

Other Info & Links

Below you will find links to information about religious freedom and caste discrimination in India. Most are links to reports or hearings by Western groups. If you find any broken links, please Contact Us.

Reports & Info from India's Governmental Bodies

Below are the most recent reports by the major government organisations in India which document discrimination against Dalit-Bahujans. They only occasionally note challenges faced by religious minorities, such as Christians. There are only a few official committees and commissions which provide this information and they are typically at least three years behind in issuing current data.

National Commission on Scheduled Castes

The report from 2004-2005 provides some of the data found in NGO and media reports about atrocities on Dalits.

<http://ncsc.nic.in/index3.asp?ssid=214>

The most relevant info is in Chapter 6, titled "Protection of Civil Right and Atrocities on SCs";

<http://ncsc.nic.in/writereaddata/sublink2images/205.pdf> (1.62 MB)

National Crime Records Bureau

Produced by India's police force, the most recent report published is from 2007 and the majority of newspaper reports as well as NGOs draw from this data.

<http://ncrb.nic.in/cii2007/home.htm>

There is no particular section on religiously motivated crimes, but chapter 7, titled "Crime Against Persons Belonging to SCs / STs", gives interesting info about Dalits.

<http://ncrb.nic.in/cii2007/cii-2007/CHAP7.pdf> (78kb)

National Human Rights Commission

The most recent published report is the "Annual Report 2004-2005", which includes a brief section on p. 143 called "Human Rights of Scheduled Castes" and assorted other writings such as p. 159 on Dalit women in Haryana. There is no dedicated section on religious freedom.

<http://nhrc.nic.in/Documents/AR/AR04-05ENG.pdf> (2.32 MB)

National Commission for Minorities

This group is tasked with monitoring problems for India's non-Hindu religious communities. While annual reports are not currently available, they occasionally publish fact finding reports (i.e. after the anti-Christian violence in Orissa).

Also, they sponsored an interesting study by some university researchers to examine the economic and social status of Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims: "Dalits in the Christian and Muslim Communities: A Status Report on Current Social Scientific Knowledge", by Satish Deshpande, Jan. 17, 2008,

<http://ncm.nic.in/pdf/report%20dalit%20%20reservation.pdf> (1.14 MB)

A second NCM-sponsored study by a leading thinktank in New Delhi looked at the status of all minorities except Muslims but didn't have the focus on Dalits: "Socio-Economic Status of the Notified Minority Communities (Other Than Muslims)", by Institute for Human Development, March 25, 2008, <http://ncm.nic.in/pdf/IHD%20Report%20Final.pdf> (1.21 MB)

Reports & Info on Religious Freedom

NPT Preliminary Findings and Recommendations, August 2010

by National People's Tribunal on Kandhamal

A jury of India's legal and human rights experts, led by a retired Delhi High Court Chief Justice, listened to testimony of victims from Kandhamal, Orissa, during hearings in New Delhi on August 22-24, 2010. John Dayal, aicc Secretary General, was instrumental in organising the event.

Download PDF (100kb)

Global Restrictions on Religion Report, December 2009

by Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, Washington D.C.

This report looked at data from 2006-2008 on religious freedom and then asked 20 questions to assess a Government Restrictions Index and 13 questions to determine a Social Hostilities Index for 198 countries. India was second in terms of "social hostility", just behind Iraq, and in the middle of countries facing "government restrictions."

<http://pewforum.org/docs/?DocID=491>

Acts of Bad Faith: Report on Anti-conversion Laws in India, January 2007

by South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, New Delhi

<http://www.hrdoc.net/sahrdc/hrfeatures/HRF157.htm>

UN Report, 1996 India Country Report

Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, February 14, 1997, E/CN.4/1997/91/Add.1
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/religion/visits.htm> | Download PDF (42kb)

UN Report, 2008 India Country Report

Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, January 26, 2009, A/HRC/10/8/Add.3

NOTE: The SR visited India in March 2008 and the aicc coordinated six multi-faith NGO meetings in five cities for her and her assistant.

http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?m=86 | Download PDF (106kb)

U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom hearing on India, Sept. 18, 2000

John Dayal, aicc Secretary General, testified in Washington, D.C. at one of the only hearings about India held since the Commission was established in the late 1990s. The Commission issues an annual report that is separate from the International Religious Freedom report released by the US Department of State each year.

http://www.uscirf.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1858&Itemid=67 or
<http://indianchristians.in/news/content/view/2955/57/>

U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus briefing on "Anti-Conversion Legislation in India", July 21, 2006 by Angela Wu, The Becket Fund. Mr. Moses Parmar, aicc North India Public Relations officer, also testified.

<http://www.becketfund.org/index.php/article/515.html>

Proselytism vs. Evangelism in India, November 2006

by Allison Duncan, Institute for Global Engagement

<http://www.globalengage.org/media/article.aspx?id=2036>

Briefing India: Religious Discrimination and Violence in 2007 against Christians, March 2008

by Christian Solidarity Worldwide

<http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=report&id=91&rnd=0.6810877>

NOTE: CSW-UK has published many helpful briefings, for example regarding anti-conversion legislation in India, the violence against Dalit Christians in Orissa in 2007, and more.

U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Report, September 2006

This report discusses anti-conversion laws, attacks on Christians (and other religion-based violence), and the challenges for Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2006/71440.htm>

U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Report, September 2007

This report includes five mentions of aicc (pg 10, 16, 19, and two on 20) and gives many details about anti-conversion laws, briefly mentions the Supreme Court case for Dalit Christian civil rights, and notes that most states in India saw an increase in attacks based on religious bias.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2007/90228.htm>

U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Report, September 2008

The aicc is mentioned at least 8 times and the India section has in-depth updates on anti-conversion laws, historic findings of the Indian commission indicating Dalit Christians and Muslims deserve government benefits, a new discriminatory law in Andhra Pradesh, caste discrimination and conversion issues, and the Christmas 2007 violence in Orissa. During the release of the report, Ambassador at Large John Hanford told press, "In India, despite the central government's efforts to foster communal harmony, we've seen more violence against Christians in the state of Orissa where religious factors combined with underlying social, economic, and ethnic grievances have sparked unrest... We've also seen violence against Christians in the state of Karnataka this past week, some of which appears to have been politically motivated, especially since some of it was carried out by the police."

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/>

U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Report, October 2009

The report includes a short section on anti-Christian violence in Orissa in 2008 but mistakenly attributes the violence to "land ownership and government-reserved employment and educational benefits." Also, it notes several challenges for Dalits of all faiths and mentions a study sponsored by National Commission for Minorities on Dalits in Muslim and Christian communities which recommended reservations to all Dalits, regardless of faith. The emergence of a "Hindu Taliban" (i.e. anti-Muslim bombing in Malegaon, Maharashtra) was noted in the section titled "Abuses by Rebel or Foreign Forces or Terrorist Organizations". Surprisingly, there was little mention of significant attacks on Christians in Karnataka in 2008. Aicc was mentioned three times.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127365.htm>

Reports & Info on Caste and Untouchability

UN Discrimination Based on Work & Descent special rapporteurs final report, 2009

by Mr. Yozo Yokota and Ms. Chin-Sung Chung

Five United Nations papers were released between 2001-2006 which identified caste problems in India as well as numerous other countries. The UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights oversaw most of the research by special investigators. Shortly after a progress report (A/HRC/Sub.1/58/CRP.2) was issued in 2006, the new Human Rights Council became active and, as a result, the project lost its mandate. The final report was released in June 2009 and includes a list of principles and guidelines to combat caste discrimination for the Council to approve.
UN HRC 11th Session Website | Download PDF (112kb)

Broken People: Caste Violence Against India's Untouchables, March 1999

by Human Rights Watch

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/india/>

Small Change: Bonded Child Labor in India's Silk Industry, January 2003

by Human Rights Watch (link is to excerpt on "Caste-based discrimination and bonded labor")

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2003/india/India0103-04.htm>

Hidden Apartheid: Caste Discrimination against India's "Untouchables", February 2007

by Human Rights Watch

<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2007/india0207/>

Canada House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights, March 26, 2009

Witnesses included Dr. Joseph D'souza, aicc President and International President of the Dalit Freedom Network. The hearing for a subcommittee of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development was titled "Human Rights in India" and focused on the plight of Dalits.

Transcript | Meeting Minutes

U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights & International Operations, Oct. 6, 2005

These testimonies were significant since they were the first mention of the caste problem officially recorded by the US government. The hearing was titled "India's Unfinished Agenda: Equality and Justice for 200 Million Victims of the Caste System."

Website version | Download PDF (335kb)

United Kingdom Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, March 28, 2007

Testimonies given regarding caste-based discrimination in India and were part of the bi-centenary celebrations of the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade by British politician William Wilberforce.

http://www.conservativehumanrights.com/news/april07/04.04.07_dalitshearingssummary.htm

U.S. Congressional Human Rights Caucus briefing on "Untouchables: The Plight of Dalit Women", May 1, 2007

Witnesses included Dr. Joseph D'souza, aicc President and International President of the Dalit Freedom Network; Mr. Kumar Swamy, aicc South India Director; Nanci Ricks, Executive Director of the Dalit Freedom Network; Prof. Smita Narula, Executive Director of the Center for Global Human Rights and Global Justice at the New York University School of Law; and Mr. T. Kumar, Advocacy Director Asia & Pacific of Amnesty International.

Download Ms. Narula's testimony (81kb) | Read Dalit Freedom Network press statement

United Kingdom House of Commons, May 8, 2007

This was a historic debate on caste-discrimination in India based on a visit by an Member of Parliament which aicc helped to host.

Original Transcript | Consolidated Transcript (provided by Conservative Party Human Rights Commission)

UN International Labour Organization, A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour, May 2005

Contains good descriptions of the child labour situation in India with multiple references to caste and a clear definition of Dalits. Most discussion is in sections 133-166, pgs 31-36. There is another short discussion in sections 362-365, pg 78.

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.GLOBALREPORTDETAILS?var_language=EN&var_PublicationsID=5282&var_ReportType=Report

UN International Labour Organization, The End of Child Labour: Within Reach, May 2006

Only briefly states that people in the "most vulnerable groups" include "those of low caste or class" in section 108, pg 24.

http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.GLOBALREPORTDETAILS?var_language=EN&var_PublicationsID=6163&var_ReportType=Report#

UN International Labour Organization, Equality at work: Tackling the Challenges, May 2007

The 2007 report includes: several sections about caste-based discrimination beginning with section 130 on pg. 35; an

interesting chart comparing affirmative action in the USA, UK, India and several other countries on pg. 62; and a short section on religious discrimination as related to caste in section 118 on pg. 34. However, the report mistakenly says the Indian Constitution outlawed caste (footnote #68 and sentence in section 130)!
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.GLOBALREPORTDETAILS?var_language=EN&var_PublicationsID=6763&var_ReportType=Report

UN International Labour Organization, Freedom of Association in Practice: Lessons Learned, May 2008
 No mention of caste or Dalits. UN International Labour Organization, The Cost of Coercion, May 2009
 The 2009 report mentions caste as a factor in "at risk" groups of people in Asia in section 338 on pg. 81.
http://www.ilo.org/sapfl/Informationresources/ILOPublications/lang--en/docName--WCMS_106268/index.htm

U.S. National Association of Evangelicals, Statement of Conscience, Oct. 11, 2007
 For the NAE press statement, see <http://indianchristians.in/news/content/view/1668/42/>
 For the NAE Statement of Conscience "Concerning the Dalits", see
<http://www.nae.net/images/NAE%202007%20Statement%20of%20Conscience%20Concerning%20Dalits-Adopted%2010-11-2007.pdf> (111kb)

U.S. State Department 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, March 2007
 This report includes numerous mentions of caste problems. On pg. 53, it said, "Traffickers usually targeted minors and Dalit women. A study prepared by Bhoomika Vihar, an NGO from Bihar, said that out of the 173 identified cases of women who had become victims of the sex trade, 85 percent were minors, and half were Dalits." On pg. 40, according to the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, caste clashes were most frequent in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka states. On pg. 42, it states that upper caste gangs at times used mass rape to intimidate lower castes, and gives many examples on pg. 43 and 45. On pg. 60, it notes that many Christians were converts from low caste or Dalit backgrounds, and continued to suffer the same social and economic limitations as Hindu Dalits, particularly in rural areas.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2006/78871.htm>

U.S. State Department 2007 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, March 2008
 The report mentions aicc twice and discussed the lack of religious freedom for Dalits as well as other abuses. Here is a concise summary paragraph from the report: "Dalits faced significant discrimination despite laws to protect them; they often were socially prohibited from using the same wells, attending the same temples, and marrying upper-caste Hindus. They faced social segregation in housing, land ownership, and public transport and were the majority of bonded laborers. Many Dalits were malnourished and lacked access to health care and basic education. There were episodes of vigilante retribution against Dalits who tried to assert their rights. While rare in urban settings, examples of intolerance occurred regularly in rural areas. Many rural Dalits worked as agricultural laborers for caste landowners without remuneration."
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2007/100614.htm>

U.S. State Department 2008 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, February 2009
 This paragraph from the report gave a nice summary: "Significant restrictions remained on the funding and activities of NGOs. Increasing attacks against religious minorities and the promulgation of antireligious conversion laws were concerns. Violence associated with caste-based discrimination occurred." Also, the report includes many references to the plight of Dalits.
<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/sca/119134.htm>

U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2006
 Includes an excellent case study called "Caste And Slavery In South Asia".
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm>

U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2007
 The only caste-related item included in this report was a poster by aicc's US-partner, the Dalit Freedom Network.
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/>

U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2008
 This report did not mention caste as an issue in India's trafficking problems. It notes a "lack of punishment for traffickers" in India and that the government made no progress in stopping bonded labor.
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2008/>

U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons Report, June 2009
 This report did not mention Dalits nor caste in the India section. The report says, "India has not demonstrated sufficient progress in its law enforcement efforts to address human trafficking, particularly bonded labor; therefore, India is placed on Tier 2 Watch List." This is the sixth year India achieved this status. Tier 3 brings possible sanctions. Beginning in 2009, if a country is on the Tier 2 watch list for more than two consecutive years, they automatically move to Tier 3 unless the US president gives a waiver.
<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/>

