |
| PB          | 1              |
| PD          | 1              |
| Grand Total | 325            |



# Monthly trend of incidents

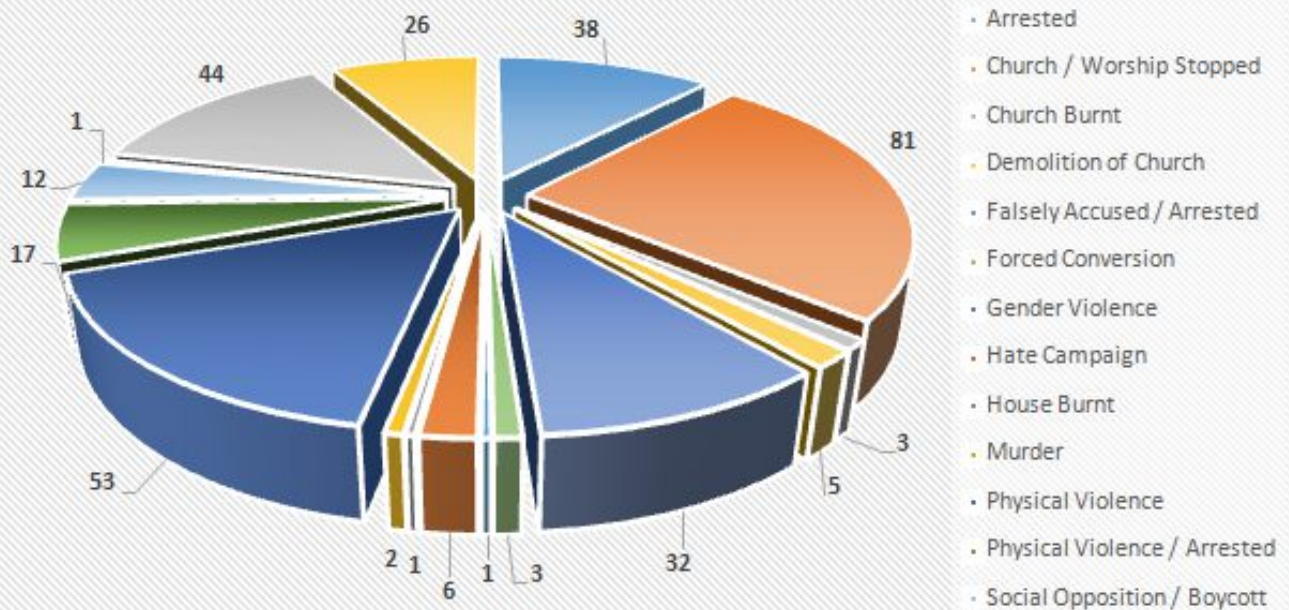
| Month       | # of incidents |
|-------------|----------------|
| Jan         | 20             |
| Feb         | 29             |
| Mar         | 24             |
| Apr         | 23             |
| May         | 18             |
| Jun         | 17             |
| Jul         | 21             |
| Aug         | 16             |
| Sep         | 46             |
| Oct         | 35             |
| Nov         | 38             |
| Dec         | 38             |
| Grand Total | 325            |





# Types of Violence

| Type of incident             | # of incidents |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Arrested                     | 38             |
| Church / Worship Stopped     | 81             |
| Church Burnt                 | 3              |
| Demolition of Church         | 5              |
| Falsely Accused / Arrested   | 32             |
| Forced Conversion            | 3              |
| Gender Violence              | 1              |
| Hate Campaign                | 6              |
| House Burnt                  | 1              |
| Murder                       | 2              |
| Physical Violence            | 53             |
| Physical Violence / Arrested | 17             |
| Social Opposition / Boycott  | 12             |
| Theft                        | 1              |
| Threat / Harrassment         | 44             |
| Vandalism                    | 26             |
| <b>Grand Total</b>           | <b>325</b>     |



# Yearly trend of incidents

| Year               | # of incidents |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 2012               | 130            |
| 2013               | 151            |
| 2014               | 146            |
| 2015               | 177            |
| 2016               | 247            |
| 2017               | 351            |
| 2018               | 325            |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>1202</b>    |



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

## Recommendations to the Government of India

- a. Enact a comprehensive national legislation against targeted and communal violence.
- b. Enforce rule of law and arrest members of groups promoting sectarian hate, violence and involving in pre-orchestrated programs of leveling false accusations of conversions upon the Christian priests and missionaries in order to feed their political agenda.
- c. Ensure stringent action under criminal law against all those who channel hate speech with the intention of inciting violence and hatred against the Christian community and other minority groups.
- d. Advise the state governments, especially Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, to deal with right wing organizations operating in these states whose primary agenda is to create an atmosphere of fear among the Christian community and other religious minorities.
- e. Prosecute police officials who fail in their constitutionally mandated duty to enforce the law of the land, by being complicit in attacks against religious minorities, and by shielding the attackers or otherwise scuttling due process of law.
- f. Conduct sensitization programs for the police officials regarding laws on religious freedom as envisaged in the Indian Constitution and on laws related to human rights.
- g. Amend paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 to include Christians and Muslims.
- h. Ensure that an active Commission for Human Rights and Commission for minorities is operational in every state, and that members of each commission are appointed by transparent and non-partisan procedures.
- i. Prevent and pursue through the judicial process, all violent acts against religious and tribal minorities and Dalits.





# DETAILS OF INCIDENTS STATE WISE

# Andaman and Nicobar

## Port Blair

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 9 March** in Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar islands, Rev. Varughese Mathew was arrested on false charges. Rev. Mathew runs the Indian Christian Fellowship which seeks to propagate the gospel in the island. He was charged with the allegation of conversion based on a complaint by religious fanatics.

---



# Andhra Pradesh

## East Godavari

Physical Violence

**On 3 January** in Uppada village under Kothappali police station in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, Pastor John Bonnke of Christ Galilea Hebron Church was beaten up by communal elements. The incident took place when the pastor was on his way to a bank, after finishing a prayer meeting at the Church. Around 4-5 people from his village stopped him on the way, took his bike, mobile phone, wrist watch and gold chain and badly beat him. The pastor approached the Kothappali police station to lodge a complaint, but the police remained non-cooperative. In 2011, the pastor's family had faced a severe persecution, when they had been beaten up with iron rods and had sustained grievous injuries. Since then, they have been facing threats and warnings to stop the church services.

## West Godavari

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 3 January** in Koyyetipadu village of Penumantra Mandal of West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh, Hindu villagers disrupted a prayer meeting. Pastor D. Solomon leads the Living Faith Prayer Fellowship and conducts services at his house. After the prayer meeting, the Christians have been socially ostracized by the village heads and community leaders. Christians marriages are banned, and villagers

have been warned not to invite any Christian for any kind of festival or even a funeral. Those violating the stringent rules would be fined Rs. 10,000 and the amount would go as a donation towards the construction of Hindu temples.

## Srikakulam

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 7 January**, in Mandasa village, Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh, a mob of religious fundamentalists along with the local villagers attacked a Sunday worship service being conducted at the house of a local Christian. The worship was led by Pastor Ramesh Khondual. The attackers beat up the Christians present as a result of which 3 members suffered serious head injuries and one, a grievous injury to his eye. Pastor Ramesh and his father suffered critical injuries and had to be hospitalized for treatment. While police took no action against the attackers, they arrested the pastor on charges of conversion. The pastor was later bailed out.

## Guntur

Physical Violence

**On 29 March** in Anthony Colony at Rentachintala in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, there was a murder attempt on a 50-year-old Pastor M. Koti Reddy. The incident occurred between 10.30am to 11am when three to four unknown men barged into the pastor's house and severely beat him. He was rushed to the nearby hospital where he lay in critical condition. Police suspect the hands of local RSS activists and a case was under Section 307 of IPC.

## East Godavari

Physical Violence

**On 15 April** in Peruru village near Amalapuram of East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh, Pastor P. Samson Raju was beaten up while he was conducting the Sunday worship service. An FIR was registered by the Christians in the local police station.

## Guntur

Demolition of Church

**On 21 June** in Balusulapalem, Cherukupally Mandal, Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh, a Seventh Day Adventist Church building was

demolished by angry villagers. The incident occurred at around 1 a.m. when the radicals bulldozed the church. The church is pastored by G. Yesuratnam. On the next day, the pastor filed a complaint at the Cherukupally police station and the culprits were immediately arrested.



## Assam

### Barpeta

Threat / Harrassment

**On 20 May** in Railway Colony, Ward No. 2, Barpeta district of Assam, Mrs. Tarulata Swargiary and her family were threatened by Hindutva radicals. Mrs. Swargiary holds a prayer meeting every Sunday in her home. Since there's no church in the area, she, along with her husband, and three other people, gather together for the weekly meeting. On the day of the incident, few members of the RSS interrupted the small fellowship and warned them to stop the fellowship with a warning that they would break and burn everything in their home if they did not cease from holding Christian prayers. No police complaint was lodged in the case.

### Tezpur

Vandalism

**On 29 September** in Tezpur, Assam, it was reported that the statue of St. Don Bosco which was in front of Bishops House was vandalized and desecrated on Saturday night by antisocial elements. A FIR has been registered with the Police.

### Dibrugarh

Vandalism

**On 14 December**, in Santibagan near Duliajan, Dibrugarh district, Assam, a Catholic Church was attacked by unidentified people at night. The statues were vandalised and desecrated. The Church comes under the Bhadoi Panchali Police Outpost, Duliajan Police Station.

## Bihar

### Jehanabad

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 1 January** in Mohanpur in Jehanabad district of Bihar, a prayer meeting was stopped by anti-Christian elements. Pastor Ranjeet leads a congregation of 70 Christians in Mohanpur for the last few years. On the day of the incident, the pastor was leading the service, when a mob entered the house and threatened the Christians to stop gathering for the prayer meetings. The pastor approached the local police station to complain and seek protection, only a verbal assurance of help was given by the police.

### West Champaran

Physical Violence

**On 26 February** at Bettiah bus station in Bettiah city of Pashchim Champaran district in Bihar, a Christian pastor and another believer were brutally beaten up. A group of Christian men and women from Gospel Echoing Missionary Society (GEMS) church, along with missionary D. Joseph, were on their way from the nearby Bagaha city in a bus. During the journey, a verbal scuffle ensued between the group and another irate passenger. This passenger who had affiliation with a radical Hindu group, alerted his friends. When the bus reached the Bettiah bus station a mob of fanatics were waiting for the Christians. They huddled around the Christians raising allegations of human trafficking against the missionary. They cornered him, and another Christian named Baldev and beat them brutally. Despite the cries for help from the Christians, nobody came forward. The two were later taken to the hospital. An FIR has been filed.

### Siwan

Theft

**On 20 April** in Anand Nagar, Siwan district of Bihar, anti-Christian radicals broke into the ""Joy of Church"", vandalized it, destroyed a portion of the arch above the main gate and stole valuable equipments from the church. Pastor Dahrath Kumar Das who ministers at the



church has been facing persecution for many months from religious fundamentalists in the area. On the day of the incident, the Pastor was away from the church campus when his neighbors informed him of the vandalism. The pastor feels scared for his life and believes that the intent of the vandalism is to provoke him to counter attack. No police complaint was filed.

## Bhagalpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 26 April** in Maheshpur village of Jagdishpur block in Bhagalpur district of Bihar, Krishn Kumar Suman and his father were stopped from conducting prayer meetings. They have peacefully conducted prayer meetings at their residence since 2009 and around 30 Christians gather regularly. However off late the villagers started protesting against the meetings alleging religious conversions and forced the village council to issue a ban on the meetings. Hence, the Christians were not able to gather for the past two weeks for regular prayers. The local police at the Sanhola police station denied any help when the Christians sought protection and freedom to worship.

## Patna

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 29 April** Rupaspur, Danapur of Patna district in Bihar, Pastor Subhash and other Christians were arrested by the police from Rupaspur police station. The police acted based on a complaint allegedly filed by Bajrang Dal radicals and arrested them right after the Sunday worship service. An FIR was filed against them with charges of forced conversions. On 19 May, Pastor Subhash, his wife, Sara and sister in law, Rajini were finally granted bail with the efforts of ADF lawyers.

## Patna

Physical Violence

**On 1 June** in Punpun town in Patna district of Bihar, Pastor Suryadev Kumar was pushed out of a running train. The pastor was traveling to Patna and was carrying a few New Testament Bibles in his hand. While seated on the train, he had placed the Bibles next to him. A co-passenger showed interest in the books and wanted to know more. As soon as the train left the station, the pastor was grievously assaulted

and then pushed out of the moving train. He was found unconsciously lying near the tracks by some train travellers. He was later admitted at a private hospital in Arwal.

## Begusarai

Arrested

**On 12 July** in Bachhawara in Begusarai district of Bihar, Thomas, along with 5 other Christians, was arrested and taken to Bachhawara police station. The Christians belonging to the India Mission were publicly screening the 'Jesus' movie in the area, and distributing gospel literature. Just then Hindutva radicals, allegedly belonging to Bajrang Dal, barged into the place, questioned the motive of the Christians, and took them to the police station. The next day the Christians were again called at the police station to give their statements. Police later released them without registering any complaints.

## Saharsa

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 22 July** in Batraha Sharda Nagar Ward No. 27, under Sadar Police Station in Saharsa city of Bihar, anti Christian elements barged into a Sunday service which was being conducted by Pastor Krishanandan Yadav. They charged the pastor with an allegation of converting people with allurement. Police at the Sadar police station arrested the pastor and twenty five other Christians and took them to the local police station. Christians were then cross questioned in group of three, while the pastor was kept in a separate room. Some children were also taken into custody who had not eaten anything since morning. After keeping most of the Christians in custody over night, they were all released on the next day. No complaints were registered against them.

## Samastipur

Physical Violence

**On 5 August**, in Samstipur, Bihar, religious extremists disrupted a Sunday service being led by Pastor Jitendra Kumar. The mob of about 40 attackers entered the Church and started abusing the Christians and accusing them of being involved in conversions. They manhandled Jitendra Kumar and took away mobile phones of Christians present. They

threatened to replace the Church with a Hanuman temple.

## Samastipur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 12 August**, in Dalsingsarai village, Samstipur, Bihar, the house of Pastor Jitendra Kumar was attacked by villagers who were led by local Hindu right-wing leaders. The attackers broke the steel gate of the house. The Pastors' son and local Christians were beaten so badly that some had to be hospitalized. The pastor and his family were taken to the police station where they were questioned and later let go. The police told the pastor to stop Christian activities. The family left the area because of fear.

## Siwan

Threat / Harrassment

**On 26 August**, in Basantpur, Siwan District, Bihar, a group of Hindutva radicals disrupted the worship service at the Gems House of Prayer. The attackers arrived at the Church before the worship service began at 8 am and threatened Pastor Gyanchand not to conduct prayers. The attackers returned again in the afternoon and issued threats against the pastor. They also threatened and intimidated the worshippers present and took videos and photographs of the Church and people.

## West Champaran

Physical Violence

**On 4 October** in Bettiah block, West Champaran District, Bihar, according to reports received four Christians were badly beaten up by members of Bajrang Dal. The Christians: Gigi Joseph, Mathew Thomas, Aji Babu Kottarakara and Samson, had gone to a village in the Bettiah block to meet an acquaintance identified only as Methial. Upon reaching the village, they were first confronted by members of Bajrang Dal who took them to the village Chief. There the Christians were beaten up reportedly for over 4 hours and were chased around the village by their attackers. Christian leaders, upon hearing about the incident, informed the police, who then intervened and carried the Christians to the police station, where they were asked for a written statement by the police which they gave.

## Vaishali

Threat / Harrassment

**On 14 October** in Manhar, Vaishal District, Bihar, according to reports received, nearly 30 religious extremists attacked the Mission India Church. The attackers stopped children coming for Sunday School in the morning and chased them away. They then made it into the Church and placed photos of Hindu gods and goddesses in the Church and started singing Hindu religious songs and forced the congregation members present to join in. The attackers also performed pooja according to Hindu rituals and told the congregation to join in. The congregation members were threatened and were told that next Sunday the attackers will return with an idol and will place it inside the Church.

## Khagaria

Physical Violence

**On 15 October** in Sonbarsa village, Chautham Block, Khagaria district, Bihar, young people affiliated with various Hindu right-wing groups attacked a peaceful prayer meeting. According to information, a Monday prayer meeting was being held at the house of Prem Kumar at his request. Suddenly a mob of around 50 ? 60 young people trespassed into the private property and disrupted the meeting. The attackers indulged in verbal abuse and told the people gathered to stop the meeting or face consequences. They beat up four people: Nitish, Deepul, Ajit, and Prem Kumar and dragged them to the local temple intending to force the Christians to worship Hindu deities. When the attackers saw that the temple was busy and was not available, they dragged the Christians back and locked them up in a room and called the police and the media. Christians were branded anti-nationals by the local media that accompanied the attackers. The police took the Christians into custody and took them to the Chautham Police Station where they were detained and questioned for 6 hours before being released.

## Aurangabad

Physical Violence

**On 4 November**, in Aurangabad, Bihar, a mob of around 25 religious extremists disrupted a prayer meeting being led by Pastor Stephen

Sebastian. The attackers threatened the Christians present and beat up the pastor. Pastor Stephen serves with the Assemblies of God Church and leads a Church that is regularly attended by 30 ? 40 people. The Church meets at a rented property. The attackers forced the landlord, Vikas Singh, to ask Pastor Stephen to leave the rented accommodation immediately. The landlord confiscated Stephen's bed, inverter and other furniture as well. The police who had been called took the pastor and left him on the road out of the town from where the pastor made his way to the GEMS hospital for the treatment of his injuries and was admitted for medical care.

## Gaya

Physical Violence

**On 4 November**, in Tetua village, Atri block, Gaya district, Bihar, a mob of around 40 religious extremists disrupted a Church service and beat up the Christians present, seriously injuring the pastor in the process. The Church of about 150 members is led by Pastor Bengali Das, who lost consciousness as a result of the beating and had to be hospitalized. Two months prior to this incident the pastor had also been threatened by Hindu right-wing groups who had come along with police men to the Church service and had disrupted it. They had warned the pastor not to continue worship services. No FIR was filed after the latest incident as the local police kept pressurizing the pastor to compromise with his attackers.

## Patna

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 9 December**, in Bakhtiyarpur village, Patna district, Bihar, police arrested pastor Sojan on charges of forced conversions. Pastor Sojan was showing the Jesus film to interested people in the village but some radicals complained against him to the police alleging that the pastor is attempting to convert people by force. The police arrived at the scene and took the pastor in custody. They led him out of the village and warned him that he should not enter Bakhtiyarpur again.

# Chhattisgarh

## Dantewada

Physical Violence

**On 3 January** in Javanga village in Geedam tehsil of Dantewada district in Chhattisgarh, Mr. Asharam, a Christian by faith, was badly beaten up by Hindu fundamentalists. Asharam has been a devout Christian since 2006 and is a member of Bethel Prarthana Samiti Church. On the day of the incident, some men asked him to come along with them and once away from the village, they pounced on him and started slapping and kicking him. They warned him that if he did not stop going to the church, he would be burnt alive along with his family. He was admitted at a local hospital after he had sustained grievous injuries in the attack. Scared for his life, he left the village along with his family and sought refuge at a pastor's house in the nearby village. When they approached the Geedam police station, the police officer denied accepting the complaint or filing an FIR; instead he threatened them that if they pursued the matter further, they would land in more trouble.

## Bastar

Physical Violence

**On 4 February**, in Gumdell Police Station, Mardum, Bastar district, about 50 religious fanatics came to Beersheba Church at 12:30 pm and stopped Sunday worship service. They attacked the Christians present and attempted to damage the Church building. The attackers were forcing Christians to renounce their faith in Christ and threatened that if the Church does not stop meeting then there would be bloodshed. Christians filed a complaint, but FIR was not registered. The police did speak to the attackers and told them not to trouble Christians.

## Dhamtari

Arrested

**On 9 February**, Chikali village, Nagri police station, Dhamtari district, police arrested pastor Dinesh Sahu on charges of forceful conversion and of hurting religious sentiments. Local Christians allege that the charges are cooked up. The pastor procured bail later.



## Kondagaon

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 2 March**, in Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh, religious fanatics objected to the funeral of a Christian woman who had recently passed away. Mrs. Buktai Bai was the mother of an evangelist, Somnath. After her passing away, Somnath was not allowed to bury his mother according to Christian rituals and was also forced to give up his faith. After local authorities intervened, the funeral was allowed to go ahead.

## Jagdarpur

Physical Violence

**On 5 April** in Bakel village under Bhanpuri police station in Jagdarpur district of Chhattisgarh, Christians were attacked during a prayer meeting. The meeting was taking place at the home of a Christian woman named Shanti. After the meeting, the Christians were about to have a meal together, when around 40-50 people allegedly belonging to the BJP and led by one Umesh Parekh, surrounded the place and started verbally abusing everyone. Soon, they started pelting stones at the house, entered inside and physically assaulted the women and children. Police personnel from the Bhanpuri police station rushed to the spot to control the situation. A complaint was lodged by both the parties - the Christians and the Hindu radicals - against each other.

## Jashpur

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 17 April** in Semarjobla village in Bagicha tehsil of Jashpur district in Chhattisgarh, five Christian pastors - Parasnath Ekka, Vidya Lakra, Sanjay Tigga, Lukas Lakra and Sikander Toppo - were detained at the Samarbar police station. The pastors had gathered in the house of a Christian family to celebrate the birthday of one of the family members. However, even before the program could begin, police came to the spot and took the pastors to the police station based on a complaint of religious conversions. The pastors were later released.

## Balrampur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 22 April** in Badki Behri village under Balrampur police station of Balrampur district in Chhattisgarh, Pastor Anand Agariya was

beaten up by Hindu radicals. The incident took place right after the Sunday service, when a group of villagers surrounded the place, beat the pastor and took him to the Balrampur police station. The pastor was released later that night. The pastor has been conducting Christian services regularly at the village where a small number of Christians gather regularly.

## Durg

Vandalism

**On 23 April** in Panchsheel Colony in Durg city of Chhattisgarh, Pastor Vinod Acharya's church building was attacked again. An anti-Christian radical named Srivastav along with 9-10 other radicals who allegedly belong to the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, broke the lock of the church and entered inside. They later left the place and went. Earlier on 4 October 2017 the radicals had tried demolishing the church building with the help of Municipal authorities, but had failed. The pastor and the church has been under constant attacks since.

## Baloda

Bazar Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 13 May** in Civil Lines of Balodabazar city of Balodabazar district in Chhattisgarh, a case of conversion was lodged by Hindutva radicals against Pastor Deepak Ranjan. The incident took place during the Sunday worship service, when a stranger who was attending the service started recording a video of the program. When the pastor told him to stop recording, the man walked out of the meeting. He later returned with a big group of radicals and police personnel, and a verbal argument ensued. The Hindutva radicals then filed a complaint with the District Commissioner of Police. They alleged that the pastor was converting poor villagers in Kokadi village by allurements. The complaint further claimed that the pastor was distributing toxic and addictive substances during the prayer meetings, and physically and mentally abusing the women and children. Pastor Ranjan has been holding Christian services for five years in the area.

## Balod

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 3 June** in Jewertala village of Mohara in Balod district of Chhattisgarh, four Christian families reported of ostracization and opposition that they had been facing from their villagers. The families had accepted the Christian faith after finding healing and peace



during sickness. As a consequence, the villagers started physically and mentally persecuting them. Any villager who tried to contact the families was fined between Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 5,000. Fearful and helpless, the families filed a complaint at the Gurur Police Station.

## Kanker

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 4 June** in Sirsida village in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh, Halal Ram Sahu and family faced severe opposition from the Sahu community. Sahu's family are Christians but started facing opposition and social boycott for the past four years. While riding home on his motorcycle, Sahu's wife, Sushila, fell on the road and was fatally injured. She breathed her last at a private hospital. When the family tried to bury her dead body in their private property, a mob of over 100 people started protesting. They demanded that the body be cremated as per Hindu rites. After much argument and the interference of police, the body was buried at a Christian cemetery. However, the Christians in the area have now become targets of the frustrated radicals.

## Raipur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 17 June** in New Anand Nagar in Bhanpuri of Raipur district in Chhattisgarh, Hindu radicals barged into a Vacation Bible School program. Pastor Yashwant Sahu was conducting the program where about 100 children had gathered. Just then a mob comprised of Hindutva radicals barged into the place and started questioning the pastor and Christians. The children ran berserk, frightened with the noise and screaming of the radicals. Later, the SHO of New Rajendra Nagar police station brought the two parties into an understanding, and the matter was resolved.

## Kondagaon

Threat / Harrassment

**On 10 September**, in Kakdabeda village, Kondagaon District, Chhattisgarh, religious extremists stopped the burial of a local Christian. The Christian had died after a prolonged illness, but local villagers instigated by right wing Hindutva activists prevented her burial according to Christian rituals.

## Baloda Bazar

Physical Violence

**On 16 September**, in Baloda Bazar District, Chhattisgarh, according to reports members of the Bajrang Dal attacked and disrupted worship at the All Peoples Church led by Pastor Deepak Ranjan. The attackers terrorised and manhandled worshippers as well as vandalized Church property. When the pastor contacted the police, they came and took the pastor and some other Christians and the attackers to the police station where the police engineered a compromise between the parties. No case was registered against the attackers.

---

## Delhi

### New Delhi

Vandalism

**On 4 May** in New Delhi, the St. Stephen's College came under an attack. Students at the college noticed that the chapel inside the college premises, had been vandalized. Scribbled in black ink across the door were words that said, "mandir yahin banega" (a temple will be built here). The cross outside the chapel had the words "I'm going to hell" written on them. The students feel that the incident is in line with growing attacks by right wing bodies.

### New Delhi

Hate Campaign

**On 26 May** near Sacred Heart Cathedral in Ashok Place, New Delhi, Swami Om and his small group gathered in protest and hurled abuses at Christians living in India in general, and on Archbishop Anil Couto's letter. In a letter written on 8 May, the Archbishop had urged all parish priests in the diocese of Delhi to launch a prayer campaign. He had urged the faithful to hold fasts and pray for the 2019 general elections. The letter had caused a nationwide protest by anti-Christian groups. Swami Om claimed that "Christians are anti-national and must be chased out."

### New Delhi

Threat / Harrassment

**On August 24**, in New Delhi, leaders of the BJP protested against a Christian event

'Supernatural 2018' to be organized on the 25th – 26th August 2018 at Talkatora Stadium New Delhi by the Family of the Lord Jesus Church. The protest also went viral on social media and the New Delhi Municipal Corporation cancelled the permission for the event.

---

## Gujarat

### Surat

#### Vandalism

**On 1 February** in Surat, Gujarat, a three-day convention was disrupted by anti-Christian elements. The Brethren Assembly had organized the convention from 1st to 4th February. On the first day when Evangelist Samuel Thomas from Mathura stood up to speak, he was rudely interrupted by a man in the audience who was very aggressive with his questions. Suddenly, a mob rushed into the venue and started shouting. They demanded that everyone leave the venue. They roughed up a few believers, ransacked and vandalized the venue and threw the chairs around. They also burned the Bibles and Christian literature that had been kept for distribution. The Convention was brought to a sudden halt and the speaker and Christians had to leave the place fearing for their lives.

### Dahod

#### Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 22 April** in Dahod, Gujarat, religious fanatics beat up Evangelist Chimanbhai Bhabhor alleging that he is converting people. The following day the same mob beat him again and handed him over to the police.

### Dang

#### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 27 November**, in Kadmal village, Subir taluka, Dang district, Gujarat, police stopped construction of a Church and summoned Ganpat Chaudhary for questioning. The Church was being constructed at the land near Chaudhary's place. The police acted on the complaint of Sampat Puwar, a man said to be affiliated with various Hindu right-wing groups. Pawar had complained that Christians of his village had destroyed idols of local deities that were kept in the open to build a church. However, when police reached the spot, they found the idols intact.

## Himachal Pradesh

### Shimla

#### Threat / Harrassment

**On 18 March** in Kothkhair town in Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh, a pastor's family was threatened by Hindutva radicals. Pastor Bhim Bahadur has been working in the town for the past 14 years and conducts Christian prayers in a rented house. On the day of the incident, while the pastor was away, around 11 radicals barged into the house and warned his wife to stop conducting all prayer meetings. They further threatened that if the pastor's family didn't oblige, they would make the family 'disappear'. They forced the children who had gathered in the house to eat 'prasad' that had been offered at the temple. A complaint was lodged at the local police station.

### Solan

#### Arrested

**On 2 November**, in Baddi, Solan district, Himachal Pradesh, Police booked Pastor Rajinder Singh, his wife and a female church member on non-bailable charges under sections 295 A and 153 A of the IPC. Pastor Singh was summoned to the police station after Vishwanath Singh, husband of a Church member and member of a right-wing Hindutva group had lodged a complaint against him alleging forcible conversion and hurting of religious sentiments. Pastor Rajinder Singh has been ministering in the area for over 10 years.

---

## Haryana

### Charkhi Dadri

#### Physical Violence

**On 14 March** in Charkhi Dadri town of Charkhi Dadri district in Haryana, evangelists Anmol Bhushan and Anish Pappu were beaten up for distributing Bible tracts. They were at the Charkhi Dadri bus stand area when the incident took place. They were later arrested by the police and detained at the lock up.

## Sonipat

### Vandalism

**On 11 December** in Sonipat district, Haryana, unidentified persons broke and demolished the temporary structure of a Church cum Community centre. Pastor Akash with the Christian Evangelistic Assemblies is building a Church and a Community centre for some time which has been facing opposition. The village head had called him and his family for a discussion on the same on 11 December, 5 pm. While Akash faced a hostile group of about 150 people in the meeting, some of them slipped away and damaged the under construction building and equipment extensively. The village head further declared that no Church building would be allowed to be constructed in the village.

---

## Jammu and Kashmir

### Rajouri

#### Physical Violence

**On 16 January** in Sihal village of Nowshera Tehsil in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a mob comprising of about 1000 people, attacked a church building and set it on fire. Seema Devi, 23, had become a Christian about eight months ago, after experiencing healing from her sickness and was attending Pastor Jeewer Joeswa's church in the village. She had gone to her mother's house in Jalandhar, Punjab after Christmas celebration at the church. It was there on 15 January, that she breathed her last. On the day of the incident, the mob kept chanting 'Jai Sri Ram' as they brought Seema's body to the church. They accused the pastor for forcefully converting Seema and blamed him for her death. In their fit of rage, they burnt the church building, church equipment, furniture and every object in sight, including the food grains. An FIR was registered at Nowshera police station against the assailants who had come from Kangri, Bhajwal, Sunderbani and Sihal villages. The police took some eight assailants into custody, but released them on the same day.

## Jammu

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 2 September**, in Jammu, religious extremists disrupted worship service at the Assemblies of God Church and threatened Pastor Manoj and his congregation members. The attackers warned the Church against conducting worship services in the area.

## Udhampur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 December**, in Udhampur district, Jammu and Kashmir, a person in a drunken state disrupted a prayer gathering organized at a house of a local Christian. Pastor Radha Krishan who reported this matter said that Christians have been facing threat and harassment at the hands of the neighbours off late.

---

## Jharkhand

### West Singhbhum

#### Threat / Harrassment

**On 26 February** in Kadwadih village in Majhgaon Tehsil in Paschimi Singhbhum district of Jharkhand, a Christian burial program was hindered by two radical Hindus. Shyam Lal Singh Guha, a Christian, lost his daughter on the morning of 26 February. When he tried to bury his daughter as per Christian rites, two villagers protested the same and threatened him from conducting the funeral. Guha's family have been Christians since 1995 and felt that their right to practice the tenets of their faith was being threatened. With the timely intervention of the local police personnel, the burial ceremony was later completed.

## Ranchi

### Murder

**On 1 May** in Tamad block of Ranchi district in Jharkhand, Pastor Abraham Topno was ambushed by Maoists about half a mile away from his village Kubasal. They forcibly pulled Pastor Topno out of his vehicle, shot and stabbed him to death. They severed his head from the body and set his vehicle on fire.

Though Maoists claim responsibility for the murder, the relatives of the pastor expressed their doubts saying that Hindu extremists likely mobilized the Maoists to carry out the execution. A police investigation is on. Pastor Abraham is survived by his wife and his nephew Aman Herenz.

## West Singhbhum

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 19 May**, in Baranga Village, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand, it was reported that Christians were facing social boycott and oppression at the hands of religious radicals. Villagers had organized meetings on 17 and 19 May and decided that Christians won't be allowed to conduct prayer meetings. It was also decided that if Christians gathered for the Sunday prayer meeting, they would be beaten up and the pastor who would be leading the worship would get beaten up too to the extent that he would be dead. Christians were forced to do a Gharwapsi (re-conversion) and if they did not abide they were told that they will be boycotted from village life. Christians approached the police but they have not given any relief.

## Palamu

Physical Violence

**On 24 May**, in Sindhwa Tola Village, Palamu district, Jharkhand, a Christian was beaten up by radicals who pressured him to renounce his faith. According to reports from local leaders he was kept bound with ropes for two days before he was released. He approached the police but the police refused to help him. With the help of Christian leaders, he later approached the SP and filed a complaint.

## Palamu

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 30 May** in Sanatola village of Palamu district in Jharkhand, eight families were reported to have been continually persecuted by local villagers owing to their Christian faith. The sorry tale of opposition and ostracization began a year ago and grew intense in the past few months. The families were denied basic amenities, electricity to their homes was cut, access to community water was denied, and some religious fanatics started visiting their homes and harassing the women folk. Repeated complaints at the local police station

did not produce any result. Threatened and fearful, the Christians fled from their village and sought refuge in another village, two kilometers away. The families belong to the 'Kripa Bhawan' Church which is led by Pastor Sarabjit.

## Khunti

Forced Conversion

**On 3 July**, in Karra block, Khunti district, Jharkhand, Christians in two villages i.e. Bamarja & Khartanga were forced by religious fanatics to renounce their faith and to perform rituals of the Sarna Dharma. They were also forced to confess that they will not go to Church again. Affected Christians from both the villages have given a written application to Karra Police station.

## Dumka

Arrested

**On 5 July**, around 7pm, in Phulpahari village under Shikaripada P.S. of Dumka district in Bihar, twenty five Christians were caught and kept in house arrest. The Christians who are a part of the Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) had gathered at a village in Shikaripada for a prayer meeting at a house. However, provoked by some Hindutva radicals, the villagers caught hold of the Christians and kept them under house arrest the entire night. On the next day they were handed over to the local police. Though some were released later, sixteen of them were transferred to the Dumka jail - Samai Soren (35), Stephen Marandi (22), Gopal Tudu (25), Lubin Soren (35), Birendra Hembrom (20), Lukhiram Tudu (22), Prodip Kisku (22), Shiba Murmu (27), Budhan Marandi (23), Miru Soren (35), Kaha Tudu (35), Monika Hembrom (18), Pansuri Soren (18), Rani Soren (38), Rasmuni Hansda (18) and Suphala Marandi (19).

## Latehar

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 9 September**, in Demo village, Latehar district, Jharkhand, religious extremists disrupted worship at the Believers Church which is led by Dhanu Oraon. The attackers, Deepak Tiwari and Sunetar Yadav, manhandled the pastor and some Christians and forcibly took the pastor to the Richghuta market place. The attackers also informed the police and alleged that the pastor was involved in forced and fraudulent conversions. The



police took the pastor and some Christians under custody and charged them under CrPC 107/116 before releasing them later during the day.

## Singhbhum

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 16 September** in Jamshedpur, East Singhbhum district, Jharkhand, a worship service was disrupted by Hindutva activists who shouted slogans, interrogated the pastor, speakers and Christians present and created a ruckus. Pastor Suresh Dhanakumar was leading the worship. No FIR was filed by the Christians.

## Bokaro

Arrested

**On 27 September** in Lalmatia village, Chandrapur Block, Bokaro District, Jharkhand, according to media reports, police arrested three people on alleged charges of conversion. A complaint at the Chandrapur police station was made by a person called Mani Ravidas. Acting on the complaint the police arrested Sikandar Ravidas, Mahavir Ravidas and Vinod Ravidas. Three other people have been named in the FIR: Robert Edward, Ajay Ravidas and Lakhi Devi. Charges against the Christians have been filed under the Jharkhand Freedom of Religion Act as well as various sections of the IPC. Local Christian leaders have denied the allegations and have called the charges fabricated.

## West Singhbhum

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 5 October** in Surlu village, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand, Christians were socially boycotted in a meeting organized by tribal leaders and RSS members. The Christians were told not to pass through the field of others and were told that they will not be given any work in the village. The meeting also declared that Christian women could be raped now that they are no more Adivasi. This prompted Christians to leave their village and flee to Odisha. No FIR has been filed.

## Gumla

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 12 October** in Kondekera Village, Palkot, Gumla, Jharkhand, police disrupted a fasting

and prayer meeting at around 2:30 pm and took into custody William Kujur and Ashish Munda. The Christians were taken to the Palkot Police station where they were interrogated. They were released after 24 hours.

## Pakur

Arrested

**On October 18** in Pakur District, Jharkhand, according to media reports, a senior veterinary doctor was arrested on alleged charges of conversion of a minor. The local Christian leaders reject the charges. According to local media, the father of a young girl (13 years) and resident of Rodego village has accused Soren of offering 500 rupees to his daughter to convert her to Christianity. He also said that Soren promised that he will take care of the educational expense of the girl if she converted to Christianity. Soren was arrested by the Littipara police station in charge Bimal Kumar Singh who said that investigation was underway to establish the allegations and that Soren had been charged under the Jharkhand Freedom of Religion Act. The girl has been sent to a Child Welfare Home.

## West Singhbhum

Vandalism

**On 18 October** in Duruli village, Chaibasa, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand, according to reports, Hindu extremists threatened Christians and broke into their homes and vandalized them. Household goods of Christians were thrown out and the Christians were thrown out of the village. They were warned not to use water or to enter the village. The village head called for a meeting and forced three Christian families to renounce their faith. It was also reported that around 20 Thousand rupees were stolen from the Christians during this time.

## Ranchi

Vandalism

**On 20 October** in Khatanga village, Ranchi district, Jharkhand, a Church was targeted by radicalized Tribals who removed the cross from the Church and converted the building into a Tribal Community hall (Sarna Bhavan). The Tribals also performed a purification ceremony and offered prayers in the tribal way. The Church belonged to the Vishwa Vani group of Churches. Christians filed a FIR on the 24



October. The Church is on the land of a converted Tribal who had donated it for the purpose of building a Church.

## Dumka

Threat / Harrassment

**On 19 November**, in Ramgarh block, Dumka district, Jharkhand, two evangelists Surendra Pradhan and Philemon were threatened and interrogated by members of Hindu right-wing groups. The evangelists who are working with Youth Mission Movement were about to register a land to build a Church when they were surrounded at the Ramgarh market. They were taken to the police station for questioning and were let off late at night after the allegation of conversion against them did not hold.

## Kerala

### Kozhikode

Threat / Harrassment

**On 18 February** at Kozhikode Civil Station in Kozhikode district of Kerala, a church service was disrupted by religious fundamentalists. Pastor Shaju P. ministers at the Life of Love Ministries church in a rented building every week. On the day of the incident, a mob gate-crashed into the house and began accusing the pastor of luring people into Christianity. They threatened him of dire consequences if he didn't stop the services totally. The church members and the pastor are shaken with fear and insecurity.

### Kollam

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 March** in Avaneeswaram village in Kunnicoode-Pathanapuram road in Kollam district of Kerala, the Sunday worship service of the Sharom Fellowship Church was disrupted by communal elements. Pastor I. Yohannna has been pastoring the church in a rented house for the past two years and had been facing threats from local religious fundamentalists off late. Due to increasing opposition, the pastor had shifted the gathering venue to a new location recently. On the day of the incident, Vijayan Pillai, a local radical leader barged into the morning church service and demanded that the service be stopped. Using abusive expletives,

he accused the pastor of converting poor people. After a long verbal spat and warning, the radical leader left the place.

## Thrissur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 7 June** in Kodungallur municipal area of Thrissur district in Kerala, three Christian evangelists were threatened and abused while they were distributing Christian booklets. The Hindutva fanatics confronted the Christians, verbally abused them and forced them to tear the booklets. After a strong warning to stay away from such activities, the fanatics let the Christians go.

## Karnataka

### Hassan

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 24 June** in Rudrapatna of Hassan district in Karnataka, Pastor Johnson who works with the Assemblies of God Church, was manhandled by a radical group of about 40 people. They verbally abused the pastor and warned him to stop the alleged conversion activities in the area. Further, the radicals filed a complaint against the pastor at the Arakalagudu police station accusing that he sells drugs to innocent Hindu people during the Communion service at the church. Police personnel and the radicals forced him to stop the Sunday service. About 100 Christians gather in the A.G. Church building.

### Bagalkot

Physical Violence

**On 9 and 10 August** in Neela Nagar village of Bagalkot district of Karnataka, Ashok Kumar and Keshua Gurunath of Bagalkot were beaten up by the villagers owing to their Christian faith. The incidents were brought to the notice of the police.

### Mandya

Threat / Harrassment

**On 14 October**, in Jakkanahalli village, Mandya district, Karnataka, a group of Christians was harassed by a mob of around 70 people at a bus

stop. Some Christians were on their way to Church while others were on their way to the hospital when the incident happened. The mob pressured the driver not to allow the Christians to sit on the bus. At least one Christian woman was manhandled, and her bible was snatched away, and she was verbally abused. When the Christians approached the police, they were accused of carrying conversions. The Christians have now approached the DSP but so far, the police has done nothing.

## Chikkaballapur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 19 October** in Chintamani tehsil, Chikkaballapur district, Karnataka, Hindu fundamentalists trespassed into the house of a Christian woman named Jyoti and threatened her with dire consequences if she did not stop prayer meetings in her house. She has been having regular prayers in her house for the last 5 years and around 25 ? 30 people gather. The fundamentalists alleged that she was converting people and threatened mob violence against her.

## Dharwad

Physical Violence

**On 1 November**, in Santhoshnagar, Hubli city, Dharwad District, Karnataka, a mob of over 100 Hindu radicals attacked a Christian prayer meeting injuring many Christians including women. A 36-year-old man Arjun S Hattimatur was seriously injured on his head as a result of the attack. The Christians belonging to the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission were having their weekly prayer meeting at the house of a Christian identified as Peter when the mob attacked without any provocation. The mob who came with media crew attacked Christians even in front of the police who watched as mute spectators. Instead the police filed a FIR against the Christians. Later on, the Christians too filed a counter FIR (FIR No. 0165/208, under IPC sections 506,504,147,149, 148,344,143,323,354,448,324).

## Hubli

Physical Violence

**On 2 November** in Santosh Nagar, Nekarnagar, Hubli district, Karnataka, a mob of 50 Hindu right-wing extremists trespassed and disrupted a prayer meeting and mercilessly beat up the Christians present. The Christians were warned of an even severe consequence if

they did not stop gathering. The police got the MLC of the victims but did not file FIR till a day later.

## Bagalkot

Physical Violence

**On 4 November**, in Lokapura, Bagalkot district, Karnataka, a mob of around 25 Hindutva extremists attacked Pastor Srikanth Durgappa and injured him. The pastor was dragged to the local police station for a kilometre while being beaten up. He suffered a fractured chin bone as a result of the attack. The attackers accused Pastor Durgappa of conversions through inducements. The police questioned the pastor till the evening and then released him after warning him not to conduct any prayers henceforth. No action was taken against the attackers.

---

# Maharashtra

## Palghar

Physical Violence

**On 7 January**, Ganjad village in Dahanu taluka, Palghar district, Maharashtra, Christians Tribals were attacked by religious fanatics. The attack took place after the Christians had met for Sunday prayer and were about to disperse when they were ambushed by a mob of around 100 people with some of them also drunk. Leading the mob were village sewaks and a woman who belonged to the Hindu right-wing. They broke the community center where Christians gather for prayer and caused much damage to it. The police however controlled the situation at that time. It was afterwards in the evening when the Christian families of the village were targeted and attacked forcing them to flee their homes. At least 25 Christians were forced to flee to jungles. Christian leaders were searching for all the missing Christians even after two days. A FIR was filed by Barkya Morga against six people including a woman.

## Mumbai

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 14 January** in Bhangarwad under Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation in Andheri East of Mumbai,

Maharashtra, a group of Hindutva radicals barged into a prayer meeting which was being conducted at a government school and threatened the Christians. Pastor Ravi Jain and the Christians gather every Sunday for the past two years for worship services. On the day of the incident, the radicals entered the school building, accused the Christians of carrying out religious conversion and threatened them to stop the services. A police complaint was later lodged by the Christians at the Deputy Commissioner's office.

## West Godavari

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 12 February** in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, Pastor Ratna Raj was obstructed from carrying on repair works in the church building. The pastor is ministering a church in his village for the past 25 years. In 2016, they decided to repair the church. They started the work after getting assent from the district collector and revenue officials. However, the local Hindu radicals in the village stopped the construction forcibly. The police have been siding with the agitators. The work has been halted and the church members are forced to meet at a church member's house.

## Gadhchiroli

### Physical Violence

**On 11 March** in Rekanal village in Etapalli taluk of Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra, Pastor Daniel Pungati and his wife were beaten up by local villagers. The pastor works with Emerge Ministries and has been conducting regular Sunday worship services for the Christians in the village. The incident occurred around 7pm when a mob of villagers barged into the meeting venue and started beating the pastor and his wife. They threatened them with death if they ventured near the village again. The remaining Christians were warned that they will have to leave the village if they continued worshipping Jesus Christ. A complaint was filed by the pastor on 13 March at the Yedari police station.

## Gadhchiroli

### Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 10 April** in Bavanchuva village in Chamorshi taluk of Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra, Namdev Raghunath Hedo, a Christian was beaten up and threatened by the villagers.

Namdev belongs to the Mali tribe and had embraced Christianity about 6 years ago along with his wife, two sons and a daughter. About five months ago, the family started facing opposition from the villagers who denied them access to the village water well. Ostracized from the community and unemployed, Namdev dug a water pit on his farm with his bare hands and is forced to survive on the contaminated ground water. However, the persecution and the unemployment which is due to social backlash brought the family to immense mental pressure and physical torture. Namdev is seeking to approach the police for the protection of his family and for his rights.

## Mumbai

### Vandalism

**On 12 April** in Chuim Gaothan, Khar (West), Mumbai of Maharashtra, a Holy Cross was desecrated and defiled by unknown persons. The miscreant had painted the words ""JESUS DOES NOT LOVE"" on the base of the Holy Cross. A complaint was lodged with the Commissioner of Police regarding the incident.

## Mumbai

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

On 24 April in Borivali of Mumbai, Maharashtra, Evangelist Jayesh Shelar of Living Hope Church was falsely accused of child molestation and taken into custody. The incident occurred when the evangelist was walking on the road behind two minor girls. Suddenly, one child fell down which prompted the evangelist to extend a hand of help. A few women who were around immediately raised an alarm alleging that he was molesting the girl. The locals rushed to the spot, beat him badly, painted his face black and took him to the nearby police station. An FIR was lodged against him under IPC 354, 376 and POSCO Act. The Christians believe that the charges are meant to falsely frame the evangelist since the locals were against him following the Christian faith.

## Gadhchiroli

### Demolition of Church

**On 8 July** in Kospundi village in Etapalli taluka of Gadchiroli district in Maharashtra, local villagers demolished a temporary church building. For the past three year the Christians have been gathering regularly under the leadership of Pastor Sudhakar. On the day of

the incident, around 28-30 Christians had gathered for worship. Around 9 am the agitated villagers came inside the hall, chased all the Christians out, climbed on top of the house and completely demolished and dismantled the structure. They further warned the Christians from conducting prayer meetings in the area.

#### Sindhudurg Vandalism

**On 25 August**, in Dodamarg, Sindhudurg district, Maharashtra, radical elements attacked a Christian prayer being held at a private home. The attackers beat up the Christians present and damaged household things including a car. According to reports, the attackers came into the Christian meeting with torn photos of Hindu gods and goddesses and placed them in Christian homes so as to make a case of hurting religious sentiments against the Christians. After beating the Christians, the attackers took them to the police station where the police admitted some Christians to a nearby hospital for medical care. Rev. Cornelio D'Souza and a person identified as Enoch were leading the prayer meeting.

#### Ratnagiri Threat / Harrassment

**On 10 September**, in Malgun village, Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra, Vilas Kalambate, a Christian has been reportedly threatened by fellow villagers who object to the prayer meeting being carried out at his place every alternative week. Pastor Ramesh has been leading these prayers at the house of Vilas, a Christian since 2011. Vilas was told by the village leaders that failing to comply with their order would have consequences such as physical violence and even social boycott and being chased away from the village.

#### Mumbai Falsely Accused / Arrested

On 10 November, in Kalyan, Mumbai, Maharashtra, Hindu fundamentalists disrupted and stopped a vacation bible school (VBS) and indulged in vandalism. They proceeded to tear educational charts being used for the VBS and added offensive content to it from their side. Then they took the pastors and the organizing team to the Kolsheewadi police station where the team was interrogated by the police while the fundamentalists

pressured the police to file charges against the Christians. The Christians were later released.

#### Kolhapur Physical Violence

**On 23 December**, in Kowad village, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra, a group of 20 masked men attack and grievously injured a group of Christians meeting for a Christmas gathering. Seven Christians including women, had to be hospitalized as a result of the attack out of which three had to undergo surgery to save them. The attackers barged into the Sunday worship service of the New Life Fellowship Church with swords, knives, iron rods, glass bottles, stones and other sharp objects and attacked the congregation. A FIR was filed.

---

## Manipur

#### Imphal East Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 5 July**, ten Christian families living in Nungbrang village in Imphal East district were excommunicated from the village for their faith in Christ. The Christians were also warned from holding any Christian prayers in the village.

---

## Madhya Pradesh

#### Vidisha Vandalism

**On 4 January** in Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh, a large crowd of Hindu activists gathered around the St. Mary's College after receiving threats to perform Aarti of Bharat Mata and other Hindu goddesses, in the college. However, a heavy police protection of about 300 officers was granted the college campus which houses three Catholic institutions - St. Mary's College, St. Mary's Senior Secondary School and Senior Secondary Trinity Convent School - in order to restrain the mob. The protestors shouted slogans, threw stones and broke barricades before performing the worship of Bharat Mata in a temple outside the college gate on the national highway. At the



same time, another group broke a boundary wall of the college campus and police had to rush to the spot. Officers were forced to resort to lathi charge and tear gas to control the unruly crowd of nearly 800 people. Tensions remained high for about two hours and the mob slowly moved away after 2.30pm. The Catholic sisters and fathers continued to be in a state of shock after the incident.

## Vidisha

### Hate Campaign

**On 16 January** in Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh, the St. Mary's College saw another spate of violence and protest by Hindu hardliners. This time, the mob was even larger than the 4 January protest. The General Secretary of Catholic Bishops Conference in India had earlier apprised the Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh about the impending threats. Additionally, the Madhya Pradesh Catholic Diocesan Schools' Association had also filed a writ petition at the Jabalpur High Court seeking protection for their institutes in Vidisha. Hence, a heavy security cover of about 500 fully equipped police personnel was provided in and around the college. 30 Hindu nationalists who were on their way to perform the Hindu worship at the college, were arrested and put behind bars. This wrought the protest without leaders and hence the mob dispersed.

## Barwani

### Physical Violence

**On 19 February**, reports came in of an incident that occurred in Jhirigamali village in Barwani district of Madhya Pradesh. Pastor Tarachand Senani conducts services at his house church in the village, where around 100 Christians gather. On 13 January, he organized a building dedication program for his recently renovated house church. On the following day, at around 10 am, a group of radicalized Hindu youngsters barged into the pastor's house and started beating the pastor's 14-year old son, Arun. They physically abused other women and children present at the house too. No FIR was lodged.

## Shahdol

### Gender Violence

**On 11 March** in Bilohri village under Bilhori

police station in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh, a Christian woman was allegedly tricked by some scheming villagers to pray for a four-year-old girl's healing who had already died. Mr. Bissu Kol and Mrs. Guddi Kol are Christians and have been in Christian ministry. A woman named Shanti brought her small daughter to Mrs. Kol and asked her to pray for the child. The Christian couple allege that the child had already died of pneumonia but the villagers had planned a scheme to target them. While Mrs. Kol was praying a huge crowd gathered outside her house and accused her of killing the child through witchcraft. Though the matter was sorted out at that moment, a couple of days later Shanti went and lodged a complaint against the Kol family at the nearby police station. The police called the couple and threatened them with a jail sentence for the 'evil' they had done. However, due to timely intervention from EFI volunteers the police released the Christians.

## Ujjain

### Vandalism

**On 12 March** in Ujjain city of Madhya Pradesh, suspected Hindu activists demolished the wall of a Catholic mission hospital and manhandled the staff, including nuns. The incident occurred when some 60 people with the help of a bulldozer, razed the boundary wall of 44-year-old Pushpa Mission Hospital. They blocked the emergency entrance and destroyed the equipments including power generators. The hospital has been facing trouble since January after Gagan Singh, the personal assistant of a local parliamentarian, staked claim over disputed land in front of the hospital. The plot of land had been given to the hospital by the local civic body for use as parking area and to maintain its greenery. The matter had been taken to the Madhya Pradesh High Court in January and the case is sub judice. The police remained quiet spectators and remained uncooperative in the matter.

## Raisen

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 16 March**, in Kondri Bildola, Sultanpur tehsil, Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh, a group of religious fanatics threatened Christians who had just met for prayer. The prayers were led by Evangelist Chainsingh Vasunia. After the prayer



concluded the radicals came to the venue and attempted to beat the evangelist and the people present. Vasunia escaped the place leaving his motorcycle behind. No FIR was filed.

## Raisen

House Burnt

**On 20 March**, in Sultanpur, Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh, the same group of people who had attempted to beat Evangelist Chainsingh Vasunia on 16 March 2018, came in a mob and burnt his house. The Evangelist and his family had got the warning earlier from sources and they had managed to leave their home before the attack took place. The family ran into the forest and got separated and had to be rescued.

## Alirajpur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 30 March**, in Barkedda village, Jobat tehsil, Alirajpur district, a group of Hindutva radicals beat up Evangelist Sigdar Jamat after he had conducted the Good Friday service. The attackers not only beat him up but also paraded him on the streets and after many hours handed him over to the Jobat police. Since he was injured, the police admitted him at the Government hospital, Jobat for treatment. After his treatment he was taken into custody. No action was taken against the attackers.

## Satna

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 10 June** in Satna district of Madhya Pradesh, Hindutva extremists barged into a Sunday worship service. Pastor Mahendra along with Pastor Prem were about to conclude the service, when eight people barged in and started abusing and shouting at the Christians gathered there. The group was accompanied by some media persons who questioned the Christians about the genuineness of their faith. Soon, the police arrived and took the pastors into custody. They were later released with instruction to obtain permission from authorities to gather and worship.

## Jabalpur

Arrested

**On 5 July** in Ranjhi area of Jabalpur city in Madhya Pradesh, Pastor Paul Sudharkar was

arrested. Few radicals allegedly belonging to RSS and Bajrang Dal disrupted a prayer service where the pastor and few Christians had gathered. The police immediately arrested the pastor and put him in a lock up.

## Rewa

Vandalism

**On 9 September**, in Majhgawan, Rewa District, Madhya Pradesh, a mob of religious extremists disrupted worship service at the Believer's Church pastored by Fr. Indrapal Saket. The attackers trespassed into the venue of the Church, a local school rented by the Church for worship services and started shouting anti-Christian slogans and manhandling the people. The police were informed who came and carried the Pastor and his wife, Mamta as well as the Church assistant Sharmila to the police station. The attackers claimed that the pastor had tried to convert a local man, Mohan Kumar by offering him 5000 Indian rupees, a claim that the pastor denies. The attackers created a ruckus at the police station and kept pressuring the police to register a case against the pastor. Even local Christian leaders Rev. Kamlesh Patel and others who had gone to the police station to intervene in the matter were verbally abused by the mob. The Christians were let off after a few hours, but no charges were filed against the attackers.

## Bhopal

Physical Violence

**On 2 December**, in Baghmugalia, Bhopal district, Madhya Pradesh, Hindutva radicals attacked a quiet get together where needy children were being given gift boxes. The attackers who were around 25 in number, shouted anti-Christian slogans and alleged that the pastor distributing the gift boxes, Pastor Kuber Nayak, was indulging in conversions. The parents of the children attempted to protect the pastor and to pacify the attackers, but they beat up the pastor. Soon the police arrived and dispersed the mob and took pastor Nayak and 4 other Christians to the Baghsewania Police Station. They interrogated the pastor and found no substance in the allegation of the attackers. The pastor was let go after signing a statement stating that no conversion activities would take place.

## Ganjam

### Forced Conversion

**On 28 January** in Soroda Poli of Ganjam district in Odisha, 16 Christian families of the Blessing Youth Missions Church gave up their Christian faith and went back to their old religion, owing to strong pressure from Hindu extremists. Another five Christian families continue to be threatened. Pastor Mohanty Chandra Takri filed a complaint at the local police station against those who were threatening and forcing the Christians to recant their Christian faith. The officials at the Kodala police station have promised help.

## Dhenkanal

### Physical Violence

**On 20 February** in Kendupara village in Dhenkanal district of Odisha, a planned attack was orchestrated on Christian families, by the local villagers. At around 5pm, a mob caught hold of Rengpo Kuldie, a Christian, and started assaulting him. When he escaped their grasp, they locked his wife and their 6-year-old son inside their house. They then turned their attention to Uchhobo who lives nearby and beat him. He too escaped the spot, but his wife and another Christian lady named Sabita were dragged on the road. They placed an axe on the neck of the women and threatened them to leave the village. When Rengo San, another Christian, tried to come to their rescue, he was brutally beaten with sticks. He fell unconscious as blood flowed from his nostrils and ears. He was later taken to a nearby hospital and despite medical treatment and several stitches, his hearing ability couldn't be restored completely. The shocked Christian families had to take shelter in the home of another Christian in a nearby village. On 25 February, police summoned the Christians and the attackers and got the latter to sign a written agreement that the Christians will not be disturbed in the future. However, earlier an agreement to this cause had been signed on 2 November 2016, and hence Christians fear that all such assurances of safety cannot be trusted.

## Malkangiri

### Physical Violence

**On 27 February** in Chitrangpali village of Kalimela Tehsil in Malkangiri district of Odisha, a Christian family was attacked by the villagers. The family had lost a young child and had tried to bury the body in their land as per Christian rites. The local villagers were unhappy about the burial and warned the family from doing so. However, the family stuck to their stand that they were Christians and the land belonged to them. The villagers went away fuming and the burial was done. Later that night, the villagers barged into the family's house and physically attacked the family members - the father, mother and grandfather. The father and grandfather sustained grievous injuries. They tried to pour kerosene on the mother, Nande Madkami, about 40 years old, and burn her. When their 12 year old daughter, Sabita tried to protect her mother, they assaulted her brutally. She sustained injury on the head and was bleeding profusely. She has been admitted in the hospital. The police showed no cooperation in the matter.

## Sundargarh

### Vandalism

**On 1 April** in Odisha, three different incidents of vandalization of Catholic churches came to light. In Salangabahal village of Raiboga tehsil in Sundargarh district, the grotto at the main entrance which houses the statue of Mother Mary, also known as "Our Lady of Good Health" was vandalized and desecrated. Secondly, in Bihabandh village of Rajgangpur tehsil in Sundargarh district, a room adjacent to the Catholic church in the village was intentionally set on fire and was completely burnt down. Thirdly, in Lanjiberna village of Rajgangpur tehsil in Sundargarh district, a statue of Mother Mary was vandalized and broken.

## Bargarh

### Physical Violence

**On the night of 5 June** in Attabira tehsil in Bargarh district of Odisha, at around 8 p.m., around 15-20 Hindutva extremists brutally beat Pastor Mukunda Sagar owing to his Christian faith and ministry in the area. While beating, they abused him and ridiculed Christ and

Christianity. At around 11 p.m. , Christians in the area approached the local police station with a complaint and request for protection. The pastor in excruciating pain, was taken to a government hospital for medical treatment. An FIR bearing number 125/2018 has been filed by Inspector Dilip Behra, the investigating officer of Attabira Police Station.

## Koraput

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On August 24**, in Koraput, Odisha, police arrested Prince Royson, the manager of the Seed Boys Hostel on reported charges of conversion. The police arrived at 9:30 pm and arrested Mr. Royson who was made to sit all night at the police station and the next day before he was presented to the Magistrate who sent him to judicial custody till August 27. The Seed Boys Hostel has been running for the last 6 years and houses 40 children.

## Sundargarh

Physical Violence / Arrested

**It was reported on 10 November 2018** that on 23 October in Sundargarh, Odisha, a mob comprising of hundreds of religious extremists attacked Pastor John Lakra and his family as they were getting their 18-month-old baby treated at an emergency in the hospital. The mob alleged that the pastor had hurt their religious feelings by forwarding a derogatory WhatsApp message from his mobile denigrating the Hindu goddess Durga. They beat up the pastor and smashed his vehicle. His clothes were torn off and he was videotaped by the attackers who then proceeded to take him to a Durga pandal and forced him to kneel down and worship the goddess. They poured petrol on him with the intention of setting him on fire, but a blackout of power saved the pastor. Soon the police arrived and rescued the pastor. He was arrested and charged under sections 295 A, 153 A and 506 of the IPC and spent 10 days in prison before being bailed out. It was found by an investigating officer that a hacker had forwarded the message from the pastors' number which made it look like the pastor had forwarded the message. This is not the first time the pastor has faced opposition and persecution. He continues to face opposition as his house has been attacked many times since his release as well.

# Punjab

## Gurdaspur

Church Burnt

**On 7 November**, in Harchowal, Gurdaspur district, Punjab, a Church was burnt by unidentified miscreants. According to local reports it was suspected that this was the work of religious fanatics who did it and made it look like a Diwali mishap. The Church – Bethesda Prarthna Bhavan is led by Pastor Satpal and is a part of the Indian Pentecostal Church. As a result of the burning the Church sustained much damage especially to the interiors.



# Puducherry

## Puducherry

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 30 September**, in Puducherry, a Church service was disrupted. Sunil Kumar, a man associated with Hindu Munnani trespassed forcefully into the home of Pastor Vincent Paul and attacked the people present. Pastor Paul conducts worship services in his house with friends and family. The pastor approached the Orleanpet Police Station but the Senior Inspector did not entertain his complaint. A few hours later Sunil Kumar called the pastor and asked to settle the matter amicably.



# Rajasthan

## Bikaner

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 22 May** in Bikaner district of Rajasthan, three Christian evangelists - Bijender Singh, Kashiram and Sahiram - were taken into police custody. They had been invited by a man to his house who wanted them to pray for a lady who was mentally challenged. When they began to pray, the man called a few Hindutva extremists and falsely accused the trio of offering him Rs. 50,000 to accept the Christian faith. Soon, police were called from the nearby Khajuwala

Police Station to arrest the three Christians. They were initially booked under section 151 of IPC, but later charged with section 295A of IPC. They were granted bail on 29 May.

## Sri ganganagar

Physical Violence

**On 4 September** in Suratgarh, Sri Ganganagar district, Rajasthan, a mob assaulted and beat up Pastor Mathai Varghese, 57, the presbyter of Ebenezer Indian Pentecostal Church, along with Kashmir Singh, a fellow Christian. Both the Pastor and Mr. Singh sustained several injuries after the mob hit them both using their hands, fists, legs and wooden sticks with Pastor Varghese also suffering a broken nose. Following the attack Pastor Mathai was also abducted by a group of 16 extremists who were later apprehended by the police. The police registered a case under CRPC 151 against both the attackers and the pastor. According to reports the pastor was not given timely medical treatment.

## Jalore

Physical Violence

**On 5 September** in village Odhwada, Nosara, Jalore district, Rajasthan, an unruly mob forcibly detained and attacked a Christian team that was conducting an anti-Drug awareness program in the village. The team consisted of 9 people including two women and was led by Sunny K John. The mob first forcibly detained the team and took them to the local temple and beat them up alleging conversions. At least four Christians sustained injuries as a result of the attack with one Christian suffering a ruptured ear drum. The police intervened and arrested 10 attackers.

---



# Telangana

## Medak

Vandalism

**On 3 February** in Muddaipet in Pulkal mandal of Sangareddy revenue division in Medak district of Andhra Pradesh, few Christians were hindered from propagating the gospel. A group of Hindu fanatics stopped the Christian men

and women on the road and snatched all Christian literature that was with them. They gathered the books and tracts on the road and set it on fire. They misbehaved with the women and forced all of them to shout ""Bharat Mata ki Jai"" and other Hindu religious slogans.

## Medak

Vandalism

**On 3 February** in Doultabad town in Medak district of Telangana, the Faith Gospel Ministry church was attacked and ransacked by a group of religious fundamentalists. A group called the pastor outside the church and threatened him, while another group entered the church building and vandalized everything inside - musical instruments, sound system, furniture, church bulletin board, pulpit, communion element and utensils, etc. The church members are in a state of shock and fear. No arrests were made.

## Karimnagar

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 24 February** in Tadwai Mandla of Karimnagar district of Telangana, Pastor Steven Pal Ramesh's church construction work was stopped by local villagers. The pastor had purchased a land in his own name and had taken permission from the collector for the construction. However, when he started the construction work, local villagers intervened and demanded him to stop the work. They then started beating him with a wooden stick. Later, the pastor approached the local police station and filed a complaint. The police assured him help.

## Karimnagar

Physical Violence

**On 26 February** in Ramchandrapur village of Karimnagar district in Telangana, a Christian family was physically assaulted by few anti-social elements. Kholapuri Prabhakar has been ministering in the village for the past 5 years and holds worship services in a temporary shed, constructed for the Christians to gather. 100 to 150 Christians gather regularly. On the afternoon of 26 February, six young men, who were heavily drunk, approached the church and acted as if they wanted to drink water from the borewell which is nearby. Prabhakar, his father, mother, sister and brother were praying inside the church shed when this happened. Soon, the



drunk men started hurling insults at the family. They then barged inside the shed and started beating the family members. Immanuel, Prabhakar's brother, sustained injuries and a fractured leg. An FIR was lodged by the family at the Ramadugu police station. Some of the men have been taken into custody.

## Hyderabad

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 19 March** in Krishna Nagar Colony of Begumpet in Secunderabad of Hyderabad district in Telangana, Mr. Samuel Victor, a Christian, was taken to the police station for praying for a Christian believer in the Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences Hospital. Mr. Victor had come to know about a Christian who had been admitted at the hospital and decided to pray for him. While he was praying, the security guards of the hospital confronted him and lodged a complaint against him at the nearby police station.

## Hyderabad

Threat / Harrassment

**On 1 April** in Dayarguda area of Kukatpally suburb of Hyderabad city in Telangana, four Christians were charged with 'hurting religious sentiments' after they handed out Christian tracts during an Easter procession. Rayapuri Jyothi, 38, Meena Kumari, 52, Mahima Kumari, 35 and Bagadam Sudhakar, 45, were taken into custody by the police following a complaint by the local Hindutva radicals in the area. The Christians were later released on bail. The Assistant Commissioner of Police later confirmed that the Christians belonging to the New Blessings Church had been given permission to hand out tracts as part of the Easter procession. However, when they were about to return to the church premises, members of the Hindu Jana Shakti attacked the Christian youth, misbehaved with the women, and even tried to apply vermilion on the pastor's wife. When they tried to complain at the police station, the radicals rushed ahead of them to lodge a complaint. Christians feel that the police lodged the FIR against them without any evidence and only because of pressure from the radicals.

## Hyderabad

Threat / Harrassment

**On 3 June** near CMR Shopping Mall in General

Bazar area of Secunderabad in Hyderabad district of Telangana, Pastor Mahesh Pal was warned from conducting Sunday services at a house which he had rented. The pastor had recently moved to a new building and had renovated the space. On the day of the incident, when the worship service started, Venkatesh Gupta, allegedly a Bajrang Dal leader, barged into the meeting. He demanded that the place be vacated. Later, Gupta went to the landlord and threatened her. Fearful and worried, the pastor discontinued the services and has started looking for another place on rent.

## Kotagiri

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 19 June** in Lingapur village in Kotagiri mandal of Nizamabad district, Hindutva radicals, allegedly from RSS and Bajrang Dal, disrupted a church service of the Independent Baptist Church. Pastor Deva Praveen has been pastoring the church in the village freely for the past many years where villagers from Lingapur, and the nearby Basapur village, gather regularly. On the day of the incident, the radicals barged into the place and questioned whether they had the necessary permission to assemble and worship. Fearful and caught unawares, the Christians were not able to respond and were forced to stop the service.

## Hyderabad

Vandalism

**On 7 July** in Neredmet neighborhood of Hyderabad city in Telangana, Pastor Anand Rao was attacked and arrested. The pastor shepherds the Rock Church in Hyderabad. On the day of the incident, Hindu fanatics attacked the church, damaged cars, broke the back door of the church building, and disrupted the ongoing prayer service. The pastor was taken to the local police station and had to stay there the whole night. Seemingly, upon the intervention of the Minorities Commission and a state BJP leader he was released the next day; however, an FIR was filed against him later.

## Yadadri Bhuvanagiri

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 8 July**, at around 11 am, in Bommalaramaram village in Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district of Telangana, the Bethel Church, which is pastored by Pastor J. Devadanam, was attacked by religious

fundamentalists. The mob disrupted the Sunday service and threatened the assembled Christians to stop all services completely. The pastor and his family have been gathering as a church for the past 25 years without any hindrance.

## Hyderabad

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 8 July** in Chandnagar in Hyderabad city of Telangana, two Hindutva radicals allegedly belonging to the BJP, barged into the Sunday prayer service and questioned whether Pastor Jairaju had the required permission to conduct the meetings. The pastor shepherds the Christ Olive Prayer House for the past eight years. The radicals threatened that if the pastor did not get the permission to conduct services, they would return with more people next time.

## Kamareddy

Demolition of Church

**On 14 July**, at around 5 pm, in Sangameshar village of Domakonda mandal in Kamareddy district of Telangana, few religious fundamentalists completely demolished the Good Fruit Ministries Prayer Hall. Pastor Srinivas Sapa is looking after the church. Due to caste and property related issues the fundamentalists chose to raze the building down. A case has been registered against the attackers under section 448, 295 and 506 of IPC.

## Hyderabad

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 24 July**, in Shamirpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, Hindutva radicals attacked Pastor Santhosh of the Ubego Pentecostal Church while he praying inside a Christians' residence. The attackers called the police alleging conversions and the pastor was taken into custody. The attackers later submitted a written complaint against the pastor.

## Hyderabad

Demolition of Church

**On 28 July** in Sivarampalli, Rajendra Nagar Mandal, Hyderabad, Telangana, The Pentecostal Mission church building was razed by 25 - 30 extremists that came along with a JCB and demolished the Church. The Christians filed a complaint the next day.

## Chennai

Demolition of Church

**On 2 August** in Anna Nagar area of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, a 50-year-old Church building belonging to the Church of South India denomination was partially demolished by the officials of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board. The exercise created tensions in the area as Church members protested the demolition and claimed that the matter was sub judice in the court. Christian youth members who attempted to prevent the demolition were detained by the police. However, authorities claim that everything happened after due procedure. Christian leaders felt that the people involved in demolition were not sensitive to the spiritual feelings of the people and did not give adequate time to remove furniture and holy books from the demolished structure before beginning the work.

## Krishna river

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 12 August** in Telangana Rev. Kodali Satyanarayana had organized a baptism program at the Krishna river. He, his wife, seven other Christians, and a new believer had gathered for the service. Before the service could commence, a few radicals from a nearby temple attacked them, and a false case was registered against the Christians. All of them were sent to jail.

## Mahabubabad

Threat / Harrassment

**On August 24, 2018** in Kesamudram village in Mahabubabad District, Telangana, according to reports, a Christian team that was distributing tracts was ambushed by fundamentalists who questioned them, raised slogans and sprayed the Christians with Kumkum.

## Kamareddy

Physical Violence

**On 10 September** in Tadwai village, Kamareddy District, Telangana, Hindutva extremists attacked and beat up Pastor Yacob also known as Balaiah Mergu. Pastor Yacob pastors the Kings Temple Churches at the Tadwai and Karadpally villages. According to reports received the pastor was supervising his Church building construction at the Tadwai

village when he was attacked by Hindutva zealots who forced him to demolish a part of the wall of the Church and threatened him against constructing the building further. The pastor accompanied by other Christian leader later filed a complaint against the attackers.

## Shamirpet

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 7 October** in Sampanbole village, Shamirpet tehsil, Medchal-Malkajgiri district, Telangana, it was reported that the Abundant Life Worship Center was attacked by religious extremists who disrupted worship service, raised slogans and vandalized the place. No one was hurt.

## Mahbubnagar

Physical Violence

**On October 24**, in Parupalli village, Mahabubnagar District, Telangana, a mob of religious extremists disrupted a prayer meeting and attacked the pastor Hanumanth Rao. The prayer meeting was being conducted at the home of a Christian, Mrs. Devamma. The attackers surrounded the house when the meeting was going on and demanded the pastor be handed over to them so that he could be killed. When the Christians refused the mob beat them up which resulted in one Christian woman suffering a cut on her hand. Pastor Rao was locked by Church members to keep him safe. The police finally intervened and dispersed the mob. Mrs. Devamma filed a FIR (79/2018) against 16 attackers who were leading the mob. She was later pressurized by the village leaders to withdraw the case.

## Kamareddy

Physical Violence

**On 9 November**, in Gandhari Mandal, Kamareddy district, Telangana, Hindutva extremists attacked and beat up Pastor U. Kristudasu and his son S. Hanok. The attackers while beating the pastor and his son kept shouting 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' (Victory to mother India) and other slogans. The police intervened and protected the Christians took them into custody. They were detained by the Gandhari police at the Sadasivanager police station for their safety. Pastor Kristudas leads the Baptist Church at Gandhari and has been serving for nearly 30 years at the same place. He and his son were hospitalized for three days

for medical care after the attack. A FIR was later filed by the Pastor's brother in law.

## Karimnagar

Threat / Harrassment

**On 9 December**, in Karimnagar district, Telangana, religious fanatics attacked Christians, damaged their vehicles and indulged in anti-Christian sloganeering causing chaos. Pastor Baburao came on his pastoral visit to the house of his Church member Mrs. Kamalamma. After visiting the family and praying for them, as he was leaving, the Christians found that the front door was locked from outside. When going out of the rear entrance of the house they were surrounded by an unruly crowd of religious fanatics who were led by a temple pujari and an advocate. They alleged conversions as the motive of the pastor and warned him against coming to their area. The attackers objected to prayers inside the house of Mrs. Kamalamma saying that it was not a Church but a house. They also damaged the car of the pastor. The pastor has filed a FIR.

## Ranga Reddy

Physical Violence

**On 11 December**, in Kismatpur, Ranga Reddy district, Telangana, a group of 15 suspected Hindu extremists beat up a group of Christians who were distributing Christian literature. Pastor John from Hebron Church was leading the distribution when suddenly the attackers surrounded the vehicle of the Christians, verbally abused them and started to beat them. The attackers also pulled out Christian literature and bibles from the vehicle and burnt them. Christians did not file a FIR because of fear.

## Ranga Reddy

Physical Violence

**On 14 December**, in Kismatpur, Ranga Reddy district, Telangana, religious fanatics beat up members of a local Church while they were putting out posters informing about a special event on Christmas the following day. Four Christians were injured as a result of the attack and had to be hospitalized. The Church shifted the event to a different place as they feared another attack. No FIR was filed."



# Tamil Nadu

## Coimbatore

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 20 January** in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor T. Simon Rajan of Apostolic Church was called to the local police station. He was informed that a complaint had been filed against him for creating noise pollution in the locality through the Christian prayer meetings. He was told to stop the prayer services immediately and resume only after receiving permission from the District Collector. Earlier, those in the neighborhood near the church had also pelted stones on the church building. The pastor feels threatened and scared due to the pressure from the police and opposition from the neighbors.

## Kanchipuram

### Murder

**On 20 January** in Adayalacheri village of Kanchipuram district, Pastor Gideon Periyaswamy of Maknayeem Church was found hanging from a rope in his one-room house beside the church building. The 43 year-old pastor's body was stiffly bent at the knees as if others had placed him in the noose after his death. He had been serving as a pastor for more than 12 years in Adayalacheri. The local Hindus were not happy with him and had often threatened him. Six months prior to his death, he had seen weekly opposition to the Sunday services which included stone pelting and regular warnings. In 2016, Hindu extremists had demolished the shed where the pastor and his church members met. The Kalapakkam police initially denied filing a complaint for murder and transferred the body to the Chengalpattu Government Hospital. However, only after church members and pastor from neighbouring villages blocked a road in protest, an FIR was lodged. The relatives and church members of the pastor claim that there was no ground for the pastor to commit suicide and it was a clear case of murder allegedly committed by the local Hindu extremists.

## Tirunelveli

### Vandalism

**On 21 January**, in Kalingapatti, Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu, Hindutva radicals attacked the El Shaddai Church House of CSI Tirunelveli diocese and indulged in vandalism

while the Church service was going on. The attackers broke chairs, caused damage to the building and threatened the Church members present. They also warned the pastor and church members not to gather for worship again. Prior to this on the 15 January 2018, they had also objected to the Church service.

## Coimbatore

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 21 January**, in Saravanampatti, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, Pastor Joel Babu from the City Harvest AG Church was asked by the local police station in Saravanampatti whether he had permission to conduct church services, and if not could not continue Church services till he gets permission from the Collector's office. The Church has been meeting for the past two years without any issues from anyone. The police told him that the local RSS/Hindu Munnani activists have complained against about six churches in the area including the City Harvest Church. When the pastor asked for a written notice from the police, the police denied issuing any such notice.

## Chennai

### Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 1 February** in Ekkatuthangal in Chennai city of Tamil Nadu, police and Hindutva extremists disrupted a program being held at the St. Antony's church. The Hindutva groups were joined with a high-ranking police official as they stopped the church program and hindered the Faithful who were trying to enter the Roman Catholic church.

## Kanyakumari

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 2 February** at Alancholai of Vilavancode in Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor Sukin faced opposition from the Revenue Divisional Officer of the government of Tamil Nadu. His church has around 100 members and most of them had gathered for a meeting. He had earlier been warned that he cannot gather more than 15 people at a time. On the day of the incident, he faced a severe warning again from the RDO and a case has been registered against the pastor and other church members.

## Thiruvallur

### Physical Violence

**On 2 February** at Thirukandalam village in



Thiruvallur district of Tamil Nadu, the Christ Church was allegedly attacked by RSS and Hindutva extremists.

## Sivaganga

Threat / Harrassment

**On 3 February** in Narikottai in Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu, a Roman Catholic Church was threatened by Hindutva extremists. They warned the priest that if the services were not stopped, they would demolish the church building.

## Theni

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 3 February** in Theni district of Tamil Nadu, Hindutva extremists disrupted a church service program of the Peace Prayer Hall.

## Kanchipuram

Physical Violence

**On 3 February** in Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu, Hindutva extremists demolished a tuition centre run by a Christian teacher and beat him severely.

## Chennai

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 4 February** in Ekkaduthangal in Chennai city of Tamil Nadu, a program of Church of God led by Pastor John, was disrupted by Hindutva radicals.

## Theni

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 4 February** in Theni district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor Immanuel Nesaraj was called at the Theni police station and demanded that he cease from conducting any worship services. The pastor has been pastoring the Peace Prayer House in a rented building in a commercial area of the town. The police told him that they had received formal complaints regarding the pastor's religious activities. No proper reason for such a prohibition was handed to the pastor. The church members are confused and fearful.

## Coimbatore

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 7 February**, in Suleeswaranpatti, Pollachi, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, a mob

attacked the Eternal Prayer House led by Pastor Stephen. The attackers disrupted the worship service, damaged the building especially the roof and threatened the Christians present saying that they will kill them all if they continued to worship. Pastor went to file FIR but the same was not registered and only CSR was taken. They then approached the SP in Coimbatore to no success.

## Dharampuri

Threat / Harrassment

**On 11 February** in Dharmapur taluk in Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor William D was threatened and warned by a local Hindu radical leader. The person threatened him for nearly an hour and warned him to stop all kinds of Christian services and if the pastor did not oblige he would have to face the consequences. The pastor lodged a complaint at the Town police station, but no action has been taken. The pastor has been pastoring the church in the area for the past 10 years.

## Erode

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 16 February** in Sathyamangalam town in Erode district of Tamil Nadu, a police complaint was filed by a Hindu radical against Pastor Charles Periyasami. The pastor conducts prayer meetings at his house where about 20 people gather regularly. On the next day, a person claiming to be from the CID confronted the pastor and questioned him whether he had the requisite permission to gather as a church. The pastor clarified that it was his house where the Christians gather and pray together. A few days later, another person claiming to be from CID, visited the pastor's house and warned them to stop all prayer meetings.

## Madurai

Threat / Harrassment

**On 27 February** in Tirupparankundram of Madurai district in Tamil Nadu, Pastor Anand Durairaj of the Church of Salem was threatened by police officials. The church has been conducting regular services in the church building for the past two decades. A team comprising of police officers and Tehsildar came to the church and told the pastor that the church property belongs to the nearby temple. He was given a deadline of 15 days to comply with the notice. The property documents are in

the name of a church member who had donated it for the church building, and hence the pastor did not find any grounds for the verbal threat. The Christians feel that the administration is siding with the Hindutva groups and persecuting them.

## Kanchipuram

### Physical Violence

**On 4 March** in Urapakkam town in Kancheepuram district of Tamil Nadu, sisters of The Pentecostal Mission (TPM) were persecuted by radicals belonging to the Hindu Makkam Katchi, a right-wing Hindu group. Sisters Parimalam, Saral, Kalyan and Shanthi were distributing flyers announcing an upcoming TPM Annual Convention scheduled from 8 to 12 March at Irumbuliyur, Near Tambaram, Chennai. The incident happened while they decided to sit on the pavement for resting, during the distribution. A shopkeeper noticed the flyer and accused them of distributing Christian literature and converting people. He alerted the Hindu radicals who came in huge numbers at the spot, confiscated the flyers and Bibles and set it on fire. They physically assaulted the sisters and threatened them. An FIR was registered against the shopkeeper but was later withdrawn on the insistence of the sisters, who decided to forgive the persecutors.

## Thanjavur

### Church Burnt

**On 12 March** in Sengipatti village in Budalur taluk of Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor Krishnaraj was rushed to a nearby hospital with burn injuries in a case of hate crime. The pastor has been leading a flock of 30 Christians in the village and had built a small church building around six years ago. The building is made of concrete walls and corrugated steel roof. Due to the hot weather, coconut leaves were spread on top of the roof to ensure a colder interior. As was his custom, the pastor was praying in the building on the day of the incident. Around 12.30 pm, he heard the shouts of "Fire, Fire" from outside. When he rushed out, burning coconut leaves fell on top of him from the roof. With severe burn injuries, he was rushed to the hospital. The church was almost destroyed in the fire. A complaint has been lodged at the local police station who feel that it is a case of religious hate crime.

## Nilgiris

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 18 March** in Sholurmattam village under Kotagiri block in The Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu, a Sunday worship service of the Evangelical Churches in India was disrupted by police officials. Pastor Kanagarathnam has been conducting services in a rented house in the village for the past 10 years. While the worship service was taking place, at around 12pm, two police officials barged into the house and ordered him to stop the meeting immediately and appear at the local police station on the same evening. Christians allege that three Hindu Munnani radicals are behind the complaints made at the police station.

## Dharmapuri

### Vandalism

**On 31 March** in Dharmapuri city in Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu, a mob vandalized the Dharmapuri Assembly of God church. Pastor Sunder Singh was conducting a fasting prayer service, when around 1.30pm, they heard shouting and great commotion outside the church followed by a loud sound of shattered glass. When the pastor rushed out to check, he was shocked to see a lady from the neighborhood joined by few other men vandalizing the motor bikes parked outside the church. They started pelting stones at the church windows. One of the stones hit the pastor on his face and he began to bleed profusely. Soon the Christians came out and tried to pacify the attackers but to no avail. The fanatics attacked them too and many got injured. The injured Christians were immediately rushed to the nearby hospital.

## Coimbatore

### Physical Violence

**On April 19**, in Sivanandha Colony near Gandhi Nagar Junction, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, as per media reports, a former BJP worker, who had converted to Christianity, was attacked by three men, alleged to be RSS members. The victim, R Thangaraj, was walking towards his home when K Radhakrishnan approached him. Two of his relatives Arumugham and Paramasivam also reached the spot. They picked up a quarrel with Thangaraj, alleging that he is converting Hindus to Christianity. During the heated argument, Radhakrishnan took out a sickle and attacked Thangaraj. The others tried to stop him and calmed him down. Thangaraj

sustained injuries on his head and shoulders. He was rushed to the Coimbatore Medical College and Hospital, a police officer said. Thangaraj told police that Radhakrishnan had been threatening to murder him for several years. Everytime, he saw him, he would tell him that he was converting others to Christianity and threatened him,

## Kanyakumari

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 22 April** in Thalavaipuram, Ganapatipuram, Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, Rev. Stanislaus of Berachah Assembly of God Church was summoned to the nearby police station, based on a complaint made by his neighbor. Rev. Stanislaus has been conducting services every week for the past 25 years and around 100 Christians gather regularly. The complainant alleged that the priest was using loudspeakers, conducting the services without permission and converting people into Christianity. Based on the complaint the police summoned him on 22 April, 23 April and 28 April. The pastor feels that he is being unnecessarily harassed by the police.

## Tirunelveli

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 5 May** in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, three Hindutva radicals, accompanied with local police, barged into Pastor Jeba Singh's church during a VBS program and disrupted the program, alleging that religious conversions were underway. The pastor clarified that the children had come with their parents' permission. A complaint has been lodged against the pastor. Please pray that the church will be able to freely conduct its programs.

## Chennai

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 6 May** in Chennai city of Tamil Nadu, police personnel barged into an ongoing prayer meeting of Seventh Day Adventist Church and disrupted the service, ordering Pastor Kiran Raju not to use the PA system for sermons. The police told them that they had received complaints over the phone from neighbours. The pastor clarified that the volume level was kept low as per instructions and sound hardly travelled outside the prayer hall. Last year, the church had faced opposition over their building renovation work too. The Christians feel that

some anti-Christian elements in the neighbourhood are behind the frequent oppositions.

## Dindigul

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 10 May** in Dindigul of Tamil Nadu, two Christian women were arrested by the police. They had gone to distribute Bible tracts along with a church group but were arrested on the way. The women were distributing tracts near a government hospital, when some Hindutva extremists seeing the evangelical activity, took them to the nearby Dindigul North Town Police Station. The women were let go after warning but were asked to come the next day again.

## Coimbatore

Physical Violence

**On 13 May** in Anna Nagar, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, Pastor Paul Joshua and his mother, Jacintha Florence, were physically and verbally harassed by the police. The incident occurred after the pastor had to hurriedly finish the Sunday worship service and report at the E2 Police Station. The pastor went there along with his mother and two church members. The police inspector there, dealt high handedly with them, verbally abused them and physically assaulted his mother. Shocked at the rough treatment, the pastor fearfully gave a written undertaking stating that the Christians won't assemble again until they got a written permission from concerned authorities.

## Karur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 20 June** in Bharathiyar Nagar in Thozilpettai on Trichy road in Karur district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor Jeyaseelan Natarajan, aged 49 years, and his son Samuel were brutally beaten up by Hindu radicals. Construction of a new church building had started in Bharathiyar Nagar when a man named Kumar, who worked in a neighboring wine shop, started picking up quarrels with the pastor. On the day of the incident, around 15 Hindutva radicals along with Kumar, attacked the pastor and his son and caused grievous injuries on them. Samuel was somehow able to escape, but the pastor was brought to the nearby Pasupathipalayam police station, and a false complaint was lodged against him and his son. Since there was no cooperation from the police, the pastor approached the National Human Rights

Commission with his grievance. Thus compelled, the Pasupathipalayam Police finally registered an FIR in Crime Number 334/218 under section 294B, 323 and 324 of IPC.

## Erode

### Physical Violence

**On 8 July** in Sathyamangalam taluk of Erode district in Tamil Nadu, Pastor Paul Stephen's and his wife, Pratibha, were attacked at their home. While the pastor was away at another church to preach, allegedly five Hindu Munnani members who seemingly were drunk, entered the house at around 10.30 am, manhandled the few assembled Christians and sexually abused the pastor's wife. Later, when the pastor returned at about 2 pm, the five goons barged into the house with 20 other men and attacked the pastor and other family members. When they tried to approach the nearby police station to file an FIR they were violently stopped by the radicals which severely injured the pastor. Finally the police were able to take the couple under their protection and brought them to a government hospital.

## Tiruppur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 July** in Nerupurachal in Tirupur district of Tamil Nadu, Pastor Manova's request to conduct prayer meetings at his house, was denied by the Kunnothur police station. He was asked to approach the DC's office. For the past two years the pastor and Christians at Bethel Blessings Prayer House have not been able to gather and worship. Allegedly the Hindu Munnani radicals had forced him to discontinue all services last year. Again on 6 July 2018, a neighbor made a false complaint that the pastor had resumed conducting services at his house. In response a Sub Inspector from the police station warned that except for family, no other friends and relatives could participate in any prayer meeting.

## Tiruppur

### Vandalism

**On 25 August** in Tirupur in Tamil Nadu a local prayer house in Tirupur which was ransacked, and most of the church items and instruments destroyed. This happened two days after the prayer house celebrated their two-year anniversary. The Christians were unaware

about the identity of the miscreants and complained at the local police station.

## Virudhunagar

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 16 September** in Housing Board Colony, Sivakasi City, Virudhunagar District, Tamil Nadu, a group of policemen disrupted worship service at an independent Church and pressured the pastor to come with them to the police station. The small Church pastored by Pastor Jenson Prabhakar meets at his mother's home. The pastor declined to go with the police and met the Superintendent of Police (SP) the next day and informed him of the incident. The SP assured the pastor of a fair investigation.

## Chennai

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 2 October** in Vadapalani, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, according to reports received, Pastor Alwin Thomas was summoned by the police to report to the Vadapalani Police station as a CSR (Community Service Register) complaint had been filed against him by Hindu groups accusing him of making derogatory remarks against Hinduism. The pastor has denied any such accusations and has alleged that Hindu groups are targeting him unnecessarily.

## Dindigul

### Vandalism

**On 4 October** in Nilakottai taluk, Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu, according to reports received, Shalom Evangelical Fellowship Church was broken into, vandalized and robbed by unknown miscreants. The Church amplifier, speakers, mic stand, offering box etc. were stolen and the front portion of the Church was broken. According to information, a Church in nearby Evadipetti village also faced a similar problem a few days ago.

## Chennai

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 7 October**, in Angamuthu Salai, Periyar Nagar, Alwar Thirunagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, police disrupted the Church worship service being led by Pastor John Immanuel. The police cited a complaint that was lodged against the Church and stopped the service. They asked the pastor to come to the police station on 9



October 2018. According to reports, local RSS members have placed a pole with RSS FLAG in Church's land and they are not willing to remove it. One Mrs. Uma Mageshwari registered the complaint against the Church.

## Coimbatore

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 9 October** in Saravanampatti, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu, it was reported that Pastor Kalai Selvan Rajadurai was visited by the Station House Officer of the Saravanampatti Police Station and was told to close down the prayer meetings that are held at his prayer hall. The SHO told him to obtain permission from District Collector for the prayers. According to reports, the prayer hall is soundproof and is a private property.

## Yadadri

Bhuvanagiri Vandalism

**On 18 October** in Choutuppal, Yadadri Bhuvanagiri district, Telangana, a Church building was targeted with an intention to cause destruction by unknown people. The attackers broke the asbestos sheets as well as destroyed the cross. This is the third such attack on the same Church. A complaint was filed with the police, but no FIR was registered till the writing of this report.

## Tiruppur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 November** in Somalingam village, Madathukulam taluk, Tiruppur district, Tamil Nadu, a person affiliated with the Hindu right-wing ideology came and forcefully stopped the worship service being led by Pastor Selvam at the New Faith Pentecostal Mission church. The Church has been present in the area for the last 25 years. The right-wing person then called to police who arrived at the spot and asked the pastor to come to the police station. The pastor complied but there was no response from the police. The pastor went to the Somalingam police station again in the evening but there was still no response from the police.

## Virudhunagar

Threat / Harrassment

**On 11 November**, in Amathur village, Virudhunagar district, Tamil Nadu, a mob of

300 Hindu right-wing members terrorized a group of Christian children while the children were attending their Sunday School at the Church led by pastor Selva Raj. The mob belonging to the Hindu Munnani, demolished a shed in front of building being used for worship and scared and threatened children. The attackers tore Bible story books and songs and activity books as well. They told the children that if they ever came for Sunday school, they would be beaten up. They took the pastor to the police station and demanded that he be expelled from the village. When the police refused to do so, the attackers pressurized the landlord of the pastor to not renew his lease with the pastor.

## Erode

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 2 December**, in Thalavadi, Erode district, Tamil Nadu, the village officer stopped worship at the AG Church which meets in a rented house. Pastor Dennis was warned that he should not conduct worship henceforth and was asked to see the officer at 2 pm later that day. Christian leaders from the area followed it up and the problem was eventually resolved. The Church has been meeting at the same place without incident for 5 years.

## Karur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 10 December**, in Velayuthampalayam, Karur district, Tamil Nadu, a three-day carol singing program was disrupted on the very first day by Hindu right-wing radicals. ECI ministry had organized a carol singing program and were going to visit Christian families living in Velayuthampalayam from 10th to 12 December 2018. But Hindu right-wing members opposed the program and warned Christians not to conduct carol singing or the prayer meetings otherwise there would be dire consequences. When Christians approached the police at the Velayuthampalayam Police Station, the police refused to give them protection and told them that carol singing can create law and order problem so they must refrain from it.



# Uttarakhand

## Dehradun

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 15 April** in Milan Chowk of Selaqui village in Dehradun district of Uttarakhand, Hindutva extremists barged into a Christian home where the Sunday worship service was taking place and disrupted the program. They accused Pastor Manial Masih and the gathered Christians, of forced religious conversion and called the police from the nearby Sahaspur police station to stop the meeting. However, the police denied taking any action, instead asked the Christians to obtain permission from the District Collector. About 150 Christians gather in the church member's home every Sunday for the prayer meetings.

## Dehradun

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 15 April** in Nehru Colony of Dehradun city in Uttarakhand, Monu Shah, a Christian, was booked under Section 295A of IPC at the local police station. Hindu extremists were able to file a false complaint against him alleging religious conversion through allurement. Shah has been active in propagating the Christian faith in his locality and therefore was targeted. Though he was released on bail, his family has apprehensions of an imminent attack from the extremists.

## Dehradun

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 18 April** in Uttarkhand, Governor of Uttarakhand, Mr. Krishna Kant Pant signed the "Freedom of Religion" bill (Dharma Swatantrata Adhiniyam) which the State Legislative Assembly had passed earlier. Uttarakhand became the seventh state after Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand that have adopted the anti-conversion law. The law has routinely been used to falsely accuse Christians of conversions done through force, fraudulent means or allurement.

## Dehradun

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 22 April** in Milan Chowk of Selaqui village in

Dehradun district, Pastor Manial Masih and his church members were forced to conduct the Sunday service on the roadside. On the previous night, the SDM, based on a complaint from religious fanatics, had ordered that the Christians be hindered from their regular gathering at Mr. Bharat Shah's house. He was warned that if the church members gathered at his place, it will have serious consequences. Left with no option, the 80 odd Christians who came on the Sunday morning, decided to hold the service on the roadside as the police and public watched.

## Haridwar

### Vandalism

**On 21 September** in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, various Hindu outfits expressed objections and issued threats against a Christian Prayer Festival that was to be held from 21 ? 23 September at the Bhalla Inter College in the city. Due to the opposition from the radicals and advise from the police, the festival was shifted to the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Even at the Church the extremists created problems. At about 12 pm they attacked the Church and indulged in vandalism and stone throwing. They shouted anti-Christian slogans and tore the banners that were put on the gate of the Church and caused damage to Church property. A complaint was given to the police.

## Haridwar

### Arrested

**On 23 September** in Dhanori village, Haridwar district, Uttarakhand, according to media reports, the Bajrang Dal trespassed into a private home and created a lot of trouble and ruckus alleging that conversions are taking place in the home. A large mob of Bajrang Dal members led by Dharamveer Saini entered Vijaypal's house in Dhanori village alleging conversions. They created trouble for the people present inside the house and were only pacified when the police reached the spot and arrested Vijaypal. The police also recovered as evidence from his house Bibles and other religious books.

## Haridwar

### Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 23 December**, in Barampur village, Narsan Block, Haridwar District, Uttarakhand,

unidentified religious fanatics attacked Pastor Michael Vinoj and 10 Christians during a Christmas outreach program. While the attackers fled the scene, the Christians were detained at Roshnabad Police Station until late evening before being released. Pastor Vinoj was arrested under Section 151 before being released on bail.

## Haridwar

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 25 December**, in Haridwar district, Uttarakhand, a mob of about 30 men from the Bajrang Dal, stopped four buses carrying 200 children on their way to a Christmas program. The children, all Hindus from slums of Haridwar, were on their way to the nearby city of Dehradun. The Bajrang Dal complained that the children were being taken to churches in Dehradun to be forcefully converted to Christianity and subjected to sexual abuse by pastors. The teacher and social worker accompanying the children, Sandeep Kashyap, also a Hindu, was arrested, after police came under intense pressure from extremists. The police later clarified that no conversion was taking place and that the Bajrang Dal accusations were baseless.



# Uttar Pradesh

## Shahjahanpur

Arrested

**On 10 January**, in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, three Nepalese Christian citizens were arrested and sent to jail for allegedly spreading Christianity among the local residents. The officials said that the trio was booked under IPC Section 295A (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) on Wednesday and was sent to the district jail after being produced in a court on 11 Jan 2017. The accused have been identified as Indra Bahadur Tamad, Shukra Rai and Mekh Bahadur.

## Bulandshahr

Arrested

**On 15 January**, in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh,

Hindu radicals barged into an ongoing prayer meeting and accused the pastor present of being involved in conversion activity. Pastor Ajit Singh from Delhi was verbally abused by the attackers who also called the police. The police took the pastor into custody and did not treat him well in the lock up. The pastor was subsequently released."

Ghaziabad Church / Worship Stopped "On 18 January in Simrauli village of Hapur block in Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh, around eight to ten Christian families were stopped from holding prayer meetings at their homes. The SHO of Babugarh police station visited the Christian families of the village and warned them not to conduct any prayer meetings nor visit a church in Rajnagar which is under the Jesus Calls ministry and located in Ghaziabad. The Christians are now living in constant fear and are worried that they may be booked under a false charge of conversion and arrested. For the past two weeks they have not been attending the Sunday prayer meetings at the church in Rajnagar.

## Firozabad

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 21 January**, in Firozabad District, Uttar Pradesh, police took three Christians into custody including a pastor and his wife. Pastor Selvin Durai, who is serving with IMA was arrested while conducting Sunday worship service and was taken to the Linepar police station. The police arrested the pastor, his wife and an associate on the complaint of the Bajrang Dal who then also surrounded the police station to exert pressure on the police to act against the pastor. However, the Christians were let go after a few hours.

## Ambedkar Nagar

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 28 January**, in Narottampur village, Ambedkar Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of Hindu radicals attacked a house church following which the police arrested 10 Christians who were peacefully worshipping in a private home. The Christians were released the next day after local politicians intervened.

## Sonbhadra

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 2 February**, in Mahariyo village,

Robertsganj, Sonbhadra district, Uttar Pradesh, a Church was locked down by the Shahganj police after Hindu right-wing groups made an oral complaint against it. After local Christian leaders intervened, the Church was allowed to be open again.

## Jaunpur

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 4 February** in Katahari village of Kerakat tehsil in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh, few police personnel barged into the Evangelistic Assemblies church. The sub-inspector and constable started taking photographs of the church while the Sunday service was in progress. They then demanded that Pastor Prem Singh Chouhan accompany them to the police station as they had received complaints about conversions taking place in the church. When the pastor reached at the Badlapur police station, he was shocked to see an agitated mob waiting for him there. Soon, the church believers also arrived at the spot. While the verbal arguments went on, the village Pradhan (headman) testified to the character of the pastor, which prompted the police to release him with warning.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

Update on Jaunpur incident: **On 10 February** in Badlapur of Jaunpur district in Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Prem Singh Chauhan was warned by the village Pradhan (headman) to refrain from conducting any Sunday services. He was told that the Sub Divisional Magistrate had warned the Pradhan that if any public disorder takes place because of the Christian services then the administration won't be able to provide help. The Christians feel that it is a ploy of the Hindutva radicals to disrupt the regular prayer services in which hundreds of people gather regularly.

## Agra

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 8 March** in Sector 4 Bodla in Lohamandi locality of Agra city in Agra district of Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Vijendar Masih and a few Christian nuns were arrested by the police. On the occasion of International Women's Day, the pastor and the nuns were distributing food

packets to a group of poor women when a mob comprising of Bajrang Dal radicals barged in to the gathering and raised a loud hue and cry. Police personnel arrested the Christians and brought them to the local police station. Many Christian leaders in the city flocked at the police station to protest against the arrest. Finally, all were released later in the evening. No FIR was lodged.

## Bareilly

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 10 March** in Umarsia village of Kyara block in Bareilly tehsil of Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh, a church construction work of the Full Gospel Pentecostal Church was stopped by police at the behest of a complaint filed by some alleged Bajrang Dal activists. The Church had purchased the plot in the village and had started the construction of a hall after intimating and getting the requisite approvals from the local Panchayat members. Some Hindutva activists complained about the construction at the local police station and got the police officials to stop the work. The work has halted and the pastor in-charge of the church, Pastor K. David, is seeking help from the S.D.M. in order to resume the construction. Around 30 Christians attend the church services regularly.

## Firozabad

Physical Violence

**On 19 March**, in Firozabad district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu radicals trespassed into a prayer meeting that was organized in a private home and severely beat up the people present. Pastor Rakesh Kumar and his wife, Asha were severely injured as a result of the attack that took place around 1:30 pm at the house of a Christian person identified as Raju. The pastor was reportedly dragged down the stairs and beaten till he was unconscious. His wife too was slapped multiple times and was physically assaulted. They had to be hospitalized for treatment of their injured but no FIR was filed by the Christians.

## Bareilly

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 March**, in Bareilly district, Uttar Pradesh, radicals belonging to Hindutva groups, forcibly



entered the Full Gospel Pentecostal church and disrupted the Sunday worship. The attackers warned Pastor Pradeep, of dire consequences if he did not stop Christian activities. Later, the pastor was also summoned to the local Police station for questioning. Two days later the police called for a meeting between the pastor and the local units of RSS and VHP. However, the Hindu groups said that they want a complete stop to the Church.

## Lakhimpur

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 26 March** in Isanagar block in Lakhimpur district of Uttar Pradesh, Hindutva activists disrupted a Christian prayer meeting. Pastor Aroon Yesudasan was conducting the meeting and Pastor Thomas from Kerala was supposed to deliver a sermon to the gathered Christian faithful. The extremists barged into the program, threatened those that had gathered, beat Pastor Thomas and called the police alleging religious conversion. Police took the Christians into custody but later had to release them after finding the allegations of conversion as baseless.

## Fatehpur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 29 March** in Harihar Ganj area of Fatehpur district in Uttar Pradesh, a pastor and two church members, Dinesh Kumar and Prem, were violently assaulted by 20 Hindu extremists clad in saffron coloured dresses. Church members of the Evangelical Church of India had gathered for a monthly baptism and fasting prayer service. Pastor Jose Prakash who leads the congregation, had sent invitations to church members for the monthly program and around 550 people had accepted the invitation and joined in the worship and Bible-study sessions. At about 3pm, the Christians left the community hall in a Missions' Hospital building where they had gathered and were moving to the ECI Church, which was a ten-minute walk away. While the preparation for baptism was underway at the church, the extremists barged in with wooden sticks. They grabbed the pastor by collar and accused him of converting people by force. They beat him mercilessly and did not spare two other Christian men who tried to stop them. Later, the police arrived and took Dinesh

and Prem into custody. Despite the grievous injuries the pastor decided not to lodge a complaint against the 20 extremists.

## Mainpuri

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 8 April**, in Dharau village, Mainpuri district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindutva radicals attacked and disrupted the Sunday Church worship service being led by Pastor Neeraj Masih. The attackers then dragged the pastor to the police station and the police booked him under section 151 of the Indian Penal Code. The pastor was sent to jail on the same day and was later released on bail.

## Ghaziabad

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 22 April**, in Kaushambi, Ghaziabad district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of Hindutva radicals who were accompanied by the police attacked the Church led by Pastor Sanjay. The attackers disrupted the Church service and started shouting anti-Christian slogans. They threatened the pastor to stop all kind of Christian activities or be ready to face the consequences. In the last one year there were several attempts to stop the church service.

## Raibareilly

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 29 April** in Baburia Kheda, Bachhrawan block of Raebareilly district in Uttar Pradesh, a mob of religious fanatics disrupted a church service. Pastor Kamlesh Kumar of Full Gospel Pentecostal Church was conducting the service when a mob of more than 25 people barged in and started abusing and beating the church members. The Christians hid the pastor in a room, so the radicals assaulted five women and an elderly man named Ram Prasad, who got grievously injured. Later, the local police arrived at the spot and started threatening the Christians. An FIR was registered by the Christians against the attackers.

## Basti

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 3 May**, in Harayya tehsil, Basti district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of religious extremists

belonging to a high caste came and disrupted the worship service at Pastor Gyan Singh's Church. Pastor Singh was severely beaten by extremists and later handed him over to police with the attackers alleging that he was carrying out religious conversions. The police have filed a case against him under IPC 141, 107, 116. He was granted bail on 04 May 2018

## Sitapur

Physical Violence

**On 9 May** in Laharpur of Sitapur district in Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Maulana Ayub's family had gathered for Christian prayers and for reading the Bible. Due to power outage, the family went into the courtyard for the reading. A few religious fundamentalists saw them praying and soon a mob of 30-40 people stormed into his house and attacked the family. The pastor was brutally beaten up and was hospitalized with critical injuries. The radicals burned his beard, used abusive language and physically assaulted his wife and children. The family was chased out of their home and they had to take refuge in a relative's house about 20 kilometres away.

## Jaunpur

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 27 May**, in Muradapur village, Badlapur block, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindutva radicals disrupted Church service being led by Pastor Rai Sahab and beat up the Christians present and the pastor. The attackers shouted anti-Christian slogans and indulged in vandalism. They then dragged the pastor to the police station accusing him of conversions.

## Ghazipur

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 30 May** in Jangipur in Sadar block of Ghazipur district in Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Vijay Kumar was arrested by the police. The pastor was conducting a prayer meeting at night at his house, when some religious fanatics called the local police and accused the pastor of converting people secretly, at night. The police took him into custody immediately. He was later released the next day.

## Bareilly

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 31 May** in Kargaina of Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh, a court of the Judicial Magistrate ordered the Subhash Nagar police station to file an FIR against Sister Suma, a Christian. The case pertained to a Tailoring Centre in Kargaina where Suma worked as the Coordinator. One of the tutors there, Mamta Saxena, approached the Magistrate's court with the allegation that Suma was coercing her to accept Christianity. She further alleged that when she denied accepting the Christian faith, her monthly allowance was stopped and she was being harassed.

## Gorakhpur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 16 June** in Bhuboura village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Anil was threatened by a religious fanatic. The pastor had been called to pray for a sick man, when the fanatic entered the house, verbally abused him and demanded that the prayer be stopped. He brandished a sword in order to threaten the assembled group. A complaint was filed by the pastor at the Shajanava police station.

## Meerut

Physical Violence

**On 18 June** in Sardhana town in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Dipender Prakash Maleywar, a resident of Muzaffarnagar's Khatauli area, was attacked and thrashed by scores of alleged Bajrang Dal activists inside the court premises. They alleged that the pastor was about to convert 11 Hindus and had come to the court to get affidavits attested by the notary. And when the radicals heard the news, they rushed to the court to attack Prakash. The police booked the injured pastor under section 151 of CRPC (arrest to prevent the commission of cognizable offence) and sent him to jail.

## Jaunpur

Physical Violence

**On 17 June** in Balui village of Chandwak area in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh, Kamlesh Kumar and his sister Ritu, who are Christians, were attacked by villagers. A small group of

friends and family, gather at their house regularly for Christian services. Pastor Abhay from nearby Chandauli district frequently conducts the services at their home. On the day of the incident, the pastor had come to the village and, along with a few other Christians, was helping Kumar and Ritu to construct the broken roof. Provoked by communal elements, a group of villagers barged into the house and threatened the Christians of severe consequences if they did not stop holding prayers at the house. No complaint was registered.

## Varanasi

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 22 June** in Katua village of Sevapuri block in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh, an accident at the Assemblies of God Church campus brought an entire village against the Christians. At around 3 pm, the boundary wall of the church accidentally collapsed and three children were hurt. This provoked the entire village to gather outside the church and shout anti-Christian slogans. They caught two evangelists - Umesh and Vinod - and took them to the nearby police station. The church paid for the medical expenses, however the villagers continued to threaten the Christians to shut down all Christian services in the church building.

## Kaushambi

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 22 June**, in Birner village, Nevada block, Kaushambi district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of Hindutva radicals disrupted prayer meeting being conducted by Pastor Shrichand. The attackers called the police and demanded the arrest of Christians, but the women worshippers protested against it. However, the police stopped the worship.

## Pratapgarh

Threat / Harrassment

**On 2 July** in Raikashipur village of Pratapgarh district in Uttar Pradesh, while a prayer meeting was going on at Pastor Ram Kumar's house around 20 radicals came in bikes and attacked the assembled believers. The radicals beat the Christians severely and vandalized the church equipment. The meeting takes place regularly

for the past two years at the pastor's house in Raikashipur village under Sangramgarh Police Station of Pratapgarh district. Following the incident, the Christians rushed to the police station to complain against the perpetrators. A case was registered against 20 people. However, a few days later the radicals lodged a complaint against the pastor, and the police filed the FIR under sections 147, 148, 149, 307, 452, 323, 504, 506, 392, 295A

## Lucknow

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 9 July** in Lucknow city of Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Sabu Thomas was falsely accused and arrested. The pastor from the Church of God was visiting a Christian family, when a neighbor locked the door of the house from outside and informed the police alleging that conversion activities were taking place. Police personnel from Nakka Hindola Police Station came and arrested the pastor.

## Kaushambi

Physical Violence

**On 15 July**, in Birne village, Kaushambi District, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu right-wing groups accompanied by the police and the SDM disrupted a prayer meeting which was meeting peacefully. The attackers forced the Christians to stop the worship. Some youth from the Church attempted to record the assault on their phones but they were beaten up and their phones were taken away. The attackers beat up the people present including women and children as well as verbally abused the Christians.

## Mirzapur

Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 23 July** under Madihan police station in Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh, Hindutva radicals, allegedly belonging to the RSS and Bajrang Dal, barged into a Christian worship service. Pastor Bharat Lal along with 20 other Christians had gathered for the program. Pastor Biswas Das of Sewa Bharat was the guest speaker. Just then the radicals disrupted the meeting and took Pastor Das to the police station with the allegation that he was converting the poor villagers by mean of allurements. Das was released after three hours.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 July**, in Bhulandih village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police along with local authorities including the SDM and the DM forcibly entered the prayer meeting conducted by Pastor Durga Prasad Yadav at his Church and disrupted worship. Hindu groups had complained against the Church alleging conversion using force and mind control. The authorities investigated and found no substance to the allegations.

## Jaunpur

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 31 July**, in Sarai Gunja village, Badlapur, District Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested four Christians including a pastor. Pastor Pappu Rajak was leading a three days fasting and prayer event along with 25 other Christians. On the last day of the meeting in the evening one of the neighbors called the police and complained that mass religious conversion is taking place at the Church. The Police team arrived in the village and arrested Pastor Pappu Rajak and 3 others. Two Christians were let go after investigations, but the Pastor and the other Christians were detained at the police station. They all were finally released by the police later on.

## Agra

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 8 August**, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, police raided the training center which is supervised by Pastor L D Gupta after receiving complaints from Hindu groups who raised objections to Christian activities.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 August** in Jaunpur of Uttar Pradesh, a team of police personnel came to Pastor Nanda Prasad's church in Naupur village and warned him to stop all church services saying that some radicals are planning to attack him and his church. Around 120 people gather for the services. Pray that God will protect the pastor and the believers.

## Agra

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 12 August** in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, members of Bajrang Dal surrounded the school of Ernest Singh in Agra while a pastors meeting was going on inside the school. The attackers created trouble and caused disturbance and then left.

## Jaunpur

### Vandalism

**On 12 August**, in Sureri, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, a Christian school was pelted with stones by people belonging to various right-wing outfits. A group of about 15 men came in two cars. One car belonged to the head of the Karunakar Ashram who came along with Narasingh Bahadur Singh, the manager of Maa Durga Public School. The school is led by pastor V.I.D. Ranjan. Since it was a Sunday and the pastor and others were not present in the school and the gate was shut, the people, shouted religious slogans and after threatening to close down the school left. They also threw stones and the windows facing the road were broken.

## Jaunpur

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 14 August**, in Sureri, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, the Christian school led by pastor V.I.D. Ranjan was once again attacked by members of various Hindu outfits and political persons. The local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Dr. Leena Tiwari, her son and the head of the Karunakar Ashram from Bhanpur Village came to the school and demanded to see the school's affiliation certificate to determine whether it was for educational purpose or religious conversion. The MLA's son attempted to physically assault the pastor but was restrained by others. They left, threatening to have the school closed down. After the two incidents the Christians have filed a complaint with the police, but no case has been registered as yet.

## Jaunpur

### Hate Campaign

**On 5 September**, in Jaunpur district, Uttar



Pradesh, the local court directed the police to investigate charges of conversion activities and register a case against 271 people in Dobhi block. Pastor Durga Pasad Yadav and 270 other people have been named in a complaint filed by some Hindu activists who have alleged conversion activities carried out in the Church. Local Christian leaders have denounced this as propaganda against the Church and targeting of their freedom of faith. Pastor Yadav has also alleged that he continues to receive threats from Hindu organizations every week

## Bareilly

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 8 September** in Prem Nagar Police Station area, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, a mob consisting of Hindu right-wing organization members forcibly disrupted a private meeting and beat up the people present alleging conversions. Members of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bhartiya Hindu Sena and Bajrang Dal forcibly entered the premises of the Rashtriya Susamachar Samiti (a Christian NGO) and disrupted their leadership meeting which was going on inside their premises. The attackers beat up Christians present so much so that Mr. Ashok Benjamin, a leader of RSP bled extensively from his head. Police took the Christians to the police station where later in the evening a compromise was struck between the attackers and their victims.

## Ghazipur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 9 September**, in Zamania, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, a group of policemen disrupted worship service at the GEMS Church. The policemen were investigating charges of forced and fraudulent conversions against the Church and its pastor Vinod Kumar James. The charges were levelled by the priests of the temple that is right opposite the Church. The police interrogated the pastor as well as the members and were surprised to find many testimonies of faith. They assured free and fair enquiry and requested the pastor to come to the police station when called.

## Jaunpur

Hate Campaign

**On 11 September** in Jaunpur district, Uttar

Pradesh, following a long systematic media disinformation campaign against Christians and their worship services in the area, the police and members of right-wing Hindu organizations raided several Churches in the district interrogating the pastors and leaders. The media offensive against Christians is led by Zee TV and Dainik Jagran Newspapers and is alleging conversion of entire villages of Hindus through fraudulent and coercive means.

## Jaunpur

Arrested

**On 11 September** in Kuddupur village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, the police detained 8 Christians belonging to the Prabhu Yesu Seva Samiti led by pastor Rajender Chauhan. The police later on released 4 people but arrested Ratnesh Kumar, Jiyalal, Rajendra Vishwakarma and Manoj Chauhan on charges of being involved in conversion activities. The four were later bailed out with much difficulty on 14 September. Hindu mobs number even 250 members and shouting slogans against Christians in the court premises made the bail procedure extremely tough according to reports from local Christian leaders.

## Jaunpur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 13 September** in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh the police raided the home of Pastor Gulab Chand in Jaunpur District at 1 a.m. He was arrested on cooked up charges of fraudulent conversion activities, according to reports. He was however released on 14 September without any case being registered against him. Pastor Gulab Chand leads the Bharpoor Jeevan (Abundant Life) Church which has close to 600 members.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 13 September** in Karmahi village in Dharmapur block, Jaunpur District, Uttar Pradesh, a fasting and prayer service organized by pastor Ravindra Maurya of the Jeevan Marg (Life Way) Church was attacked by Hindutva extremists. The attackers disrupted prayers and terrorized the congregation which was made up of mostly women and children.

## Jaunpur

### Physical Violence

**On 13 September**, in Englisia village in Madiyahu, Jaunpur District, Uttar Pradesh, the younger brother of the village chief (Sarpanch) beat up pastor Ram Milan Gaud. According to reports, the attacker warned the pastor against leading worship services in his house church and ordered him to halt them permanently or face consequences.

## Pratapgarh

### Arrested

**On 13 September** in Aaspur village under the Devsara police station, Pratapgarh District, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Pastor Ram Ratan along with two pastors from Mumbai who were visiting him. The police alleged that they were involved in fraudulent conversion activities. While the pastor was released with around midnight the two Mumbai pastors were told to leave the state immediately by the police.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 16 September** in Bhulandih village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports, the police blocked all the roads leading to the Bhulandih Church (led by Durga Prasad Yadav) and forced the people to go back. Five people from the Church, identified as Deepak, Rahul, Chandrabhushan, Rajendra and Virendra were arrested on the same day and were released on bail on 19 September 2018.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 16 September** in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports, Anil Kumar, Praduman, Deepak Kumar, Monu and Ravinder were arrested by police in the middle of the church service. They were released on bail on 18 September 2018.

## Gorakhpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 16 September** in Bhagwanpur Tola, Ragunathpur village, Gorakhpur district, Uttar Pradesh, around 25 Hindutva extremists

attacked and disrupted worship service at a Church led by Evangelist Anil Kumar Bharti. The attackers also called the police and alleged that conversions were taking place. Anil was arrested during the Church service by the police and was taken to Gulhariya Police Station in Gorakhpur. Three other Christians identified only as Praduman, Pradeep Kumar, Monu, and Deepak were also arrested.

## Hapur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 16 September**, in Sarawa village, Hapur district, Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports, residents of Chamand wala colony protested a Christian gathering that a few families of the same colony had organized. The protesting families disrupted worship services and alleged conversions. For the past few months some families in the colony have been organizing Christian prayers at their homes. The police were called for intervention and they ruled out any allegation of conversions.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 17 September** in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports, police visited the house of Pastor Prem Singh and told him to stop worship services or face the consequences. The police also ordered him to present himself at the police station the next day for questioning.

## Jaunpur

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 18 September** in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, the police visited the house of Pastor Amit Mayank and threatened him and his family. The police asked Mayank to stop worship services in his Church failing which they threatened of arresting both Mayank and his father.

## Azamgarh

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 22 September** in Gola Bazaar, Lalganj, Azamgarh district, according to media reports, the police disrupted private prayers in a private house on complaints by activists from BJP who alleged that conversions are going on in the

prayer gathering. 5 ? 6 women were gathered in the house of Aarti Seth and were praying when the police interrupted their prayers and took two women in custody and presented them before the SDM Lalganj, Priyanka Priyadarshi. She directed the police to take the statements of the two women and release them.

## Jaunpur

Arrested

**On 23 September**, in Nevadiya Village, Jaunpur District, a mob of Hindutva extremists went around the village shouting anti-Christian slogans and later attacked and disrupted the worship service in the Church led by Pastor Ashok Rajbhar. The Church usually has attendance of 800 - 1000 people but following instructions from the police, only a small service was organized with barely 50-60 people present. But even this gathering was attacked. The police arrested Lalchand Rajbhar, Anil Rajbhar, Akhilesh Rajbhar, Rama Shankar Maurya along with Pastor Rajbhar and took them to the police station. Later one Christian was let go because of old age.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 September** in Badshahpur, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh, members of Hindu right-wing groups disrupted worship service, attacked the Church attendees and vandalized the Church premises. The Church is led by Pastor Ram Singar. The pastor, his wife and Dharmendra Kumar, were taken into custody by the police who took them to the police station. The attackers alleged that the pastor was involved in conversions.

## Gorakhpur

Arrested

**On 23 September** in Maharajganj, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports received, Pastor Kuldeep was arrested by the police under section 151 of the Indian Penal Code.

## Barabanki

Arrested

**On 23 September** in Barabanki District, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted worship at the Church led by Pastor Chabilal and arrested him

on alleged charges of being involved in conversion activities.

## Siddharth Nagar

Arrested

**On 23 September** in Siddharth Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports received, police arrested pastor Satenda Vishwa on the basis of a complaint received from Hindu right-wing activists. The pastor was arrested while he was conducting worship service.

## Azamgarh

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 September** in Kariyabar village, Tahbarpur police station area, Azamgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu right-wing activists disrupted private prayers being organized in the house of Bahawan Ram alleging forceful conversions. The attackers also called the police who came and investigated and found the complaint to be false. No action was taken against the disrupters

## Kanpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 September** in Shastri Nagar, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, local BJP leaders led by Raghvendra Mishra disrupted worship at the Assembly of Believers Church alleging conversions. They attempted to close down the Church and called the police who then questioned the pastor Shailender. The BJP leaders caused a lot of inconvenience to Church members and threatened them. No action was taken against the BJP leaders for disrupting worship service.

## Padrauna

Arrested

**On 23 September** in Ghoorchapra village, Jatahabazar Police station area, Padrauna district, Uttar Pradesh, Sawaru Prasad was arrested by the police on charges of conversion activities. Leaders of the Hindu Yuva Vahini and the BJP disrupted the worship service being led by Prasad. The attackers who also called the police, alleged that Sawaru Prasad was converting people by fraud and by selling them Bibles and other books. The police detained

Prasad and took him to the police station. No charges were filed against the attackers who disrupted worship and intimidated people.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 29 September** in Sarai Durgadas, Maharajganj, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports, members of Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal disrupted and attacked a worship service led by Phoolchandra Vishwakarma. The attackers raised anti-Christian slogans and manhandled the people present including many women. The pastor escaped the scene and many women who had come to attend the worship protested the unprovoked attack by the Hindutva activists. A man by the name of Rahul Gautam who had come to attend prayers was taken into custody by the police. No action was taken against the Hindutva activists.

## Jaunpur

Arrested

**On 29 September** in Janghai, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted worship service and arrested Pastor Suresh Chauhan on charges on being involved in conversion activities.

## Kushinagar

Arrested

**On 30 September**, in Bhurchaphra Naukatola village, Kinderpati post, Jetaha Bazar police station, Kushinagar district, police arrested Pastor Ashish Bharti along with his sister and father. Local Hindu right-wing groups had come with the local police and had asked them to stop the worship services. The Senior Inspector had threatened the pastor and had ordered him to stop the worship services as well. Afterwards the police arrested the pastor and the pastor's sister Sindhu Bharti and their Father under section 151 of the IPC.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 30 September** in Kuddupur village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of Hindu right-wing leaders accompanied by the police disrupted worship service at the Prabhu Yeshu

Seva Samiti Church led by Pastor Rajender Chauhan. The miscreants shouted anti-Christian slogans and manhandled the people present.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 30 September** in Nevadiya village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted and stopped worship service in a Church led by Pastor Ashok Rajbhar. The police dispersed the crowd and when the pastor and nearby Christians started worshipping in their homes in private, the police even stopped private worship in homes and took pastor Rajbhar to the police station for questioning.

## Jaunpur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 30 September**, in Jamdaha village, Khetasarai, Jaunpur district, local police disrupted worship service being conducted by pastor Ramchand Bind. The police asked the worshippers to go back home but they denied. The police had earlier ordered the pastor not to conduct worship on a Sunday. The police then left the Church threatening the Christians of dire consequence.

## Dadri

Arrested

**On 2 October** in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, two Christians were detained by the police after they were accused by members of Hindu right-wing groups of being involved in 'conversion activities'. Mrs. Anita Vinod and Mr. Amarnath were distributing Gideons Bibles at a commercial area in Greater Noida when 10 - 12 people belonging to various Hindu right-wing groups apprehended them. The mob questioned them, made threats and called the police who arrested the two Christians and took them to Kasna Police Station, Sector Beta II, Greater Noida. A FIR was filed against the Christians who also filed a FIR against their attackers.

## Varanasi

Vandalism

**On 2 October** in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, miscreants belonging to Hindu extremist



groups attacked the St. Thomas Church at Godowlia area. The attackers raised slogans against the Christian faith, broke open the lock at the front door of the Church and vandalized the property. They were alleging that the pastor had offered money to one Pravin Dube (who was part of the attacking group) and had asked him to get converted to Christianity. The historical Church belongs to the Church of North India denomination as is led by Rev. Newton Stevens. Rev. Stevens was not in the Church when the attack happened. He heard about it through people and called the Dashashwamedh Police Station who sent a Phantom Patrol and dispersed the attackers. A FIR has been filed against 50-60 people. No arrests have been made till the writing of this report. A man who calls himself Yogi Aloknath Sanatani first mobilized the attack using his Facebook page and then posted pictures of the attack issuing warning to 'Christian pigs' to stop the game of conversion. It is not known if this person has been arrested. One Advocate Ankit Pandey and one Roshan Mishra were also tagged on his Facebook post.

## Varanasi

### Physical Violence

**On 4 October** in Ardali Bazaar, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports, members of Hindu right-wing organizations beat up a man identified as Vinod Maurya on allegations of conversions. They alleged that he is a pastor and is converting people by offering them money. After beating him they called up the police and handed over Maurya to them. The police after questioning Maurya found the allegations against him to be false and released him after a medical examination. Maurya filed a FIR against his attackers under sections 323, 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code.

## Azamgarh

### Arrested

**On 5 October** in Rampur Abusaidpur village, Azamgarh District, Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports, a mob led by members of Hindu right-wing groups disrupted a Christian prayer meeting being held at a private home. The police led by Inspector of the Nizamabad police station, Trilokinath Pandey, arrested three people on charges of being involved in conversions. The names of the arrested are:

Kripashakar, Vijay Prajapati and Ram Dulare. According to reports, Christian prayers were being held for past many months at the house of Ram Dulare and used to be attended by many people including many women. The arrested were taken to the police station and their Bibles were confiscated as proof of their involvement in conversion. They were charged the next day under sections 153A, 295A and 298 of the Indian Penal Code on the complaint lodged by one Tribhuvan Saini who is also the head of the Nizamabad division of Vishwa Hindu Mahasangh. Local Christian leaders have rubbished allegations of conversions and even the attendees of the prayer meeting were reportedly very angry because of the arrests under fabricated charges.

## Azamgarh

### Arrested

**On 7 October** in Chitara Mahmudpur village, Didarganj police station area, Martin Ganj block, Azamgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Ledaar was arrested by the police on allegations of being involved in conversion activity. He was taken into custody after conducting the regular Sunday worship service. When local Christians got to know about the arrest of the pastor, they expressed their protest and concern at the local police station. The police initially maintained that they had detained the pastor only for questioning, however they did file charges against him reportedly under pressure. The pastor was released after he secured bail the following day.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 7 October** in Nevadiya Village, Jaunpur District, police once again disrupted worship service at the Church led by Pastor Ashok Rajbhar. The policemen who came reportedly threatened the pastor and his family and told them not to conduct any worship or prayers from then on. They also took away two motorcycles that were standing in the Church premises: one Hero Honda Splendour and One Bajaj Platina.

## Kannauj

### Arrested

**On 7 October** in Kakar Ghata Village, Umarda

Block, Kannauj District, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted Sunday worship in a Church led by Pastor Jawahar Lal and arrested 4 foreigners who were participating in the worship service. The foreigners who were found to be ethnic Koreans but US Citizens, were not connected with the pastor according to his statement but had come to visit his Church without any prior intimation. The police took the pastor and the foreigners to the police station and later released everyone but confiscated his Aadhaar Card and Bank passbook. No substantial evidence for conversion was found by the police, as per reports. Pastor Jawahar has been leading the Church since 2015 and many people come for Sunday worship service.

### Pilibhit

#### Church / Worship Stopped

**On October 12** in Madhupuri village, Barkheda police station area, Pilibhit District, Uttar Pradesh, according to media reports, members of Hindu Yuva Vahini disrupted a prayer meeting being held at a private residence and accused the Christians of being involved in conversions. A Christian Satsang has been held at the house of Anita, wife of Makhanlal, resident of Madhupuri village for some months now. It is well attended by many people. On the day of the incident members of Hindu Yuva Vahini trespassed into the private home and disrupted the meeting. They also called the police who on the complaint of the Yuva Vahini members arrested four people: Ankush, Rooplal, Geeta and Anita and took them to the police station. The members attending the Satsang also went to the police station to defend the people who were arrested. After a long investigation that lasted almost 18 hours, the allegation of the Yuva Vahini was proved to be false and the arrested people were let go.

### Jaunpur

#### Arrested

**On 14 October** in Sarai Rustom village, Jaunpur District, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Pastor Nirmal Kumar on alleged charges of conversion. Members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Shitla Prasad Mishra, Subhash Pandey and Sushil Mishra had informed the police that conversions are taking place at the Sunday worship service being held at the house of Omprakash at the village Sarai Rustom.

Police Officer Shashi Bhusan Rai reached the venue of the worship and arrested pastor Kumar and also confiscated Bibles and song books as proof of conversion. Women who were attending the worship in large numbers protested the arrest of the pastor and offered to court arrest in solidarity. Keeping the volatile situation in mind, police officer Rai called for more police backup from Panwara and Machlishaher police station.

### Jaunpur

#### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 14 October** in Mungra Badshah Pur Block, Jaunpur District, Uttar Pradesh, according to reports received, local police barged into a Sunday worship service and disrupted it. The police also took into custody Pastor Ravi and others and took them to the police station for questioning. The incident took place around 1 pm.

### Ghaziabad

#### Arrested

**On 14 October** in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, a pastor was arrested by the police after the Sunday worship service he leads was disrupted by members of the Bajrang Dal. The police took him into custody, took him to the Kavi Nagar police station, interrogated him and warned him against conducting Sunday worship services in the area. No action was taken against the attackers.

### Azamgarh

#### Arrested

**On 14 October**, in Kharhani village, Tarwa Block, Mehnagar, Azamgarh District, police from the Tarwa police station disrupted Sunday worship service at the Parmeshwar Seva Church led by Pastor Sanjay Chauhan. The policemen reportedly created a ruckus and threatened the congregation. The police arrested pastor Chauhan, Sanjay Mathew and Rajesh Maurya and took them to the police station. Around 250 people regularly attend worship at the Church.

### Pratapgarh

#### Hate Campaign

**On 14 October** in Naubasta, Sangipur,

Pratapgarh district, according to media reports, the police conducted an extensive search after receiving information of conversions to Christianity. In biased media reporting that should be challenged with appropriate authorities, several news portals including OneIndia.com, upsamachar.org and eenaduindia.com alleged that a large missionary conspiracy had caused many families to embrace Christianity in the area. They accused one pastor Rajesh Singh of conducting prayers in the area and specifically named Radhey Shyam Verma and Ram Kailash Verma of Naubasta village as people who have along with others embraced Christianity. This is a clear case of targeting a faith and of spreading mis-information against a community.

## Pratapgarh

Threat / Harrassment

**On 20 October** in Ramgarh village, Banohi, Pratapgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, Pastor Raushan Lal Gautam was threatened by a person. Pastor Gautam was in the market for purchasing grocery when this person met him and alleged that the pastor is offering 5 lakh rupees for becoming Christian. The person threatened the pastor and told him to stop all Christian activities in the village. The pastor was told that if he continues to conduct prayers, people will come in large numbers and attack the Church. The pastor is fearful.

## Muzzafarnagar

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 28 October** in Khannupur village, Muzzafarnagar district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted worship at the Masih Prathana Bhavan Church led by pastor Surajveer. The police chased away the people gathered for Sunday worship and warned them that they should not come back. The action of the police was allegedly motivated by a complaint filed against the pastor by a neighbour. The pastor was summoned to the local police station and when he presented himself there in the afternoon, he was threatened again and told not to conduct any worship service or prayers till he has obtained permission from authorities. The Church has been meeting for worship for the last two years.

## Agra

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 30 October**, in Agra city, Uttar Pradesh, a private Christian gathering was attacked by 40 ? 45 people belonging to Bajrang Dal and Vishwa Hindu Parishad including their office-bearers. The meeting was organized at the Hotel Samovar. The attackers beat up the people present using bamboo and hockey sticks, broke the furniture, indulged in vandalism and in anti-Christian sloganeering. They did not spare even the women, and many were injured badly and were bleeding profusely. According to media reports the attack was planned by Hindu organizations for more than one week after they came to know about the meeting. The police arrested 7 Christians on charges of hurting religious sentiments and did not arrest any persons who had attacked the peaceful gathering. When Christian leaders attempted to file a FIR, the police rejected their appeal. At least seven people were hurt badly due to the attack, but the Agra police did not even provide any medical help or took them for a medical check-up.

## Fathepur

Physical Violence

**On 4 November**, in Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of around 35 Bajrang Dal members disrupted worship that was being led by Pastor Sunil belonging to the Grace Transformation Ministry. They pulled out the pastor and beat him up injuring his hand. They interrogated the pastor for around half an hour before police came and started investigating matters. The Bajrang Dal members alleged conversions.

## Mau

Arrested

**On 4 November** in Khurahat village, Ranipur Block, Mau District, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Pastor Vashist Rajbhar after local fundamentalists complained against him. After finishing the Church service, the pastor was distributing religious tracts, when the fundamentalists agitated against him and called the police. The police arrested the pastor and detained him. He was let go the next day. Pastor Rajbhar serves with the Christian Revival Church.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 6 November**, in Malsil village, Sikrara police station, Jaunpur district, villagers disrupted the prayer meeting being led by Pastor Bhupesh Kumar Yadav. The villagers verbally abused the pastor and attempted to stop the prayer meeting.

## Raibareilly

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 7 November** in Malikbhiti village, Silaula post, Lalganj, Raibareilly district, Uttar Pradesh, police personnel from the Dalamau Police Station disrupted the worship service at a Church led by Pastor Roopsen and called him to the police station for questioning. Local people had accused the pastor of being involved in conversions and witchcraft.

## Pratapgarh

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 November** in Pandey Ka Purwa, Patulki, Pratapgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted the Sunday worship of a Church being led by pastor Rakesh Singh. The police arrived at the Church on the complaint of right-wing Hindu groups who alleged that conversions were taking place. The police asked for registration papers of the Church and told the pastor that prayers cannot continue." Muzzafarnagar Church / Worship Stopped "On 11 November, in Khannupur village, Mansurpur, Muzaffarnagar district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted worship service being led by Pastor Surajveer at the complaint of the local RSS leader who alleged conversions taking place in the Church. The police arrived in the middle of the worship service and closed it. They took photographs of the Church members and attendees and asked the pastor to present himself in the police station later. When the pastor approached the police in the afternoon, he was threatened and warned against conducting prayers and worship without prior permission. The Church has been meeting for more than two years in the location.

## Agra

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 11 November** in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, a mob

of young people belonging to Hindu right-wing groups threatened and attempted to disrupt a Christian Sunday worship service. The mob attempted to break in to the annual function of a Christian Ashram / Orphanage. Police was called by the attackers who came to investigate charges and found them to be false.

## Ghazipur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 November** in Fauladpur, Bahariyabad, Ghazipur district, religious fanatics belonging to Hindu Yuva Vahini (HYV) disrupted a worship service at around 4 pm. They alleged conversion, videotaped the prayer, and called for the police. The pastor Tribuvan Prasad was summoned to the police station. The attack on the worship service was led by Rajesh Singh Bablu and Pankaj Singh of the HYV.

## Ghazipur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 November**, in village Tanda, Sadat block, Ghazipur, members of Hindu Yuva Vahini disrupted a Christian worship service being held at the home of one Akash Yadav. Hundreds of people were present for the worship according to media reports. The attack on worship service was once again led by Rajesh Singh Bablu and Pankaj Singh, office bearers of Hindu Yuva Vahini. The worshippers protested the interference of the Hindu group, police were summoned by the Hindu leaders who finally closed the prayers and videotaped the whole incident. Leaders of the BJP were present at the venue along with the members of the Hindu Yuva Vahini according to media reports.

## Ghazipur

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 12 November**, in Jaldipur village, Khanpur police station, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob belonging to Hindu Yuva Vahini accompanied by the local police went to Rajkumar's house at around 10 pm and started quarrelling with the family. Rajkumar had opened his house for Christian prayers for the last 4 years and the fanatics were angry because of that. They alleged that conversions were taking place. Rajkumar was taken into custody by the police and was charged under sections 151 and 107 of the IPC. The next day he



was presented before the SDM and later procured bail with the help of local Christian leaders.

## Sultanpur

### Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 14 November** in Chaphar village, Sultanpur district, Uttar Pradesh, high caste people led by Hindu right-wing activists disrupted a Christian prayer meeting and beat up the Christians present. Pastor Radhey Shyam and his Church members were having their regular prayer meeting and Pastor Vijay Lal from Kanpur was the main speaker when the attack took place. The attackers beat up the people present including women. They also brought pictures of Hindu deities and tore them to falsely accuse Christians and then called the police who took all 4 pastors into custody and charged them under sections 295A and 153A of the IPC. The names of the 4 pastors are: Lalji, Radhey Shyam, Munna and Ramsukh. The pastors were bailed out on 19 November 2018.

## Ghazipur

### Forced Conversion

**On 14 November** in Jaldipur village, Khanpur police station, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of religious extremists came to Pastor Rajkumar's house and demanded that he perform Hindu religious ceremonies and be converted to Hinduism. Police were called by the attackers who took the elder brother of Rajkumar into custody till late in the night. The family was attacked on the 12 November 2018 as well.

## Sultanpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 14 November**, in Chhapra village, Chanda Police Station, Sultanpur district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindutva radicals attacked the worship service being led by Pastor Ram Sukh Vishwakarma. The worship was being held at the house of Pastor Vishwakarma and over 20 people were present including women. The attackers locked the people inside after disrupting worship and threatening them.

## Azamgarh

### Physical Violence

**On 16 November** in Udiyawa village, Azamgarh

district, a Christian on his way to a fasting and prayer meeting was harassed and attacked by radicals who alleged that conversions are going on at the Church. Pastor Dinesh from New Life Fellowship who had organized this prayer meeting was taken into custody by the police and was threatened and told to stop all Christian activities. The police also demanded a bribe from the pastor which he refused to pay. He was asked to come back and meet the SHO the next day.

## Kaushambi

### Church Burnt

**On 16 November**, in Kaushambi district, Uttar Pradesh, according reported by Persecution Relief, a temporary Church structure was burnt to the ground by unknown miscreants. The Church is led by Pastor Sone Lal and over 1200 people reportedly gather every Sunday for worship and prayer.

## Ghazipur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 18 November**, in Ghummattaradpur village, Jungipur Police Station, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, police stopped worship at a Christian prayer meeting led by Pastor Vijay Kumar Bharti. Pastor Bharti has been conducting the prayer meetings at a rented accommodation. On the day of the incident at around 2:15 pm when the prayers were almost concluding, police personnel came and told Bharti to stop prayers permanently. They also influenced the house owner who in turn asked Bharti to discontinue prayers. The house is since locked.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 18 November**, in Damodara village, Jaunpur district, Pastor Ashok Patel was arrested by the police on alleged charges of conversions. He was later let go after Christian leaders intervened.

## Pilibhit

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 21 November**, in Madho Tanda village, Bahariyabad police station, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, people belonging to Hindu Yuva

Vahini along with police personnel disrupted a Church meeting being led by Pastor Lalji Vishwakarma. They barged into the meeting place, abused the pastor with filthy language, manhandled the people and forcibly stopped the worship. They snatched away the pastors Bible and warned him not to conduct worship services anymore.

## Varanasi

### Vandalism

**On 22 November**, in Chandmari, Varanasi district, Uttar Pradesh, unidentified people attempted to vandalize the walls and the gate of the Matri Dham Ashram by writing slogans favouring the ABVP (Students wing of the BJP) and slogans praising Hindu god Ram. No FIR was registered but the act caused tension in the area. Matri Dham Ashram is a Christian Ashram.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 November**, in Barsathi village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of 25 people came and created chaos thus disrupting a Church service led by Pastor Anil Rajbhar and Rakesh Maurya. The mob shouted anti-Christian slogans and threatened the people present. They also attempted to vandalize the place.

## Ghaziabad

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 November**, in Modi Nagar, Ghaziabad district, Uttar Pradesh, people belonging to Hindu Yuva Vahini and the RSS disrupted a worship service led by Pastor Vinay Paul. The attackers were accompanied by the police. The pastor was asked to stop the worship, the people gathered for worship were threatened and were told not to have worship services in the future. The pastor was asked to show permission letter from the District Magistrate. The pastor has stopped Church services because of fear.

## Ghazipur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 November**, in Singera village, Mardah police station, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob consisting of people from the Hindu

Yuva Vahini and the RSS disrupted Sunday worship service being led by Pastor Phoolchand Masih and Munna Bharti. The attackers, all from high caste, disturbed and stopped the prayer without provocation and shouted anti-Christian slogans. They called the police as well and complained against the pastor alleging that they were giving money and other inducements to people in order to convert them to Christianity. The police took the pastors into custody and took them to the police station. When Christians protested against the arrest of Pastor Phoolchand since he is nearly 80 years old, he was let go, but Munna Bharti continued to be in custody. He was released the next day.

## Lucknow

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

On 26 November, in Alambagh, Lucknow district, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested three Christians who were traveling from Azamgarh to New Delhi. Their co-passengers in the bus listened to their conversation and informed the police that they were going to Delhi in order to be converted. When the three Christians got down at Alambagh to change bus for Delhi they were apprehended by a police team from Alambagh police station and were taken into custody. They were released after questioning.

## Kaushambi

### Falsely Accused / Arrested

**On 1 December**, in Mohabbatpur, Kaushambi, Uttar Pradesh, four pastors were detained by the police on charges of being involved in conversion activities. These included Pastor Murali Jacob of the Maranatha Prayer Network. They were arrested around 2 pm and were released at about 9 pm.

## Kanpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 2 December**, in Naubasta, Kanpur district, Uttar Pradesh, a mob of around 150 people reportedly belonging to various right-wing groups attacked the Church led by Pastor A B Singh while the Church was having the Sunday worship at around 11 am. The attackers threatened people present (about 35) and ordered them to close down the Church immediately or be ready to face consequences. They raised anti-Christian slogans and created

much nuisance. When Pastor Singh's wife Kalpana attempted to protect her husband and other women in the Church she was pushed and beaten up. The attackers had registered a FIR against the Church and the pastor alleging that they are involved in forced conversions. Pastor Singh has been leading the Church for the last 20 years peacefully.

## Ghazipur

Threat / Harrassment

**On 2 December**, in Birno, Mardah block, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, Police told a pastor to stop worship services or face consequences. Pastor Kapil was informed by the police that high caste Thakurs were planning to attack his Church. They offered no protection but asked the pastor to stop all worship.

## Pratapgarh

Threat / Harrassment

**On 6 December** it was reported from Pandey Ka Purwa, Patulki, Pratapgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, that police have still not given permission orders to the Vikas Jan Seva Santhan to go ahead with the prayers and worship services. On 11 November, police from Jethwara station had stopped Christian prayers at the Church and had asked Pastor Rakesh Singh to take permission from the SDM of Lalganj. Pastor Singh had submitted all required documents and application for permission to SDM but there has been no response till now. More than 1500 people used to regularly gather for worship for the last 5 years in the Church. But now because of police pressure and lack of response they have no place to worship.

## Meerut

Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 17 December**, in Mawana, Meerut district, Uttar Pradesh, religious extremists trespassed into the house of a pastor and beat up the guests present alleging that conversions were taking place. Pastor K V Abraham from the Assemblies of God Church, Pastor Sunil Kumar and others had gathered at the house of another Pastor identified as Pramod Kumar. Suddenly at around noon time they were attacked by the extremists who beat up the

people present including the senior pastors without any provocation. Police came to the spot and arrested the Christians instead taking into custody Pastor Abraham, Pastor Sunil Kumar, Pastor Pramod, his wife and their two-month-old child plus three others. The Christians were detained for over 20 hours and were let off the next day at 12:45 pm without any charges being filed on them. No action was taken against the attackers.

## Kanpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 20 December**, in Chakeri, Kanpur district, Uttar Pradesh, members of Bajrang Dal disrupted a prayer meeting and threatened Christians. They locked up the Christians inside and called the police and alleged that Christians were involved in conversions. Evangelist Varughese Abraham had gone to a Christian home for prayers regularly held in a neighbourhood along with his wife and Ashish Singh Parihar. A boy came and sat in the meeting and sent photos of the same to his associates in the Bajrang Dal who descended on the venue alleging conversions. The police took the Christians to the Reema Devi Police Station and interrogated them. The Christians gave a statement that they were only have their regular prayers and not conversion. The police finally let the Christians go at 1 am.

## Ghazipur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 21 December** in Kodari village, Singrapur post, District Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted a Christian prayer gathering and alleged that the Christians were involved in conversion. The meeting was led by a woman named Divya and about 35 people were gathered for their Friday fasting and prayer. The police warned the Christians not to do any Christian activity in the future. The Church has since stopped all meetings.

## Jaunpur

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 December**, in Bhaisaha village, Jaunpur district, a mob of religious extremists attacked the Sunday Church service. The attackers were accusing Pastor Rakesh Maurya of being involved in conversions through allurements.

Police personnel from the Barsathi Police Station came and stopped the worship service and took the attackers as well as the Christians to the police station.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 December**, in Kusmi village, Jaunpur district, police disrupted a peaceful Sunday worship service led by Pastor Anil Kumar Banbasi at the Yesu Darbar Church. Police was acting on the complaint of an unidentified person who called number 100 and told the police that conversion was happening at the Church. Police personnel threatened the pastor and the people present (around 400) and told them to disperse threatening them with lathi charge if they do not. The police made the people flee and verbally abused them. After some time, the SHO from Chandwak police station also came with force and he was particularly abusive towards Christians and made threats against them. Fearful Christians were forced to leave their Sunday worship. Police also confiscated the music system and other items from the Church. The Church has suspended all their activities.

## Chandauli

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 23 December**, in Sikari village, Chandauli district, Uttar Pradesh, about 10 right-wing radicals disrupted worship service at the Masihi Upasna Church led by Pastor Vinay Kumar. They asked the pastor to show the Church registration papers to them. They alleged that the pastor and his associates are involved in converting poor people. The radicals informed the police who came and reiterated what the radicals had said to the pastor. The police also searched the premises thoroughly to identify any evidence of conversions. They registered a case against the Christians under sections 107 and 116 of the IPC. The Church has suspended all activities.

## Jaunpur

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 23 December**, in Dallukapura village, Bheekpur post, Mugrabadshahpur police station, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police raided the house of pastor Rajendra Prasad

around 4 pm and threatened him. The police used derogatory language and verbally abused the pastor and threatened him with dire consequences including threat on his life. They warned him against conducting Church services and ordered him that Church should remain closed on Christmas. When the pastor approached authorities, the District Magistrate did not give him permission to hold prayers. Police levied charges against the Pastor and two others, but they procured bail.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 25 December**, in village Ghosai, Jaunpur District, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Pastor Rajendra Masih and 4 other Christians from the middle of a Christmas worship service. The high caste people in the village had called the police on number 100 and had complained against the Christmas celebration alleging conversions. The Christians were taken to the Jalalpur police station and were sent to judicial custody.

## Jaunpur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 December** in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted the Christmas worship serve being led by Pastor Rajendra Chauhan and took him into custody. They carried the pastor to the Line Bazaar police station where he was questioned and later released.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 25 December**, in Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted the Christmas worship service being led by Pastor Shyam Sundar Bhardwaj and arrested him. He was booked under section 151 of the IPC and was sent to judicial custody. The pastor was so full of fear that he was crying. Christian leaders applied for his bail at the Kerakat Tehsil. The pastor, serving with Christ Embassy, finally got bail on 27 December 2018.

## Jaunpur

### Hate Campaign

**On 25 December**, in Bhulandih village, Jaunpur



district, Uttar Pradesh, police prevented the organizing of Christmas worship at the Church led by Durga Prasad Yadav. According to a self-congratulatory article by Dainik Jagran (<https://www.jagran.com/uttar-pradesh/varanasi-city-no-prayer-at-christmas-in-chandavak-jaunpur-city-18785918.html>), police force from 10 police stations was deployed at the Church so as to prevent Christmas worship and celebration. The Dainik Jagran and Zee News plus other media outlets have played a major role in demonizing Christians since July 2018 in the area. Jagran, in their article writes that they campaigned for over two months against Christian missionaries and stopped the Church which was at one point of time attended by over 9000 people.

## Ghazipur

### Church / Worship Stopped

**On 25 December**, in Ameda Saichanpur, Ghazipur district, Uttar Pradesh, a police team lead by the SHO Khanpur disrupted Christmas worship service, attacked the worshippers present, vandalized the tent that the Christians had erected for the special Christmas service and threw away several things to stop the worship. The Church is being led by Pastor Radheshyam Rajbhar. The police also arrested Pastor Radheshyam's son as he was taking photos of the police during the attack. About 500 people were attending worship at the time of the incident.

## Jaunpur

### Threat / Harrassment

**On 25 December** in Muftiganj, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police went to the house of Pastor Rajesh Maurya in his absence and threatened his family members. The police team lead by the SHO demanded that pastor Maurya present himself at the Chauki Muftiganj and if he did not do so they will cause harm to his shop. The pastor has a vegetable shop which is a source of his livelihood. The pastor was at a Christmas celebration at another village during the time of the visit of the police.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 26 December**, in village Ghosaanv, Jalalpur,

Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested three people from a Christmas celebration after local BJP leaders complained to the police alleging conversions. According to media reports, the celebration was in the house of a person called Chandrashekhar who was arrested along with Rajendra, Devraj and two others and was taken to the police station. The local BJP chief Aamod Singh Rinku alleged conversions were happening in the celebration, a charge that the Christians denied. Police later released the Christians after they found that the complaint against them was false.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 26 December**, in Kachuman village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted a Christmas worship service and arrested the assistant pastor of the Church. According to media reports, Christians had gathered to celebrate Christmas as they could not do so on Christmas day because of the huge deployment of the police forces who prevented them from doing so. However, when the police got to know of it, they disrupted worship and arrested Jeet Bahadur, the assistant pastor of the Church since the pastor was away to another tehsil. The Church members especially the women protested the actions of the police, but Bahadur was taken to the police station and was charged under section 151 of IPC.

## Jaunpur

### Arrested

**On 26 December**, in Mahimapur village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted a Christmas celebration and worship and arrested the pastor and 4 others. While Christians were celebrating Christmas, led by Pastor Rajendra Kumar, some high caste Hindus complained to the police alleging conversion activities. Soon the police arrived and stopped the worship and celebration and arrested Pastor Rajendra along with 4 others and took them to the Jalalpur Police station. The Christians were sent to judicial custody later.

## Kannauj

### Arrested

**On 28 December**, in Haseran village, Kannauj

district, Uttar Pradesh, Hindu radicals disrupted and stopped worship and Christmas celebration at the Church led by Pastor Rajeev Kumar and Pastor Ashok. The attackers threatened the Christians present and argued with them and called the police. When police arrived, the attackers alleged conversions going on and the police arrested two pastors who were leading the worship instead of the attackers. They were accused under section 295 A of the IPC and were released on 4 January 2019 on bail.

### Jaunpur Arrested

**On 29 December**, in Karmahi village, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police disrupted a Christmas celebration led by Pastor Ravinder Maurya. Police personnel stopped the celebration and arrested Pastor Ravinder Maurya, Chandrabali Maurya, Shahblal Yadav and Subash Maurya and took them to the police station.

### Chandauli Threat / Harrassment

**On 30 December** in Chakia, Chandauli district, Uttar Pradesh, police threatened a missionary accusing him of indulging in conversions. Pastor Earnest is an IMS missionary serving in the district. A Bajrang Dal leader had complained against him at the local police station alleging conversion of Hindus. The SHO of Chakia police station had called Pastor Earnest to present himself at the police station. When the pastor went there along with his assistant Sunil and another Christian, the SHO verbally abused them using derogatory language and threatened them. He forced them to give a statement in writing that they would not convert anyone and only then allowed them to go in the evening.

### Mau Arrested

**On 30 December**, in Ratanpura block, Haldalpur police station, Mau district, Uttar Pradesh, police stopped a worship service being led by Pastor Radhey Krishna. Around 60 worshippers were gathered for Sunday worship when the police disrupted and stopped the worship service. They arrested the pastor and took him to the Ratanpura Outpost.

### Jaunpur Physical Violence / Arrested

**On 31 December**, in Udpur Gailhawa village, Badlapur, Jaunpur district, Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Evangelist Amarnath. The incident took place around 4 pm when Amarnath was leading a prayer meeting. Suddenly Hindutva radicals believed to be RSS members, came and started beating him and later handed him over to the police.



## West Bengal

### West Bardhaman Physical Violence

**On 6 March** in Ukhra town of Durgapur subdivision in Paschim Bardhaman district of West Bengal, a group of Christians led by Evangelist Achintya Ghosh were manhandled and threatened by two radicals claiming to be from the RSS. Evangelist Ghosh and a few other Christians were distributing gospel tracts, books of the New Testament and the Gospel of John, when the incident took place. Around dusk, two young men with bamboo lathis, claiming to be from RSS, confronted and threatened them. They physically assaulted one of the brothers in the busy market place alleging that the Christians were converting people with allurements. Seeing the assault, Evangelist Ghosh rushed to his rescue and tried to stop the radicals. In no time, many locals gathered at the spot and started to defend the Christians. With the help of the locals the Christians were able to get away from there without being grievously harmed.

### Bankura Threat / Harrassment

**On 3 October** in Bankura District, West Bengal, according to reports received from Transform East Alliance, Hindu neighbours opposed a Christian funeral and created problems for the bereaved family. Ganesh Soren, a Christian

man, passed away in the early hours on 3 October. When his wife and son (20 years) were preparing to bury him according to Christian rituals, the neighbours objected to it and told them that either he be buried according to Hindu rituals and the family embrace Hinduism or they should leave the village taking none of their possessions with them.

### South 24 Parganas

Social Opposition / Boycott

**On 30 October**, in Ramdhari village, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, it was reported that the small Christian community belonging to the Assemblies of God Church has been facing a systematic campaign against them for some days. The Church has around 80 – 100 people gathering for worship every Sunday in the village but a few days ago, the villagers issued a diktat that only Hindus can stay in the village

and Christians, if they want to stay, must convert to Hinduism or else leave the village or risk facing violence. The Christians were told that their homes will be broken and destroyed. When Christians approached the police for protection their petition was denied, and they were told that the police has received a complaint against the Christians already.

### Hooghly

Church / Worship Stopped

**On 11 November**, in Singur, Hooghly, West Bengal, a worship service was disrupted by a mob led by Hindutva activists. The pastor Kuntal Ganguli and other Christians were threatened and told not to continue prayer meetings or face dire consequences. The Jeevan Jyoti Church has been meeting in the place for the last 15 months.







EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP OF INDIA

805/ 92 Deepali Building  
Nehru Place, New Delhi—110019 INDIA

Email: [mail@efirlc.org](mailto:mail@efirlc.org)  
Telephone: +91 11 66602434, 26431133, 26423726, 26423727 | Fax: +91 11 26285350  
<http://www.efionline.org>