

## "Mob manhandled priest, nun"

Contributed by Correspondent  
Wednesday, 28 July 2010  
Last Updated Friday, 30 July 2010

**CUTTACK:** For the second day on Tuesday, defence lawyers grilled yet another witness in the Kandhamal nun rape case at the district session's court throughout the day.

Deposing before the court Kumud Naik, a 30-year-old youth, told the judge that he was a witness when a mob attacked the Baliguda church on August 25, 2008 and they manhandled the church's priest and a nun in the aftermath of murder of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati.

'No complaint'

However, Naik was unable to answer satisfactorily when he was asked by the defence lawyers why he (Naik) did not file a complaint before the local police when his own house and shop were burnt in the communal riots.

He admitted before the court that his house and shop was destroyed in the violence even as Section 144 of CrPC was clamped in the area.

'Converted illegally'

The defence lawyers claimed that Naik, who was 'illegally' converted to Christianity at a tender age of 13 years and whose wife is now an employee of the church was roped in as a witness by the prosecution after more than four months of the incident just on the eve of filing chargesheet in the case.

'Naik was roped in as a witness in the case after more than four months of the incident and he was examined by the crime branch sleuths on January 20, 2009, just five days before the charge sheet was submitted on January 25 last year', said defence lawyer Souribandhu Mohapatra.

At least three witnesses were summoned to depose before the court on the day. But only two of them turned up while statements of only Naik could be recorded, sources said. Naik also identified two of the accused from among nine accused.

(Source: The Hindu, 28 July 2010, <http://www.hindu.com/2010/07/28/stories/2010072861830600.htm>)