

Christians Killed, 50 Churches Burned as Thousands Flee

Extreme violence erupted over the past week in Manipur in northeast India, with 50 Christian churches being burned or destroyed and killing at least 58, many of whom were Christians, media reports claim.

Beginning mid-last week, violence had been reported in several areas of Manipur, mostly in the Imphai Valley and Churhandpur. Christian survivors of the attacks have identified the “predominantly Hindu Meitei ethnic community as the attacks,” The Christian Post reported.

The Christian Post also reported that the local Christian community has accused the Hindu nationalist government of supporting the attackers.

The accused group has a longstanding history of tension with Christians over land ownership and affirmation action policies.

A constable of the Central Reserve Police Force, on leave at his home in Churhandpur, was shot and killed on Friday, the Indian media outlet reported. The outlet says it is not known how many of the 58 that have been killed are Christians, but reports from Manipur say that the majority of them were.

Suspension of telecommunication services have hampered reports coming from Manipur, and The Christian Post reported that “determining the full scope of the damage suffered by the Christian community remains challenging.”

Military personnel were sent to the region on Thursday night, and it was reported that the intensity of the attacks had

diminished by Friday. Reports say nearly 10,000 soldiers from the army and the Assam Rifles have been deployed in Manipur.

Over 13,000 people have been shifted to safe shelters set up by the army and state government, but more than 23,000 others have fled to neighboring states of Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland. {eo}

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