

ORISSA ANTI-CHRISTIAN VIOLENT INCIDENTS LIST

Contributed by Correspondent
 Tuesday, 23 September 2008
 Last Updated Wednesday, 04 February 2009

[Editor's note: We stopped adding incidents on Dec. 31, 2008. We are working to independently verify each of these incidents and will update this list as we gather more information. We analysed media reports as well as numerous emails and phone calls from Christians in Orissa telling about horrible violence. We are monitored lists of recorded attacks from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India and the Evangelical Fellowship of India. On Aug. 28, we reorganised the list by date. If you have a confirmed incident to report, please Contact Us.]

August 2008

24th - Rupa, Kandhamal district: Rasananda Pradhan, was burnt to death when his house was set ablaze.

24th - Balliguda: Lynch mobs at the block headquarters of Balliguda, in the very heart of Kandhamal district, attacked and destroyed a Presbytery, convent and hostel damaging the properties.

24th – Nuagaon, Kandhamal: A young Catholic Nun of the Cuttack Bhubaneswar diocese working at Jan Vikas Kendra, the Social Service Centre at Nuagaon in Kandhamal, was gang raped by groups of Hindutva extremists before the building itself was destroyed.

24th – Kandhamal: A mob attacked, ransacked the Jan Vikas Kendra office, and set fire to three four wheelers, six motor cycles, all the important records and documentation of the organisation, and office equipment. This incident took place at 5.30 in the evening.

24th – Baliguda: Divya Jyoti Pastoral Centre destroyed by gutting, burning, and looting the facility at about 6 p.m. The same group entered the Baliguda presbytery, convent, and hostel and damaged the properties.

24th – Kanjamedi, Kandhamal: Roman Catholic Church was attacked and vandalized at 6.30 p.m.

24th – Kanjamedi: The Diocesan Church was ransacked and three Pentecostals churches were destroyed in the same way at 6.45 p.m. by the same group.

24th - Malkangiri, Padua: Lutheran Churches were destroyed. Fathers and Sisters along with the children in Gumuda left the mission stations fearing attacks. As the congregation was coming out of the Church in Malkangiri, a group of angry youth harassed them and forced them to recite Bande Mataram. 22 Christian families of Shanti Nagar (Givindapur) at the foothill of Taptapani Hot Springs were also assaulted and forced to leave the village.

24th – Raikia: In the late evening, about 12 Dalit Christian shops were burnt.

25th - Sankrakhole: Late night, the Convent of St. Joseph's was attacked and ransacked. The sisters also left to the forest and have saved their lives.

25th – Tikabali: Mr. Abenswar Digal's house was set on fire, under Tikabali Police station.

25th – Gumagarh: At about 11.00 p.m., 23 houses of Gumagarh, under Bisipadsad Police station were attacked and ransacked.

25th – Phulbani: Church and presbytery were vandalized and ransacked.

25th – Phulbani: Srasanda MC brother's residence was attacked and the patients who came there to get treatment were beaten.

25th - Phulbani: The VHP activists continued to burn houses and household articles of Christian families in the area. Eight houses were completely destroyed in this incident.

25th – Balliguda: Houses of Christian families in Christiansahi were destroyed and ransacked.

25th – Nuasahi: Houses were set on fire destroying the whole street where Christian families lived. This incident took place at 11.30 a.m.

25th – Balliguda: Two boys studying in the church run hostel were caught in Baliguda and their heads were tonsured (shaved).

25th - Mr. Jamaj Parichha's house was attacked and his vehicles were set ablaze, doors were cut into pieces, and he was beaten by the mob. He sustained a severe head injury and is hospitalised (place is not disclosed because of the security reasons)

25th – Phutpali, Bargarh district: A woman inmate of an orphanage was burnt alive and an orphanage was torched during a bandh called by the VHP and its allies. Twenty children, who were at the orphanage, managed to escape but a priest suffered serious burn injuries in the attack.

25th - Raikia: Rev. Abhiram Singh and leaders of Good Shepherd Community Church, fled to forest for survival of his life. Wife and two kids are in another town with fear and trembling.

25th - Raikia: Dalit Education Center, a school run by Operation Mercy Charitable Company, was burned in evening

25th - Kandhamal district: Churches were attacked in Khurda, Bargarh, Sundergarh, Sambalpur, Koraput, Boudh, Mayurbhanj, Jagatsinghpur and Kandhamal districts as also in the state capital, police sources said, adding 40 houses were set ablaze in Phulbani town.

25th - Bhubaneswar: Violent mobs made several attempts to enter the compounds of Catholic Church and Archbishop's house in the heart of the Capital of the State of Orissa. They could not enter because of the police presence. They threw stones at the guesthouse of Archbishop's House, damaging windows.

25th - Phulbani: The Church at Phulbani, and several other churches at Piangia were attacked and ransacked. Pastor D. Tatson's house was vandalized and his property burnt.

25th – Budamaha, Raikia: The Pentecostal church under Raikia Police station was vandalized and ransacked.

25th – Masadkia: A church was vandalized and ransacked.

25th - Two Pentecostal churches were vandalized and ransacked.

25th - Raikia: Piserma Church, under Raikia Police station was vandalized and ransacked.

25th – Mondakia: A Baptist church and Catholic Churches under Raikia Police station was vandalized and ransacked.

25th – Raikia: Mdahupanga Church, under Raikia Police station was vandalized and ransacked.

25th - Phulbani: Followers of the late Lakshmanananda Saraswati damaged the Catholic Church in the district headquarter town.

25th – Phulbani: Church and presbytery were vandalized and ransacked. Srasanda MC Brother's residence was attacked and the patients who came there to get treatment were beaten. The VHP activists continued to burn houses and household articles of Christian families in the area. Eight houses were completely destroyed in this incident.

25th – Padampur, Bargarh: Fr. Edward Sequira was attacked and beaten brutally. He survived with a serious head injury but is still unconscious.

25th – Govindapally, Boipariguda: Protestors entered the Convent and damaged the grotto of Our Lady and the Cross of the Church yard.

25th – Boipariguda: Mr. Routu Desinayak and Ms. Kalyani, who works for an agro-entrepreneurship program for SWAD at Boipariguda were also arrested under the Forest Protection Act. Although the Police Officer and the Block Development Officer were not willing, the mob forced the police to tie Mr. Desinayak with a rope and drag him through the street to the Forest Office

25th – Boipariguda: Father Joy Areeckal had to run into the forest and the hostel children and his social workers were subjected to insults and intimidation. The Mission has been destroyed along with all that it contained. A sad twist to the story is that the police, along with the people, seized wooden planks and said it was illegally harvested trees.

26th - Bakingia: A Seventh Day Adventist pastor, Samuel Nayak (55), was killed by a mob with knives while trying to get save possessions from his house. He had already moved his wife and two children into the forest.

26th - Barakhama: A police camp was also attacked by the Hindu fundamentalists. With several houses being burnt down and people being made homeless, many Christians, particularly from Nua Sahi, Munda Sahi and Suna Tonga have fled into forests for their lives.

26th – Badimunda: Roman Catholic Church and 5 individual houses were set on fire.

26th - Mandakia: A Pentacostal pastor, Akbar Nayak (41), was killed by a mob of about 100 people with knives while trying to get save possessions from his house. He had already moved his wife and two children into the forest.

September 2008

1st – Raikia: At about 4.00 p.m, 100 years old Catholic Parish Church Mondasore was attacked, vandalized, looted and set fire.

1st – Bhanjanagar: Catholic Church at Chadiapally was ransacked.

1st – Durgaprasad: Baptist Church at Durgaprasad was ransacked and set fire.

1st - Rakia: Presbytery of Catholic Priest was attacked, looted and burnt to ashes

1st - Baptist Church at Durgaprasad was ransacked and set fire

1st – Raikia: The Scorpio (Four Wheeler) car of Fr. Jugal Kishore Digal was set fire at Mondasore

1st – Daringbadi: Baptist Church at Balligada was ransacked, vandalized and set fire

1st – Bhanjanagar: Catholic Church at Chadiapally was ransacked and set fire

1st – Daringabai: Catholic Church at Balligada was ransacked and set fire

1st - Bhaliapada, Mondasore Parish: Mr. Rabindra Parichha, said "I had called the district control room and asked for the security force and also faxed letter apprehending the danger for the Mondasore parish but, In spite of the police information my Parish church was attacked.

2nd – Raikia: Christian house of Mr. Dibya Digal of Pajimaha was attacked and set fire.

2nd – Raikia: Christian House of Mr. Samont Nayak was attacked and set fire

2nd – Raikia: 18 Christian people of Bhaliapada Village reached to the Bhubaneswar and they are now in the Refugee camp. It is reported that all became the destitute.

2nd – Baliigada: At about 50 Christian houses were attacked; All the house hold articles were set fire.

2nd – Kakadabadi: Daringbadi Catholic Church was attacked and set fire

2nd – Kakadabadi: 3 Christian house of Kakadabadi village was ransacked and set fire

2nd - Tikabali: 35 Christian houses were set fire (Beheragano area)

2nd – Chakapad: 5 Christian houses were set fire

2nd - Sarangard: Christan People of Padangi village were being forced to practise Hinduism and given warning to death, if they practise Christianity

2nd - G.Udayagir: The house of Mr. Gaura Chandra Nayak was attacked and set fire.

3rd - Daringbadi: (Mondasore Parish) At about 2 a.m., the Catholic church in Padunbadi was attacked and heavily vandalised. Reportedly a wall was broken and other severe damage.

8th – Medikia , Raikia: Nine houses of christians were set on fire by VHP cadre at 1 a.m. but no one was hurt. (Source: News from aicc leader)

9th – Nilungia, G. Udaigiri: In another case of assault and kidnapping, Mr. Pura Malik was captured by a group of Hindu extremists in Nilungia village, G. Udaigiri.

11th – Telinga, G. Udaigiri: Rioters broke into the homes of Mr. Benjamin Nayak and Mr. Gomor Nayak and burned both houses. Leaving behind their belongings the family members somehow managed to escape and are presently in a relief camp. (Source: EFI mailing)

12th – Mandasur, Rakia: One jeep of a Catholic mission was burnt by VHP at 10 a.m.

13th - Anchhla, Borigumma, Koraput: A church was burnt in the night by irate mob having allegiance with Hindu militant outfits. (Source: EFI)

20th - Near Phulbani: 33-year-old Ishwar Digal from Gatrungia village in Tikabali block of Kandhamal was attacked and killed as he and his wife Bhumi were coming back to their relief camp in Phulbani town. His wife escaped and notified Sarangada police station. (Source: EFI news, aicc leaders)

21st - Gochhapada, Kandhamal: 10 homes belonging to Christians were burned. (Source: EFI news)24th - Sikaketa, Kandhamal District: at about 8 pm, two churches - one Baptist and one Roman Catholic -- were damaged at and 40 houses of Christians are set on fire. (Source: Catholic, aicc leaders)24th - Kurumungia and Gresingia, Kandhamal District: Dozens of houses of Christians burned in villages. (Source: Catholic, aicc leaders)

25th - Sisapanga, near Gundhani, Kandhamal District: At about 3 pm, four Christian houses were set on fire. (Source: Catholic, aicc leaders)26th - Rajenpanga, Kandhamal District: Around 3 p.m. 25 houses of Christian community were set afire by VHP cadre only 15 kms away from Daringbadi. Victims reportedly took shelter at the Daringbadi relief camp. 26th - G. Udayagiri, Kandhamal District: A young Christian man named Rajesh Digal was on his way home from Chennai. While walking with his Hindu friend, they were attacked. The Hindu man was stabbed in the left side but escaped. Rajesh was buried alive by the VHP attackers. (Source: aicc leaders)30th - Rudangia, Kandhamal District: 60 houses of Christians burned in the morning, and one Christian lady was shot and killed while seven others were injured. (Source: aicc leaders)October 20083rd -- Dubla village, Bolangir District: Christians fled this village after threats by mobs chanting anti-Christian slogans. They returned on 3rd to have peace talks organised by police. But they faced more threats by extremists and decided to leave the next morning.3rd -- Sindhipankha village, Kandhamal: Two Christians (Dushashan Majhi and Sanyasi Majhi) killed. (Source: Compass Direct)5th -- Sikuli, Kalahandi District: The Sikuli CNI church was heavily damaged around 8pm. It is located under the R. Madanpur police station. One eyewitness said 40 Christian houses were then burned at 10:30pm. (Source: aicc leaders)5th -- Bohiotbadi village, Kandhamal: Under Daringbadi Police Station, about 15 houses of Christians were burned down around 11:30pm.8th -- Balligada Village, Nuagam Block, Kandhamal: 25 houses belonging to Christians burnt and looted by mob. (Source: Compass Direct)8th -- Kandhamal: attempted attack on Advocate Mrutyunjaya Nayak by Bajrang Dal members. Police arrived and prevented any injury and FIR was filed. (Source: EFI News) 14th -- Sarangagarh village, Kandhamal: This village under the Raikia police station was attacked and homes of about 12 Christian families were burned. A CRPF soldier was also murdered in a separate incident. (Source: Deccan Chronicle, "Violence in Orissa again", Oct. 15, 2008)November 20083rd -- Dhangadamaha village, Kandhamal: Three Christian houses were attacked and vandalised under G. Udayagiri block by unidentified miscreants (Source: aicc leaders)4th -- Bhadrak district: Seven Christians (5 men and 2 women) working for a humanitarian project called Discipleship Centre were beaten by villagers near Tihidi Police station. RSS and VHP leaders filed FIR alleging forcible conversion by DC staff. All staff were temporarily arrested under section 153A/341IPC and section-4 of Orissa Freedom of Religious Act. (Source: aicc leaders)25th -- Dobali village, near Raikia, Kandhamal: A Christian woman, Lalita Digal (45), was dragged out of the house and murdered when returning from a relief camp to harvest her paddy field. (Source: EFI News)25th -- Tiangia village, Kandhamal: Two Christian homes burnt as well as one Hindu home of a family sympathetic to Christians. (Source: Persecution Update India)December 20083rd - - Koraput District: Three Christians arrested on false allegations of 'forcible conversion' made by RSS members, and charged under sections 147, 148, 254, 307 and 506 IPC. (Source: aicc leaders) **ATTACKS WITHOUT DATES**

(we are still working to verify more details about these reliable, but unconfirmed reports from late August)

Kanjimendi: Fr Thomas, director of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Kanjimendi, less than a kilometer away from the Social Service Centre, and another Nun were injured when the centre was attacked. They were taken to the police station in a disheveled state as the armed mob bayed for their blood. The Pastoral centre was then set afire.

Balliguda: The mobs in Balliguda caught hold of two boys of the Catholic hostel and tonsured their heads.

Srasanada: Mobs attacked the Mother Teresa Brothers' residence and hospital in Srasanada, destroyed once before and rebuilt two months ago, and beat up the patients.

Akamra Jila, Bhubaneswar: A Baptist Church in Akamra Jila in Bhubaneswar is damaged.

Boudh: Fundamentalists enter the Catholic parish church and destroy property.

Muniguda: Catholic Fathers and Nuns' residence have been damaged.

Sambalpur: HM Sister's residence (Ainthapalli) has suffered damage.

Padanpur: One priest is attacked and admitted to a hospital. Hostel boys and the in charge have moved away from the place.

Madhupur: Catholic Church attacked.

Phulbani: Attempted violence on small churches in various districts, including Padampur, Sambalpur near GM College, Talsera, Dangsoroda, Narayanipatara, Muniguda, Tummiibandh, Tangrapada, Phulbani, Balliguda, Kalingia, Chakapad, Srasanranda.

Balliguda: Houses attacked on forest hamlets of Balliguda, Kanjamandi Nuaguam (K.Nuaguam), Tiangia (G.Udayagiri), Padangiri, Tikabali.

Kalahandi: Houses burnt even though the district is more than 300 kilometers from the place where Swami Lakshmanananda was killed.

Bhawanipatna: Pastor Sikandar Singh of the Pentecostal Mission beaten up and his house burnt in Bhawanipatna.

Kharihar: 3 Christian shops were looted and burnt. Pastor Alok Das and Pastor I M Senapati beaten up.

Aampani: Pastor David Diamond Pahar, Pastor Pravin Ship, Pastor Pradhan and Pastor Barik beaten up and chased away with their families.

Naktikani: Mob surrounds village to attack Christians.

Raikia: village evacuated, whole village fled to forest for survival

Gee Udaigiri, Baliguda: Mr. Mishra Digal was beaten up, while the motorcycles of Mr. R. K. Digal and Jitendra were burnt. Several buses at Gee Udaigiri in Baliguda were burnt.

Kakriguma: Churches have been targeted by the mob that reportedly damaged the Assembly Of God Church and the Philadelphia Church.