

Persecution, Attacks on Indian Christians Escalate

Hindu activists in India have stepped up their mission in recent weeks to disrupt Sunday prayer services at many Christian churches in that country under the guise they are exposing “forced religious conversions,” an allegation denied by many Christ worshippers, media outlets have reported.

Two such incidents were reported to authorities on Nov. 28. In the nation’s capital of Delhi, activists of Bajrang Dal vandalized a newly inaugurated church in the Dwarka area, and Minakshi Singh, the general secretary of Unity in Compassion, says the police were actually biased against Christ followers who were simply holding a Sunday service. Police detained one of the attackers for an hour and let him go after questioning, reported.

Meanwhile, in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, Barjrang Dal activists barged into a Christian prayer hall and forced the faithful out at Belur in the Hassan district. Police intervened and brought the situation under control after a mob of 20 to 25 men sporting saffron scarves argued and jostled with many of the worshippers in the Life to the Nation’s Ministries prayer hall.

The Quint reported that Karnataka’s Bharatiya Janata Party in the Indian government has launched a “massive gathering exercise” that has targets Christian congregations and churches across the state.

“On , the state’s Intelligence Department issued an order to top police and intelligence officials to gather information about ‘authorized and unauthorized’ churches in Karnataka,” the news website reported after accessing what it called “a key document issued by Additional Director General of Police,

State Intelligence Department.”

Recently in New Delhi, a warehouse turned into a church was vandalized and Sunday mass was disrupted by the same group who members were seen shouting, “shoot the traitors” in a video accessed by Al Jazeera.

On Oct. 3, a mob of nearly 250 Hindu vigilantes armed with iron rods ransacked a church in Roorkee in the northern state of Uttarakhand, governed by the BJP. Pearl Lance, the daughter of the church’s pastor, was allegedly molested by men, abused and attacked by women, and her phone stolen. Rajat Kumar, a staff member at the church, was hit with iron rods multiple times on his head, resulting in serious injuries.

“They dragged me by my neck to the ground floor while raining blows on my face and back. I became unconscious after I was hit with a rod on my head,” Kumar told Al Jazeera, his right eye badly bruised and swollen.

India’s internal security and its National Commission for Minorities officially list more than 100 religiously motivated attacks against Christians each year in India. As of 2020, USCIRF placed India as a Tier-1 minority persecution along with countries like China, North Korea, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. {eoa}

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.