



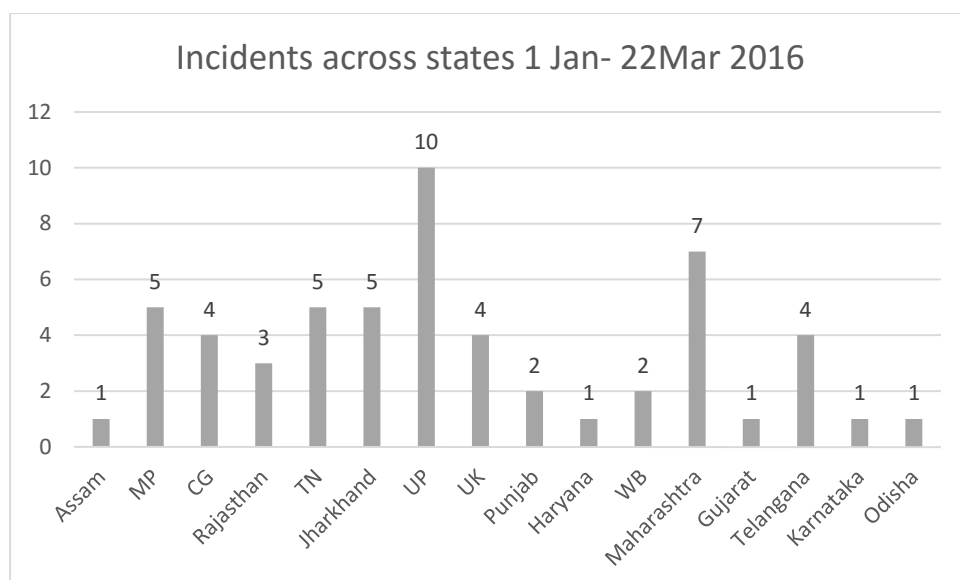
Evangelical Fellowship of India

Persecution Watch, January – March 2016

EFI News – Persecution Watch March 2016

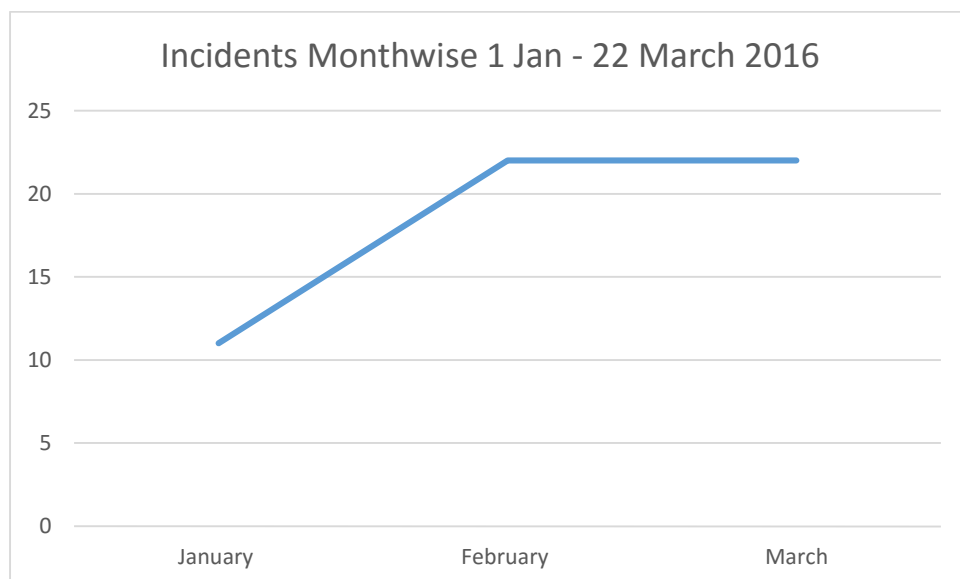
Introduction

The Evangelical Fellowship of India has registered 55 verified incidents of hate crimes targeting Christians India between January 17 and March 22, 2016 in 16 states throughout the country. This list is a partial list for many incidents are not reported and of the incidents that are reported, many are unverifiable due to the sheer size of the country.



Uttar Pradesh tops the list with 10 incidents, followed by Maharashtra with 7 incidents. This is followed by Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand with 5 each, and by Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Uttarakhand with 4 each. Other states on the tally are Rajasthan (3), Punjab (2), Haryana (1), West Bengal (2), Gujarat (1), Assam (1), Karnataka (1) and Odisha (1).

January saw a total of 11 incidents while February and March (till 22nd March) saw 22 incidents each.



The Evangelical Fellowship of India urges the Central Government and the respective State Governments to curb the hate and violence unleashed at the Christian community in India and to secure their fundamental right to profess, practice and propagate their faith and live peacefully as citizens of a free nation.

List of incidents

Evangelist beaten in Erode, Tamilnadu

January 17, 2016: According to reports received from ADF, a Christian evangelist was brutally beaten by a mob of more than 100 Hindutva fundamentalists for sharing a Bible with a person who had wilfully requested and accepted it from the evangelist.

Pastor viciously attacked and grievously injured during the church service in Theni, Tamilnadu

January 17, 2016: According to reports received from ADF, a Pastor from Kambam, Theni District, Tamil Nadu was attacked and injured by a Hindutva activist. The pastor who belongs to a Pentecostal Church in Kambam, was attacked while he was carrying out the Church worship service. He was attacked on his head, using a heavy and sharp object and bled profusely as a result of his injury. He was admitted at the government hospital and received emergency treatment.

Christians attacked in Odisha

January 19, 2016: Christians in Digal village in Mottu village, Podia block, Malkangiri district in Orissa were beaten up in the presence of the police by local Hindu radicals. On January 19, 2016, the Christians in Mottu village were called by the police to a certain location. On reaching they were ambushed and beaten up by local radicals insisting that people who worship Jesus Christ should not live in the village. The mob was led by the village head. Christians were beaten in front of the police who did not help them.

Women's meeting stopped in Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh

January 19, 2016: A women's prayer meeting organized at Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh was disrupted by RSS members. The RSS members barged into the private meeting, misbehaved with the women participants and used abusive language. They also informed the police alleging that conversions were going on. The police came and arrested 4 women who were leading the meeting and took them to the Venkat Nagar police station. Distressed by the behaviour of the RSS members and the subsequent action of the police, the women who were attending the prayer meeting went to the police station in a combined group and confronted the policemen. This action resulted in the release of the 4 leaders of the prayer meeting. The police however warned the women not to pray together but in their own homes.

Pastor summoned in Doiwala Police station in Dehradun, Uttarakhand

January 21, 2016: Pastor Radheshyam Saksena from Dehradun was summoned at Doiwala police station on alleged charges of forced conversion from received from unknown people. The Doiwala police warned him not to share his Christian faith in the area.

Pastor attacked by Hindu extremists in Dehradun, Uttarakhand

January 24, 2016: Pastor Jaison from Hope India Ministries was attacked by Hindu extremists during the Church service in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The worship service was disrupted by around 40 people who barged in and stopped the worship service. The Police soon followed and took Pastor Jaison to the local police station. At the police station the policemen allegedly threatened Pastor Jaison and told him to discontinue conducting worship services on Sunday. He was kept in the police station premises and questioned throughout the day by the police and the local intelligence department. Pastor Jaison has been pastoring the Church in the area for the last eight years.

Pastor abused, humiliated, paraded in Orai, Uttar Pradesh



January 29, 2016: Hindu extremists kidnapped, beat up, and humiliated Pastor Avdhesh Savita in Orai town, Jalaun district, Uttar Pradesh. Pastor Savita was kidnapped by members of Yuvavahini (a Hindu extremist outfit) posing as policemen. He was taken to Bajrang Dal head office in Orai town from his native village of Rendhar. He was beaten up on the way there and once he reached the Bajrang Dal office, the combined members of Bajrang Dal and Yuvavahini beat him up even more. They then proceeded to shave half of his head, his eyebrow, half of his

moustache, put him on a donkey and paraded him for more than half an hour before the police intervened. Charges of forced conversion were alleged on Pastor Savita by a man called Sangam Jatav, who had approached the Bajrang Dal and was part of the mob that humiliated and beat the Pastor. Jatav had claimed that Pastor Savita had taken him and two others to Varanasi last December and there had forcibly converted them. Jatav's claims were refuted by two people he named. The police have registered an FIR against 100 – 150 unknown Bajrang Dal members, and have arrested Sangam Jatav and 9 others who also have FIR's registered against them at Rendhar and Orai. Akhilesh Dhiya, the district convener of the Bajrang Dal is absconding.



Catholic priest, Church members attacked by a mob in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu



January 28, 2016: Fr. Jose Kannumkuzhy and three members of Diocesan Pastoral Council were beaten up by a group of 35 young people, suspected to be members of right-wing Hindu groups, on January 28, 2016. Fr. Kannumkuzhy and the three Christians, Lijo, Joseph and Stanley, were visiting the Assisi Snehalaya (abode of love) in Ettimada, 20 km south of Coimbatore. During their trip they also had planned to visit the Ettimadai police station and were waiting outside when the attack took place.

As they were sitting in their car, a mob appeared suddenly and started attacking them. They tried to escape in their car, but the mob followed them and caught up with them as they entered a national highway. Lijo, who was driving the car, approached police jeep to seek help. However, the policemen refused to intervene. The mob attacked them with granite stones lying on the highway. They tore the priest's cassock and punched him. Not only this, they were made to walk nearly 2.5 kilometres while the attackers asked them to "call on their Jesus to protect them".

The priest and the fellow Christians were admitted to nearby K G Hospital on the same day of the attack. Fr. Kannumkuzhy, who is 49 years old, continues to be in the intensive care unit and is under severe trauma due to extensive head injuries. The three lay people were discharged on January 31.

Pastor beaten up in Banswara district, Rajasthan

January 31, 2016: Pastor Galia Damor was beaten up by members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad at Churada village, Banswara, Rajasthan on January 31, 2016. He was on his way to lead Sunday worship service at the Church he pastors and was travelling by the bus to reach his destination. As soon as he got down from the bus, four men came to him and demanded that he prays and heals a sick person then and there. When he suggested that they should take the person to a hospital instead, the extremists pushed him and beat him up with belts. They were shouting slogans against religious conversions in the village. Although the pastor has given a written complaint at the local police station, no action has been taken till press time.

Christians missionaries threatened in Hantarganj, Chatra, Jharkhand

January 31, 2016: A group of missionaries were kidnapped and threatened by Hindu extremists in Mahgodwa village, Hantarganj of Chatra district on 31st Jan 2016. Hindu extremists who had kidnapped the Christians, kept them illegally under their custody for some time, only to release them later after sternly warning them not to enter the village again.

Christians Missionaries severely beaten and arrested in Churu, Rajasthan



January 31, 2016: 11 Christians including 3 women were beaten up and later handed over to the police in Sardarshahr, Churu, Rajasthan. The incident took place when a visiting team comprising of 9 Christians from North east India (including 3 women) and two Christians from Punjab were invited to pray for a sick girl in ward number 13, Sardarshahr. As soon as local Hindu extremists got to know about this, they gathered a mob of more than 400 people, ambushed the house, beat up the Christians and handed them over to the local police.

The crowd did not even spare the women and the uproar went on for about 2 hours. The Christians, who were falsely accused by Hindu extremists of having given large sums of money to people to convert, have chosen not to file a complaint despite being injured as a result of the attack.

Pastor and wife attacked, Pastor critical

February 5, 2016: Pastor Simon Tandy and his wife were attacked by Hindu extremists in what was made to look like an accident on February 5, 2016 near Kanker, Chhattisgarh. The incident took place almost a week after Pastor Simon and his wife were threatened of dire consequences by Hindu extremists as they disrupted the worship service in the Church that is pastored by Pastor Tandy on January 31, 2016. The police intervened and made sure that Pastor Tandy was unharmed. The attackers however left after issuing a warning.

On the day of the second incident Pastor Tandy was on the way to Kanker with his wife when his two wheeler was allegedly rammed into by the Hindu extremists who fled the spot. At the moment Pastor Tandy is admitted in Raipur since it was not possible to treat him at Kanker given the basic facilities there. He continues to be critical. His house meanwhile is being visited by Hindu extremists who are threatening his wife not to take any legal action.

20 Christians including a pastor arrested in Robertsganj, Uttar Pradesh



February 6, 2016: 20 Christians including a Pastor were attacked, manhandled and arrested at Robertsganj in Uttar Pradesh's Sonbhadra district. Pastor Sajju John was having a meeting with fellow believers when Dharamvir Tiwari, Ex District President of the BJP and leaders of the Hindu Jagran Manch (HJM) along with member of BJP and the HJM surrounded the house where the meeting was going on. They rounded up the Christians and had them arrested. The Christians were taken to the local police station where they were questioned. They were later released close to mid night after spending an entire day at the police station.

Pastor and two Christians arrested at Noida

February 7, 2016: Pastor Rampal and two Christians identified as Lalu Gautam and Ranjeet were arrested by the local police in Noida and taken to the Noida Phase 2 police station for questioning. They were arrested from Sector 93 in Noida where Pastor Rampal was conducting a worship service. He was about to serve the holy communion when the police came and took him along with the two Christians. They were questioned by the police on complaints received from local Hindu groups who were alleging that Pastor Rampal did not have permission to hold Christian meetings as the Church is not registered. The three were also taken to meet the local intelligence office for questioning. They were released later in the evening and no charges were filed against them.

Pastors detained in Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh

February 6, 2016: Pastor Sajju K. John from India Mission along with 20 Pastors were taken into Police custody on Feb. 6, 2016 on charges of conversion. They were in an on-going staff meeting in the evening when a mob came and disrupted the meeting. They were taken through the street, humiliated, beaten and abused all along the way to the police station. After much harassment and stress, they were released after intervention from EFI volunteers later at midnight without any charges.

Pastor along with three Christians attacked by Hindu extremists in Jalandhar, Punjab

February 8, 2016: Pastor Ankur Narula and the members of his Church were attacked in Jalandhar, Punjab on the evening of February 8. After an outside assignment Narula was on his way to his home, which is in the church compound, when he was chased by around 30 men on cars and bikes. Narula's driver drove the car straight into the Church compound, where some church members were playing the game of cricket. Three Christians ran to Narula's aid as they saw the mob following Pastor and suspected threat. The mob quickly approached Narula with the intention to assault him, when these three Christians shielded Pastor and in the process were severely beaten along with Narula who sustained minor injuries. The three were hospitalized.

Christian woman threatened and rejected by her own family in Gondia, Maharashtra

February 10, 2016: Kamtha, a Christian woman from Gondia, received death threats from her father-in-law because of her faith. She is the only Christian in her entire family and is facing a lot of opposition. Her family wants her to renounce Christianity and for this she has been subjected to much physical and mental trauma. However, things worsened on February 10, when her father-in-law threatened to kill her unless she recants her faith. She has been boycotted from her community already.

Prayer meetings disrupted in Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh

February 10, 2016: Two peaceful Christian meetings at Ghazipur district were disrupted by Hindu extremists. Both the meetings were held at two different house churches. On February 8 Pastor Jitendra along with his congregation were gathered in one such house when Hindu extremists disrupted the meeting and threatened the Pastor of dire consequences. On February 10, Pastor Jitendra was leading another house prayer meeting at a different location when the extremists attacked again. Pastor Jitendra and other Christians present were manhandled, verbally abused and their bibles were torn to pieces. Pastor Jitendra has been threatened by Hindu extremists in the past too and has been warned not to conduct house church meetings.

Police detains Pastor on trumped up charges of kidnapping and conversion in Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh



February 11, 2016: Pastor Ashawan of Shahdol district in Madhya Pradesh was detained on February 11, 2016 by the police on alleged charges of kidnapping and conversion. He was arrested by the police at the complaint of a lady whose husband had accepted the Christian faith. She charged Rev. Ashawan of kidnapping her husband and converting him forcefully. After intervention from the local EFI volunteers who mobilized support for the Pastor and on the basis

of a written application submitted by the husband of the lady (who pressed charges) along with around 40 Church members, the police let Pastor Ashawan go. No case was filed against the Pastor.

Pastor's mother assaulted, found unconscious in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh

February 12, 2016: Itwari Devi mother of Pastor Nanhe Lal from Rakba village of Jaunpur district was found unconscious on the street after being assaulted by local Hindu extremist on February 12, 2016. Itwari has a piece of land that she had willingly offered to Christians for the purpose of worship. Hindu groups in her village warned her several times in the past to, not to let the worship service take place on her land, but she did not deter. She was attacked and beaten, as a result of which, she fractured her left leg. Itwari's son Pastor Nanhe Lal conducts the service and ministers to the people there. This is the second attack on Itwari Devi in the last one year. Last year in the month of July they attacked her while she was going to neighbours house in the night.



Pastor attacked by Hindu extremists in Gurdaspur, Punjab



February 13, 2016: Pastor Bua Masih from Babri village of Gurdaspur district in Punjab was attacked by Hindu extremists while he was on his way back from a neighbouring village after conducting a prayer meeting at a Church member's house. Masih had undergone leg surgery in the past and was under medication for the same. Due to the assault, his stitches broke. "Masih could barely walk and was under much pain," said Jitendra Rathod, Coordinator, EFI, who met Masih personally after the attack. Masih was warned by Hindu extremists on February 10, three days before the attack, of dire consequences if he enters their village.

Construction of Church building stopped in Kaithal, Haryana

February 15, 2016: In Rajound village of Kaithal in Haryana, Hindu extremists have stopped construction of a Church building by putting pressure through local officers. The Church construction was taking place in Pastor Sharad Kumar's personal land. Kumar works with Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB).

Hindu extremists attack Believers Church in Katras town of Dhanbad district, Jharkhand

February 15, 2016: Around ten unidentified men entered the Believers Church in Katras town of Dhanbad district and finding a woman cleaning the church, they assaulted her. Nitu Devi a Church member, cleaning the Church premises got severely injured in the attack. An FIR has been lodged against the attackers in Katras Police station.

Pastor threatened for Church activities in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh

February 18, 2016: Pastor P. Rajhmani of Full Gospel Pentecostal Church mission in Mhow, Madhya Pradesh is facing constant life threats from local Hindu extremists. On February 18, 2016 Rajhmani's house was surrounded by a mob who have been keeping an eye on him. Rajhmani locked himself inside the house for fear of them attacking him and his family. "Hindu extremists have been eying on me and monitoring my activity for the past one year now," said Rajhmani to EFI. Rajhmani has been Pastoring this Church for the past 10 years.

Hindu extremists attack meeting leaving pastor unconscious and others in critical condition in Rai Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh

February 19, 2016: Pastor Santosh Kumar Shivpuri, 80, and eight others were severely assaulted in Rai Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh on February 19, 2016. A mob of about 40-50 Hindu extremists attacked the house of Rampal where a prayer meeting was being conducted. The extremists hit them with rods due to which Pastor Shivpuri, Rampal, his wife and others were critically injured. Shivpuri fell unconscious because of the beating and was later carried to Kanpur for treatment. Rampal broke his hand in the assault and had to undergo surgery during which a rod had to be put in his hand. The police arriving on scene, spotted Shivpuri unconscious and left him at the mercy of his family to attend to him. The vehicles of the Christians parked outside were also damaged. Shivpuri was previously warned by the villagers to not to conduct prayer meetings in their village.



Christian family assaulted at Dingara Village, Buldhana district, Maharashtra.

February 20, 2016: A Christian family was assaulted at a Panchayat meeting summoned at the behest of the villagers at Dingara Village in Buldhana district, Maharashtra. Roop Singh and his family were summoned before the Panchayat for conducting a weekly prayer meeting in his house for the past three years. After being beaten by the villagers, the family along with their pastor approached the local police station to file a complaint against the villagers. However, the Police refused to accept their complaint and instead suggested them to settle the matter and make a 'compromise'. The villagers have restricted the entry of any pastor to the village and Singh's family has been warned of dire consequences if any prayer meeting ever takes place in his house in the future. Singh's family was also threatened and manhandled by the villagers about two months ago.

Pastor attacked by Hindu extremists in Khargone, Madhya Pradesh

February 21, 2016: A group of Bajrang Dal members barged into the house of Pastor Tulsiram Ahirwar, of the IET Church in Village Neemgarh, Khargone, Madhya Pradesh on February 21, 2016. It was after the Sunday worship service that this mob entered the house church, started to threaten Ahirwar and beat him. They warned him not to continue worship services. No complaint has been filed by the Pastor.



Christian man beaten up in Raigarh, Maharashtra

February 21, 2016: Shivram Pawar, a Christian from Nadsud village of Raigarh district of Maharashtra was severely beaten by Hindu extremists on February 21, 2016 on alleged charges of conversion. A FIR has been lodged in the local police station.

Three men enter a Christian's house and assault him in Singhbhum, Jharkhand

February 21, 2016: A Christian named Ponj (50) was brutally beaten by three local extremists who entered his house on February 21, 2016 at Amjora village, in West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand. Ponj was resting in his house when these three men entered around 11 in the morning and started to misbehave with him. They forced him to sing a tribal worship song; when Ponj refused the three men started to beat him accusing him of carrying out religious conversions in the area. They also accused him of disrupting the peaceful environment in the village. A complaint was launched at the Jagarnathpur police station by Ponj but no FIR has been registered.

A three-day convention attacked by Sarna Community in Jharkhand

February 24, 2016: A group of people belonging to the Sarna Community barged into a three-day convention organized by local Christians at Pandra village, Keredari block of Hazaribagh district, Jharkhand and beat up the Christians present. The convention was scheduled to be from February 24 - 26, 2016 but was stopped on the first day itself. Seven people got injured in this sudden attack. According to reports from the local Christians some of the attackers were police personnel. The next morning a mob of around 100 people gathered at the local police station and raised slogans against Christians alleging them of conversions. Two FIR's have been registered, one against the Christians by the Sarna Community alleging conversion and the other is registered against the Sarna Community by the Christians.

Sunday Prayer Meeting Disrupted in Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh

February 28, 2016: Two Pastors were detained by the police on February 28, 2016 of Jamua village, Jaunpur, Uttar Pradesh. They were arrested at the complaint of a high caste Hindu of the same village. Pastor Vijay Bahadur and Pastor Lalta Prasad were taken to the Thanagaddi police outpost under

Kerakat police station straight from the Sunday worship service that they conduct under a temporary tent placed on Prasad's land. 400 – 500 people gather for worship every Sunday on that land. A written application was filed against Pastor Prasad with the local District Magistrate alleging 'mass conversion taking place in Jamua village'. After the intervention of EFI, no charges were filed against the two detained pastors and they were released.

RSS members attacked Church Leaders and Congregation in Bandla, Hoogly, West Bengal

February 28, 2016: Around 40 members from RSS and Bajrang Dal disrupted a Sunday worship service of Assembly of God Church in Bandla, district Hoogly. Hindu extremists attacked the Church members and snatched their Bibles from them. They also abused the women present in the Church. The next day on 29 February 2016, the same Church members were attacked by around 70 members from RSS and Bajrang dal while a house Church meeting was going on in a Christian's house. They threatened the people present in the prayer service. The Church Pastor Saikat Sinha who was not present in both the incidents due to death of his mother in law is now fearing for his life as Hindu extremists have threatened to harm him if they find him in any of the Church activities in the area. The Church services have now been suspended by the Pastor due to fear from Hindu extremists.

Hindu extremists attacked Christians during Sunday worship service in Subhasnagar, Hyderabad, Telangana

February 28, 2016: Pastor Agran Shastry and Church members from Beersheba Mandir Church were attacked by around 40 Hindu extremists in Subhasnagar, Hyderabad. The attack took place while the Sunday worship was going on. The attackers beaten Pastor Shastry using their shoes, paraded him in the street, manhandled his wife and beat up the congregation members. A FIR was filed in the local police station. 4 members of the Hindu extremists group were arrested but later released on bail. Pastor Shastry has given an application in the police station for his protection as he is fearing for his life.

Hindu extremists attacked Christian believers in Roorkee, Uttarakhand

March 3, 2016: Around 25 RSS members attacked a meeting of Christians at Krishna Nagar, Roorkee, Haridwar District, Uttarakhand. The attack took place when Christians were having a community meal at the house of a local Christian identified as Rajender, who had invited Pastors and Church members from the Anglican Disciples Church of India for a fellowship lunch. Suddenly and without provocation, RSS members trespassed into his house, alleged that conversions were going on and started beating the Christians present including the women. The attackers targeted Pastor Vinod Tyagi, Assistant Pastor Sunil Masih and Mr. Ruben Singh in particular. Later nine Christians were dragged to the local police station where the police was pressurized by the RSS members to register a complaint against the Christians. The RSS also mobilized a crowd of around 500 people who surrounded the police station demanding action against the Christians. The police carried an investigation and not finding any incriminating evidence released the Christians. The Pastors fear for their lives and have given an application to the police for their protection.

Hindu Extremists attacked 3 Evangelists in Gariyabandh, Chhattisgarh

March 4, 2016: A mob of around 40 people belonging to the RSS attacked 3 evangelists, Satish Kumar Gideon, Nehru Lal and Subhas Lal at Dhawalpur village, Gariyaband district, Chhattisgarh. The Evangelists from the India Field Council of Baptist Mid Mission were attacked on alleged charges of conversion. After beating the 3 Evangelists the attackers took them to the Mainpur Police station where they filed a complaint against them. The Police officials detained the evangelists till late night and then let them go

ordering them to come again on next morning for questioning. The next day, after warning the evangelists, to not to visit the area the police released them.

Senior pastor beaten up at Nandurbar, Maharashtra

March 4, 2016: Unidentified attacker beat up Rev. Anand Patel, 68 years, from the Suwarta Alliance Church, Shahada, at Nandurbar district. The incident took place around 9 am in the morning. The pastor was not seriously injured and approached the police to file an FIR but the police refused to file the same.

Church Attacked During Service, Congregants Thrashed in Raipur, Chhattisgarh



March 6, 2016: Christians were beaten up and a prayer service disrupted by around 25 people belonging to Bajrang Dal at Kachna area, Raipur. The attackers trespassed into the Church around noon, as Sunday worship service was going on at the Kachna Church, and started to beat up the people inside. The attackers also vandalised the church premises and raised anti-Christian slogans. Even the women and children among the congregation of around 65 persons were not spared and it was reported that the attackers

attempted to tear off their clothes. The Police have registered a First Information Report against unknown men and three motorbikes belonging to the attackers have been seized from the church premises on which the attackers had come.

Christian beaten up in Medinipur, West Bengal

March 6, 2016: According to reports, a Christian man was attacked and beaten up by a mob of local religious extremists. The event took place when the victim was returning home after attending worship service at a local Church. Sources say that the villagers had objected to his attending Church several times and had warned him of dire consequence if he continued to do so.

Bible, other holy texts found burnt at grotto in Pune, Maharashtra

March 9, 2016: Unidentified miscreants burnt Bible and other Christian religious books at a grotto located at St. Sebastian Nagar in Daund, Maharashtra. Daundh is located about 80 kilometres from Pune city. The grotto is part of the St. Sebastian's Church and is Bibles, Hymnals and Prayer books in many languages were kept in the grotto for use by the worshippers. Fr Denis Joseph, parish priest of St Sebastian's church, told the media that a local resident, Raymond Dias, saw thick black fumes emanating in front of the grotto around 5 am. The police visited the spot and verified the incident.

Pastor's house burnt down by fanatics in Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh



March 9, 2016: Hindu extremists targeted and burnt the house of Pastor Ramprakash in Sultanpur. This is not the first time that the pastor has been targeted by fundamentalists. The Church pastored by Rev. Ramprakash has been meeting in the area since 2000 and has been facing frequent threats and attacks.

Pastor severely beaten in Chikmagalur, Karnataka

March 11, 2016: A mob of Bajrang Dal members attacked and beat up a Pastor at Jayapur town, Koppa Taluk, Chikmagalur, Karnataka. Pastor Keshava K (38), from Koppa town was invited to pray for a sick person by a family staying in Jayapura town near Koppa. According to reports from GCIC, the inviting family had also arranged for a car for the pastor to travel to their house. Pastor Keshava travelled to the house for prayers along with his wife Latha (38), and 2 Christian women Rathnamma (56) and Sashikala (35). As soon as they reached the house and started to pray, Bajrang Dal members entered the home and started beating up Pastor Keshava. At the time the family who had invited the pastor withdrew and let the Bajrang Dal members beat him up. The Bajrang Dal members then handed the Pastor, his wife and the two women to the police at the Jayapura police station where more than 200 members of the Bajrang Dal surrounded the police station demanding action against the Christians.

Group of Hindutva outfits vandalize a newly constructed church in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

March 12, 2016: Tensions prevailed at Kalapatty, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, after a persons belonging to radical Hindu outfits vandalized a newly renovated church which has been in existence since 1948 in the area. Hindu outfits had approached the court seeking a stay order on the renovation of the Church but the the High Court had given permission for the church renovation and had directed the district police to give adequate protection. Hence the church was dedicated on March 9, 2016, amidst protests from persons who are said to be not from that locality. On the day of the incident, a group of 15 people pushed away the policemen on guard, vandalized the Church and damaged the compound wall, main door, furniture in the Church, and the altar. The Kovilpalayam police arrested five persons on March 15 and among them P Sampath (43) is the formal zonal secretary of the BJP. The other four were identified as R Kutty (34), S Sakthivel (29), N Vignesh (25) and K Devaraj (60). The four men are said to belong to a fringe Hindu outfit.

Christians attacked by a mob in Haridwar, Uttarakhand

March 13, 2016: Hindu extremists attacked, abused and attempted to beat up Christians at Jagjitpur village, Haridwar. The incident took place after the Sunday worship service at the Indian Pentecostal Assemblies Church was over and the members were leaving for their homes. Suddenly sixty Hindu extremists, waiting at the main entrance of the Church created a ruckus. They shouted slogans against Christianity, verbally abused the Church members and tried to beat up several Christians. The police soon arrived at the spot and took the attackers as well as Christians to the police station, where the attackers alleged that Christians were involved in religious conversions. The police after a thorough questioning let the Christians go as the charges against them were found baseless.

Pastor intimidated at Nasik, Maharashtra

March 13, 2016: Hindu extremists attacked Pastor Babu Suryavanshi from Nasik and took him to the Ghoti police station alleging forced conversions. The attackers also demanded that the Babu Suryavanshi stop the worship services that he has been conducting in the area. The police questioned him, while the attackers surrounded the police station, demanding, that the police take action against him. Pastor Suryavanshi was let go after questioning.

Sunday worship disrupted and Christians beaten up in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

March 13, 2016: A mob led by RSS members and the village headman attacked a Sunday worship service and beat up Christians including the Pastor at Mauaima, Allahabad. The incident took place while the Sunday worship service was going on. Suddenly a mob led by local RSS leaders, village headman, district Panchayat head and the block development head barged into the premises disrupting the worship service. According to reports, slogans were raised against Christianity and Christians were beaten up. The attackers

especially beat up Pastor Brijesh who lead's the Church and injured him severely. 3 – 4 more Christians have been seriously injured. No FIR was filed.

Renovation of church obstructed, Christians accused of carrying out forced religious conversions in Tapi, Gujarat

March 14, 2016: Local villagers led by Hindu groups raised objections to the renovation carried out at a local Church at Mohpada village, Tapi district. The Church has been in existence since 10 years. The Hindu groups accused the Christians of carrying out illegal conversions and demanded that the Church renovation work should be stopped immediately. The Christians were told that there is no space for them in the village and that the villagers do not want a Church there anymore.

Christian convention halted, tent forcibly removed in Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh

March 15, 2016: Hindu extremists disrupted a prayer convention at Pipariya, Hoshangabad district. Nearly 1000 Christians including many pastors had gathered at the annual convention of the Indian Evangelical Team when a mob of Hindu extremists descended at the venue and disrupted the meeting. They forcibly removed the tent that had been erected for the meeting and tried to chase away the Christians. The convention organizers chose not to file a complaint with the police.

Christians denied permission to conduct a gospel meeting within their own premises in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

March 16, 2016: A gospel meeting organized at Alangulam Taluk, Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu from March 18-20, 2016 at a premises owned by a recognized church was denied permission to go ahead. The Church was told that this was due to an apprehension of a possible adverse effect on the law and order situation in the area. It is reported that the authorities acted under pressure from a religious organization that had objected to the meeting being conducted, stating that it would hurt their religious sensitivities.

Pastor attacked and arrested on false charges in Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh:

March 17, 2016: Pastor Raju Sahu was returning home after a prayer meeting, when a group of 40-45 people from Dharam Sena beat him. They then called the Bhakara Police station near Dhamtari and handed the pastor over to the police demanding that Pastor Sahu be charged with forcibly converting villagers to Christianity.

Pastor detained and questioned by the police in Jharkhand

March 17, 2016: Pastor Budhram Birwa from Village Sagarkatta under Tonto Police station in West Singhbhum district was detained and questioned by the police. Local villagers had complained against him alleging forced conversions. After intervention from EFI staff and local volunteers, the police released him.

Makeshift church hall set on fire in Telangana

March 18, 2016: A makeshift prayer hall of the Christian community was set on fire by unknown people in Telangana's Gopanpally village of Nizamabad District. A FIR against unknown people has been registered in the case but no arrest has been made in this regard as yet. "The village Panchayat had objected to the construction of the prayer hall, following which unknown people burnt down the hall late at night on Friday," Nizamabad Superintendent of Police briefed the media.

Pastor and family attacked at Rajasthan

March 20, 2016: Local villagers beat up Pastor Sumati Prakash Khardia and his family causing grievous injuries at Dungarpur, Rajasthan. The attack took place after Pastor Sumati attempted to rescue his niece who was being attacked and molested by people who have a history of enmity with Pastor Sumati. As the pastor intervened in the matter, he was beaten up along with his family and has been admitted in the hospital in serious condition. His family members too suffered serious injuries.



Pastor and Christians severely beaten up at Nalgonda, Telangana



March 20, 2016: ABVP and RSS members beat up Christians including a Pastor at Chinthagudem, on the outskirts of Nalgonda town in Telangana. The attack took place when a prayer meeting at a private residence was going on. Pastor Prabhakar and another unnamed pastor were seriously injured during this attack and had to be rushed to the hospital for treatment. They received deep cuts on their heads.

Church burnt in Telangana

March 20, 2016: According to reports received, a Church at Warangal, Telangana was completely burnt by unidentified miscreants. The Church is pastored by Rev. Chintha Kranthi at Warangal.