

15 Violent Attacks Against Hundreds of Believers Recorded Over the Last 14 Days

At least 15 separate anti-Christian incidents across India have been documented in the past 14 days.

International Christian Concern (ICC,) says these incidents include physical assaults, a church demolition, forced conversions, false accusations of forced conversions and social boycotts.

ICC reports the following incidents occurred:

- On July 2, 35 Hindu radicals attacked 150 Christians who were gathered for prayer in a meeting hall in Raikashipur village located in the Pratapgarh District of India's Uttar Pradesh state. More than 20 Christians were injured in the assault, including several suffering broken limbs.
- On July 6, six Christians were forcefully converted to Hinduism in the Kunti District of India's Jharkhand State. On the same day, six Christian families from a village near Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, were given an ultimatum to recant their Christian faith by July 15 or face "severe consequences."
- On July 7, 25 Christians in the Dumka District of Jharkhand State were arrested after local villagers falsely accused them of attempting forced conversions. Sixteen Christians have been formally charged and sent to jail. The Christians were accused after participating in a public preaching event held in Phulpahari village.
- On July 8, Hindu radicals assaulted a pastor, his wife

and three other Christians inside a prayer hall in Paguthampalayam village, located in southern Tamil Nadu State. According to local Christians, the assailants also stripped the pastor's wife. Following the attack, four of the Christians were arrested by police after radicals filed police complaints against them.

- Also, on July 8, a mob of 150 people, believed to be Hindu radicals, forced their way into a church in Bommalaramaram village, located in the Yadadri District of Telangana State, and assaulted the pastor and other church members. After two hours, they forced the pastor to sign a document stating that he would discontinue building the church he was in the process of constructing in Bommalaramaram.
- On July 9, Pastor Sabu Thomas was praying with a family inside their home when someone locked the door from the outside, called the police and reported that he was engaged in forced conversions. Pastor Thomas was arrested but later released by police in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- On July 13, Pastor Thomas George and his wife, Binu Thomas George, were falsely accused of attempting forced conversions and were arrested in Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh State.
- On July 14, a church building in Sangameswar village, located in the Kamareddy District of Telangana state, was demolished by the village Surpanch after gathering signatures from villagers opposed to the church. According to local Christians, the intention of the village Surpanch is to make Sangameswar "Christian free."
- Also, on July 14, Hindu radicals lodged forced conversion complaints against Christians in two locations in Madhya Pradesh. One complaint was lodged by activists from the Durga Vahini group in the Alirajpur District. The other complaint was lodged by VHP activists near Bhopal. After filing the complaints, the

Hindu activists demanded that police shut down all Christian activities in the area

- On July 15, a Christian family was socially boycotted in Kotetharaa village, located in the Janjgir-Champa District of Chhattisgarh State. Hindu villagers were told that they would have to pay a 10,000 INR fine if caught speaking with the Christian family.
- Also, on July 15, a church located in Santkabeer Nagar, located in Uttar Pradesh state, was attacked. Local reports indicate that one Christian was injured in the assault.
- Again, on July 15, a church was attacked during a worship service in Rajendra Nagar, located near Raipur in Chhattisgarh state. The assailants beat men, women and children who attended the church service. The Christians were further assaulted at the police station by an angry mob of Hindu radicals.
- On July 15, Hindu radicals, along with police, disrupted a church service in Birne village, located in India's Uttar Pradesh state. The Christians were forced to agree to stop their prayer meetings and other Christian activities. They were also told that they could not hold such meetings without permission from the local authorities.

ICC stated all of these events "demonstrate a growing anti-Christian sentiment in India."

A media release obtained by ASSIST News () says: "This sentiment has manifested itself in violent action and has gone almost entirely unchecked by local authorities. Christians in India live knowing that their police and government will more likely participate in persecution, rather than defend them against it."

Dr. John Dayal, President of the United Christian Forum, said, "We [Christians] are becoming increasingly concerned at political, social and economic developments in our country

that may fracture, if not irretrievably impact, the very foundations of conditional democracy.”

William Stark, ICC’s Regional Manager, told ASSIST News Service, “We here at International Christian Concern are extremely concerned by the tidal wave of attacks on Christians over the past two weeks. Every day, new reports of persecution come in from what seems like every corner of India. Many Christians fear that this may be the new normal for their community as Hindu radicals have been allowed to attack Christians and other minority communities with impunity. India must take concrete steps to counteract this wave of intolerance and violence. Until then, the attacks will likely continue to increase in both number and severity.” {eo}

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