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Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance: follow-up to and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Written statement* submitted by Integrated Youth Empowerment - Common Initiative Group (I.Y.E. – C.I.G.), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 August 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Persecution of Minorities in India

Persecution consists of acts that are sufficiently serious by their nature or repetition as to constitute a severe violation of basic human rights. Minority rights cover protection of existence, protection from discrimination and persecution, protection and promotion of identity, and participation in political life. Unfortunately, sectarian violence and atrocity crimes, rooted in discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities, are spreading across the world and specially in India where minorities are treated unfairly or cruelly over a long period of time because of their race and religion. Violence risk factors for minorities in India, including, ethnic division, discrimination, human right violations, and inequality of economic opportunities continues at rise. Despite the UN calls on protection of minority rights, in India, Christian and Muslim minorities are arrested, persecuted, made homeless and killed, their rights are being violated while sufficient attention is not being paid to the issue. The United Christian Forum (UCF), a human rights group based in New Delhi, has said that since January 2023, at least 400 acts of violence against Christians took place across 23 states in India. In the first half of 2023, Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 155 incidents, followed by Chhattisgarh (84), Jharkhand (35), Haryana (32), Madhya Pradesh (21), Punjab (12), Karnataka (10), Bihar (nine), Indian Administered Jammu and Kashmir (eight), and Gujarat (seven). In UP, Jaunpur reported the greatest number of cases of violence against Christians with 13 such occurrences, followed by Raebareli and Sitapur, with 11 incidents each. Kanpur recorded ten instances, while Azamgarh and Kushinagar districts reported nine cases each. According to the Christian body, June saw the highest number of attacks against the minority community with a total of 88 incidents or an average of three occurrences per day. The incidents of religious persecution in Uttar Pradesh have increased ever since the pro-Hindu BJP came to power in the state of Uttar Pradesh for a second consecutive term. The state government is one of 11 to enact anti-conversion laws in the country. On 24 July 2023, a mob of 30 radical Hindu nationalists (Hindutva) carrying knives and bamboo sticks, violently attacked a Christian pastor and his family in Rae Bareilly district in the state of Uttar Pradesh in Northern India. The mob attacked the family for allegedly converting villagers to Christianity. The pastor's wife sustained a blow and cut to her head that left her unconscious; she was rushed to the hospital along with others who suffered serious internal injuries. The mob vandalized the house church, damaged the furniture and other items. When the pastor called the police for help, officers arrived at the scene to only make things difficult for the pastor and his family, taking them to the police station, where the attackers accused the pastor and his wife of conducting illegal conversions. The police registered the allegation and kept the pastor and his wife at the station for more than 24 hours and finally released them on bail. On 11 April 2023, three churches are the Evangelical Baptist Convention Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church Manipur and Catholic Holy Spirit Church were demolished in Manipur and ignored the faith of 41% of Manipur's Christian population. On May 13, 2023, Indian police arrested 10 people under the stringent anti-conversion law after a raid on a Christian prayer gathering. Recently on 1 August 2023, a large armed Hindutva extremists mob set on fire a mosque and killed its deputy imam in Gurgaon's Sector 57 Haryana. The extremists assaulted deputy imam, stabbed 13 times with swords. and his throat slit before he was killed. Another person present in the premises of mosque was also badly beaten up and shot in the knee. He is presently in the ICU. My organization urge this council to ask Indian government to stop persecution of minorities and ensure complete protection of their rights.
