

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** IND31143  
**Country:** India  
**Date:** 8 January 2007

Keywords: India – Christians – Kerala – Conversion – Malayalam – Hindi – Anti-conversion laws

This response was prepared by the Country Research Section of the Refugee Review Tribunal (RRT) after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the RRT within time constraints. This response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

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**Questions**

1. Please advise what states Malayalam is spoken in to a reasonable degree.
2. Is Hindi taught in school in Kerala?
3. What is the position regarding discrimination by authorities and Hindu movements against Christians in India, particularly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu?
4. Please provide any information on Saint Macdelena church (probably Magdalena). What denomination is it?
5. Are there any anti-conversion laws active in India, Kerala, or Tamil Nadu?
6. Which states have large Christian populations and where are Christians safe?

**RESPONSE**

1. Please advise what states Malayalam is spoken in to a reasonable degree.

According to The US National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC) website, Malayalam is spoken “by 35 million people primarily in the state of Kerala and in the Laccadive Islands in southern India. It is one of the 22 official languages of India” (‘Malayalam’ (undated) US National Virtual Translation Center website <http://www.nvtc.gov/lotw/months/april/Malayalam.html> – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 1).

2. Is Hindi taught in school in Kerala?

No definitive information was found on whether Hindi is taught in school in Kerala. However, according to Sikshana – an Indian organisation focused on the improvement of learning levels in the Indian public education system – the teaching of Hindi is currently compulsory in most of the non-Hindi speaking states:

**Teaching of Hindi**

Apart from Hindi speaking States, teaching of Hindi is compulsory in most of the non-Hindi speaking States/UTs, though the classes from which the teaching of Hindi is compulsory differ from State to State. Teaching of Hindi is not compulsory in the States of Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Karaikal region of Pondicherry ('National Policy On Education, Government of India' 2002, Sikshana website [http://www.sikshana.org/children\\_policies.html](http://www.sikshana.org/children_policies.html) – Accessed 8 January 2007 – Attachment 2).

The following information sourced from the Language in India website discusses the promotion of Malayalam as the official state language of Kerala in the late 1960s. The attachment also analyses the popularisation of Hindi in Kerala as a result of trade and business ventures in the 1930s. The pertinent extracts follow in detail.

### **1.3 Malayalam language**

...The formation of the State Institute of Languages in 1968 was a step for the adoption of Malayalam as the official language of Kerala state. The institute is trying to change the medium of instruction into Malayalam by preparing glossaries and university level text books in Malayalam. To translate all acts and rules applicable in Kerala into Malayalam and to prepare a glossary, an official language commission was set up by the government in 1968. To facilitate legislation in Malayalam the Kerala official language Act was passed in 1969. It was presumed that by the end of 1978-1979 Malayalam was to be the official language in all government offices, government undertakings and the courts up to the taluk level, though the desired goal is not yet achieved.

### **1.4 Hindi Language**

...In the vicinity of the harbours of Kiozhikode, Cannanore, Cochin and Kollam there lived many merchants from North India, who spoke Marvadi, Gujarathi and Arabic, all of whom knew Hindustani. To transact with them freely the natives had to study Hindi. In this way due to historical, realigious [sic] and commercial reasons, the study of Hindi began to gain memntum [sic] in Kerala.

In 1922, Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachara Sabha, Madras Deputed K.M. Damodaran Unni for popularising Hindi in Kerala. He stayed in North India and studied both Sanskrit and Hindi. He toured many places in Keala [sic] for months teaching Hindi. In those centres he entrusted to the best student, the duty of teaching Hindi to the other aspirants. Thus each centre became self-sufficient and helped in spreading Hindi. Thus K.M. Domodaran Unni was considered to be the first 'Hindi Pracharak' in Kerala.

Till 1925 Dakshin Hindi Prachar Sabha sent several 'pracharakas' to spread Hindi Education in Kerala, of them the names of K.Kesavan Nayar and Swami Sankarananda deserve special mentioning. They opened a good number of new centers from which many students were sent to Dakshin Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras where they studied for a few years and returned to Kerala to spread Hindi among the Keralites. The spread of Hindi language gained momentum with the freedom struggle.

...In 1935 Travncore assembly passed a resolution to introduce Hindi as an additional language [sic] in schools. By 1936 in many of the schools in Malabar Hindi had already been introduced. To Hindi girls schools were opened in Cochin and Travancore. The students were awarded scholarships by the Prachara Sabha. From 1950 the Travancore-Cochin state made Hindi a compulsory subject in schools. From 1936 colleges of Kerala started to teach Hindi.

In 1936 Kerala provincial sabha was started in Ernakulam after closing the branch in Thiruvananthapuram. Through celebrations of Hindi week, conferences and discussions of teachers and students Hindi became popular among the people.

To impart better training to the instructors Hindi Mahavidyalayas were started in 1947. Many successful candidates came out from these institutions after passing different Hindi examinations.

In 1934, K. Vasudevan Pillai started Kerala Hindi Prachar Sabha, Thiruvananthapuram, to train pupils for examinations conducted by Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras. This he continued up to 1948. From there it functions as an independent organisation for the promotion of Hindi in Kerala. Thus due to the efforts of the organisations like Hindi Prachar Sabha and through the coaching from schools and colleges good section of the Kerala population knows how to read and write Hindi. But it may be noted that as for the speaking ability further progress is to be achieved. (Gangasaran Singh, 1982) (Geethakumary, V. 2002, 'A Contrastive Analysis of Hindi and Malayalam', Language in India website, 6 September <http://www.languageinindia.com/sep2002/chap1.html> – Accessed 3 January 2007 – Attachment 3).

### **3. What is the position regarding discrimination by authorities and Hindu movements against Christians in India, particularly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu?**

With regard to discrimination against Christians in India, particularly Kerala and Tamil Nadu, question 2 of an October 2005 research response addresses this very question. Information is provided on anti-Christian violence orchestrated by Hindu extremists such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The pertinent extracts follow below and attachments can be provided on request.

On March 2005, an article published on The Christian Post website reported that, “in a number of states throughout India, reports of escalating violence against Christians have made their way outside the predominantly Hindu nation and into religious media agencies”. The report makes specific mention of an incident in Kerala, stating that: “in India’s Kerala state, six theology students with Gospel for Asia (GFA) were forcibly abducted and beaten on Feb. 13 by activists of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)”. The report also provides information on the occurrence of recent attacks in “the northwestern Indian state of Rajasthan”; “Uttar Pradesh”; and “Karnataka state” (Chan, K. 2005, ‘Attacks Against Christians in India Continue’, *Christian Post* website, 5 March <http://www.christianpost.com/article/missions/1441/section/attacks.against.christians.in.india.continue/1.htm> – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 1; for further information on the 2005 attack of the six theology students, see: Mathew, A. 2005, ‘Sangh activists attack missionaries in Kerala’, *Gulf News*, 14 February – Attachment 2).

An ANSA English Media Service bulletin, of 27 October 2004, reports that “[l]ife is becoming increasingly more difficult for Christian missionaries in India”. The report makes specific mention of two incidents in Kerala, stating that: “[f]our nuns of the Mother Teresa missionaries and two priests were attacked by a group of dalit (the Indian outcasts) in a remote village in the Kerala state two months ago... beating them up and tearing the crosses off their chests”; and that: “a priest [Father Chittilapilly] was killed in his parish in the city of Thuruthiparambu, in the state of Kerala, while he was reading a sermon”. The report also noted the occurrence of incidents in “Gujarat state in northern India”; “the district of Mayurbhanj”; and reports that “[a]ccording to the Christian groups, most of these attacks are to be traced back to groups of Hindu extremists, supporters of the nationalist ideology of Hindutva” (‘More Violence, Repression Against Christians’ 2004, ANSA English Media Service, 27 October – Attachment 3; for further information on the assault of the four Mother Teresa nuns in 2004, see: ‘Attack on Mother Teresa’s nuns condemned’, Ecumenical News International website, 28 September <http://www.eni.ch/articles/display.shtml?04-0636> – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 4; for further information on the murder of Father Chittilapilly in 2004, see: Iype, G. 2004, ‘Din over Catholic priest’s murder in Kerala’,

rediff.com news website, 9 September <http://in.rediff.com/news/2004/sep/09iype.htm> – 19 October 2005 – Attachment 5).

The most recent edition of 'Notes on Church-State Affairs' (a global monitor of sectarian strife published on the Baylor University website) states that: "[v]illagers from Panamvilla in Trivandrum, Kerala State, burned down a church and assaulted three church members after a baptism on 1 April" (Hendon, D.W. & Lynn, N.R. 2005, 'Notes on Church-State Affairs', Baylor University website, Summer: vol.47: no.3

[http://www3.baylor.edu/Church\\_State/Notes2005Summer.htm#India](http://www3.baylor.edu/Church_State/Notes2005Summer.htm#India) – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 6) (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response IND17599*, 19 October – Attachment 4).

The US Department of State's 2006 report on religious freedom provides information on various attacks on Christians in Kerala and neighbouring Karnataka. The attacks were reportedly carried out by members of Bajrang Dal, the youth wing of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP); the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS); or Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activists. The pertinent extracts follow in detail.

The media reported the death of a twenty-five-year-old Christian pastor in Channapatana, Karnataka on February 11, 2005. Although an official autopsy determined it was a suicide, Christian groups alleged that Hindu extremists had killed him.

In May 2005, activists of the Bajrang Dal vandalized a Christian church in Channapatna, Karnataka, injuring women and children belonging to the congregation. The state police arrested six activists and registered a case against them.

On August 30, 2005, approximately fifty assailants ransacked a Christian church building in Bangalore. No further details were known.

Hindu extremists in southern Karnataka attacked a Christian church on Easter Sunday 2006 and assaulted the pastor. District police authorities arrested four persons who allegedly belonged to the Bajrang Dal.

Religious press outlets reported that on April 16, 2006, in Bataguri, Karnataka alleged Bajrang Dal members attacked two separate churches. A group of ten to fifteen men attacked the Believers' Church during Easter Sunday service and vandalized the pastor's house, beating the pastor and his wife and threatening the parishioners with further attacks should they continue meeting. On the same day, twenty five to thirty men raided another church, threatening women and children and destroying church property.

Religious press outlets reported that on June 8, 2006, in Thovaracare, Karnataka, seven members of the Bajrang Dal broke up a Christian prayer meeting, chased away two pastors, and threatened other Christians present.

Religious press outlets reported that on June 9, 2006, in Kolar Gold Field, Karnataka, extremists destroyed a church after the pastor ignored orders to cease his work and leave the area.

Religious press outlets reported that on June 11, 2006, in Namthi, Kanataka, 150 persons seized Pastor Sundar Rao after he led a prayer meeting and forcibly took him to the police station, where they and the police severely beat Rao. The next day, after his release, he was assaulted again. The attackers were arrested and released on bail.

In August 2004, a Catholic priest was killed in Kerala, during the state's annual harvest festival. Church members reported that the Catholic priest had received intimidating telephone calls threatening him with death if he did not cease to "proselytize." The Catholic Bishops Conference of India (CBCI) claimed the killing was meant to destroy inter-religious harmony in Kerala and demanded an investigation.

In September 2004, also in Kerala, BJP activists attacked nuns and monks belonging to the order "Missionaries of Charity," injuring one monk and one nun and damaging a vehicle. The police arrested fourteen RSS-BJP sympathizers in connection with the attack.

In April 2005, Hindu and Muslim villagers burned down a prayer hall and physically attacked three Christian church members following a baptism ceremony in Kerala. Two days later, villagers assaulted the pastor and his assistant.

On Easter eve 2005, in Chalakud Taluna, Kerala, approximately twenty RSS activists attacked Christians viewing the film *The Passion of the Christ*, injuring one man.

... Religious press outlets reported that in July 2005, Hindu villagers in **Tamil Nadu** closed down a Pentecostal church and expelled the pastor and his wife, allegedly in response to decreasing interest in Hindu festivals in the village. After the couple filed a complaint, the police began negotiating with the villagers. No further details were known (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report – India*, 15 September – Attachment 5).

**4. Please provide any information on the church, Saint Macdelena (probably Magdalena). What denomination is it?**

No information could be found on a church known as Saint Magdalena or similar in India.

**5. Are there any anti-conversion laws active in India, Kerala, or Tamil Nadu?**

Questions 5 and 6 of a previous RRT Research Response completed in February 2006 provide an explicit account of the anti-conversion legislation that exists in certain Indian states. The pertinent extracts follow.

Religious conversion is permitted in India, however some states have enacted anti-conversion legislation that restrict **forced** conversions. According to a September 2005 *Compass Direct* article,

**Anti-conversion laws are in force in the states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, and Arunachal Pradesh. Gujarat state passed a similar law in March 2003; but the law has not been enforced because the government has not yet formulated rules under the Act [Researcher emphasis]...**

...Responding to the VHP's...(Vishwa Hindu Parishad)...demand for a nationwide anti-conversion law, John Dayal, secretary general of the All India Christian Council, told *Compass*, "Such laws are against the constitution, and they violate international covenants to which India is a signatory, including the United Nations charter." ('India: Hindu mob detains, assaults six Christian workers in Orissa state' 2005, *Compass Direct*, 2 September <http://www.compassdirect.org/en/breaking.php>– Accessed 6 September 2005 – Attachment 24)

In October 2002, the state of Tamil Nadu passed an anti-conversion bill, however the US Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report for 2005* states that "Tamil

Nadu repealed its anti-conversion law” in 2005 and that “conversion continued to be a highly contentious issue”:

No new anti-conversion legislation was introduced in the states, and Tamil Nadu repealed its anti-conversion law. The Gujarat police conducted no illegal surveys of Christians during the period covered by this report. While the Government took some steps to decrease religious tensions, violence directed against minorities by both state and nonstate actors persisted. Religious extremists continued to distribute tridents (trishuls), three-pronged Hindu symbols which were sometimes used as weapons or to intimidate, in Rajasthan and Orissa (US Department of State 2005, *International Religious Freedom Report – India*, November – Attachment 7).

The report further states that “forced religious conversion is illegal, but some NGOs claim some state governments have used this type of legislation to restrict voluntary conversions as well”. As is elaborated in the report:

...Conversion continued to be a highly contentious issue. Hindu nationalist organizations and others frequently alleged that Christian missionaries lured converts, particularly from the lower castes, with offers of free education and healthcare and equated such actions with forced conversions. Christians denied this charge, responding that persons convert on their own free will and that efforts by Hindu groups to “reconvert” Christians to Hinduism were themselves coercive. Several state governments have responded to the allegations by Hindu groups by enacting laws to strengthen proscriptions against coerced conversion. Forced religious conversion is illegal, but some NGOs claim some state governments have used this type of legislation to restrict voluntary conversions as well (US Department of State 2005, *International Religious Freedom Report – India*, November – Attachment 7) (RRT Country Research 2006, *Research Response IND17783*, 6 February – Attachment 6).

The US Department of State’s 2006 report on religious freedom highlights instances of attacks, arrests, and/or detention of Christians accused of forced conversions throughout the 2005-2006 period. Most of the arrests occurred in states with anti-conversion laws such as Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, and Arunachal Pradesh:

#### Forced Religious Conversion

Four states have laws in place banning forced religious conversion. Three other states have inactive laws or bills that await accompanying regulations before they can be enforced. Some NGOs claimed state governments used these laws to restrict voluntary conversions and to harass religious minorities. The issue of conversion, especially to Christianity, was highly contentious in the country. Hindu nationalist organizations frequently alleged that Christian missionaries lured Hindus, particularly from lower castes, with offers of free education and healthcare and equated such actions with forced conversions. Christians denied this, responding that low-caste Hindus convert of their own free will and that efforts by Hindu groups to “re-convert” these new Christians to Hinduism were themselves coercive. Arrests under these laws occurred during the reporting period in several states. All arrested were Christians. The Christian community contended that the anti-conversion laws were applied in a discriminatory manner and only enforced when a person converted from Hinduism to another religion.

Religious press outlets reported that, in August 2004, Pastor Subas Samal and an associate were arrested under Orissa’s anti-conversion law and spent six weeks in jail after leading a group of Christians in Orissa back to their village, from which they had been expelled by their

non-Christian neighbors [sic]. The pastor claimed he had attempted to end the conflict and had never forced anyone to convert.

In February 2005, the NCM urged the Governments of Rajasthan and Maharashtra to immediately stop forced reconversions of Christians and to protect Christians and their property. The action was in response to an attack on Christians in Kota and calls by “Hindutva” supporters for a social boycott against Christians who refused to reconvert.

On May 1, 2005, the press reported that the VHP in Bargarh, Orissa, reconverted 567 Christians. The reconverted reportedly had signed affidavits declaring their intention to change their faith in keeping with the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act. A Christian community leader in Orissa asserted that the reversion was not genuine and was staged by the VHP to keep the communal issue alive. Religious press reported that approximately 600 Christian dalit tribespeople converted to Hinduism in Bijepur, Orissa, due to VHP pressure.

On May 14, 2005, four Christian missionaries were arrested in Brajaraj Nagar, Orissa, and charged with forced conversion. They accused the missionaries of using offers of financial assistance to propagate Christianity. The missionaries had not received permission to perform conversions in the area, but were released the following day.

Religious press outlets reported that on July 10, 2005, police detained thirty-five members of the Gosner Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh, for performing forced conversions. All were released on July 11, 2005, but a FIR was filed against two women.

Religious press outlets reported that on July 19, 2005, police arrested a Christian couple under the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act (MPFRA) after their neighbors [sic] accused them of engaging in “fraudulent conversion” activities. They released the couple on bail within twenty-four hours and were awaiting trial at the end of the period covered by this report. On August 21, 2005, a mob targeting the couple injured approximately ten persons, including women and a two-year old child.

Religious press outlets reported that on September 26, 2005, the pastor and eight members of a church in Durg, Chhattisgarh, were convicted of fraudulent conversion activities for offering money to Hindus willing to convert.

Religious press outlets reported that on October 11, 2005, police arrested Sunny John under MPFRA for allegedly engaging in fraudulent conversions of children from poor Hindu families. John, who runs three schools, was accused of converting eleven children between the ages of five and ten.

Religious press outlets reported that on October 15, 2005, Hindu extremists attacked the annual convention of a church in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, alleging that the organizers had kidnapped tribespeople for conversion. Police interrogated the tribespeople, who denied the reports. Police did not press charges.

Religious press outlets reported that on November 18, 2005, police arrested Pastor Masih Das Rai under the Freedom of Religion Act for performing forcible conversions in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Members of a Hindu extremist group attacked the pastor and twelve members of his church prior to the arrest. Despite two applications for bail, Pastor Rai remained in police custody at the end of the period covered by this report.

Religious press outlets reported that on January 16, 2006, approximately fifteen Hindu extremists attacked Pastor Kulamani Mallick, his wife, and child, and set fire to their home in



Matiapada, Orissa. The extremists beat other Christians in the village and destroyed seven houses, six of which belonged to Christians. Pastor Mallick and his cousin were subsequently arrested under the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act. Five men were charged with starting the fires and destroying property.

Religious press outlets reported that on January 24, 2006, a group of up to 200 Hindu extremists assaulted Pastor Ram Prakash and a number of others for allegedly converting local persons to Christianity in Ramchandrapur, Uttar Pradesh. Prakash was arrested when he called the police to report the attack. Reportedly, he was beaten while in police custody. Prakash was released on bail, but was rearrested for encouraging communal tension.

Religious press outlets reported that on January 26, 2006, police arrested three Christian leaders belonging to the Church of the Nazarene in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, under MPFRA, and charged them with forced conversion of tribespeople. According to an NGO, the arrests were based on the affidavits of twenty-three non-Christian tribespeople asserting that they were forced by the leaders to attend a Christian convention. The NGO contended that the affidavits were themselves coerced by the police.

Religious press outlets reported that on March 17, 2006, a group of men interrupted a prayer meeting in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, reportedly questioning the participants, injuring six and “sexually molesting” female trainees. The attackers were also alleged to have destroyed Bibles and damaged property. Police detained five attackers, who were later released on bail, and registered a case against the sponsor under MPFRA.

Religious press outlets reported that on April 5, 2006, in Naudara Bridge, Madhya Pradesh, a Methodist high school was attacked by extremists who accused the staff of forced conversions after a former teacher filed a case of forcible conversion against three staff members. The Madhya Pradesh State Minorities Commission determined the accusation to be false.

Religious press outlets reported that on April 7, 2006, in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, extremists beat approximately twenty-five Christians protesting the arrest of seven Christians under MPFRA. The attackers reportedly injured at least seven Christians while police watched. No action was taken against the perpetrators.

The AICC reported on April 20, 2006, that police arrested two Christian women for attempting to convert persons in the Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. The local superintendent of police alleged that the two women were distributing material urging Hindus to follow the Bible. The Christian press also reported that on April 18, 2006, police arrested Avinash Lal, an independent Pentecostal pastor, and six other Christian leaders in the same Madhya Pradesh district for conversion by allurement and conducting illegal religious gatherings.

Religious press outlets reported that on May 1, 2006, in Gwarighat, Madhya Pradesh, police arrested a social worker, Sunil Kumar Rao, of forcibly converting children to Christianity in violation of the state anti-conversion law. He was released on bail.

Religious press outlets reported that on May 2, 2006, in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, assailants attacked Pastor Andreas Soni, a Pentecostal pastor, as he distributed Christian literature. Subsequently, the police arrested him under the state anti-conversion law. He was later released on bail.

Religious press outlets reported that on May 14, 2006, in Gaur Nadi, Madhya Pradesh, approximately fifty members of the Dharam Jagran Sena attacked a church, beat a church member who had just converted to Christianity, assaulted the pastor, and ordered him to stop



converting persons to Christianity. The attackers accused the church of undertaking forcible conversions and filed a formal complaint against the pastor at the police station. He was detained under MPFRA and was released after local Christians paid his bail fee.

Religious press outlets reported that on June 18, 2006, in Kosa Nala, Chhattisgarh, approximately twenty-five members of the Dharam Jagran Sena raided the Hosanna Church during a service and physically assaulted Pastor David Raj and his wife. The assailants then took the pastor to the police station where police detained him and arrested his wife, charging them with forced conversions. The couple was released on bail but had to report regularly to the police for the duration of their case, which was still pending by the end of the period covered by this report.

Religious press outlets reported that on June 25, 2006, in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, a large mob threatened four Missionaries of Charity nuns distributing food to impoverished patients at the Ruya Hospital and accused them of converting persons to Christianity. Police subsequently arrested the four nuns and released them after several hours at the behest of the local diocesan bishop. A case was registered against those who threatened the nuns (US Department of State 2006, *International Religious Freedom Report – India*, 15 September – Attachment 5).

## **6. Which states have large Christian populations and where Christians are safe?**

Question 3 of a previous RRT Research Response completed in October 2005 provides information on the largest Christian populations in particular states of India. The pertinent extracts follow in detail, and attachments can be provided on request.

The 'Indian Regions' webpage on the Indian Christians United website provides a statistical information on the Christian population of each of India's states. According to this source, Lakshadweep has a Christian population of only "1.16%" out of a total population of only "63 000". Kerala has a Christian population of "19.32%" out of a total population of "32 431 000"; giving it the largest Christian population in India. The states with the highest percentage Christian population are the small northeastern states, like the strife torn state of Nagaland which has a Christian population of "87.47%" out of a total population of only "1 707 000" ('Indian Regions' (undated) Indian Christians United website <http://www.indianchristiansunited.org/IndianRegions.htm> – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 8).

In concert with the reports noted in response to Question 2, the following extracts, from the two most recent editions of 'Notes on Church–State Affairs', give some indication of the degree to which the recent surge in anti-Christian violence is dispersed across the various states of India:

### **February 2005 to May 2005**

There were more reports of attacks on Christians by Hindu activists. Four men from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) attacked a prayer meeting in Dhanora village in the Seoni District of Madhya Pradesh State on 23 February 2005, beating two members with planks of wood. Although police failed to stop the attack, they did arrest two men for the attack the next day. Hindus from the Bajrang Dal attacked eight members of the Friends Missionary Prayer Band in Rajasthan on 13 March. Villagers from Panamvilla in Trivandrum, Kerala State, burned down a church and assaulted three church members after a baptism on 1 April. On 1 May in Mangalwarapete village in Karnataka State, a mob of about five hundred attacked a meeting of King Jesus Church, which meets in the home of Pastor Paulraj Raju whom the mob assaulted. A Christian couple suffered severe wounds in an attack in early

May in Gujarat State. Attackers in Andhra Pradesh State killed Reverend K. Daniel on 20 May by pouring acid over him. Representatives of the United Christian Forum, the All Indian Christian Council, and the All India Catholic Union presented a “white paper” to Prime Minister Manmohand Sing listing more than two hundred incidents against Christians that they said had occurred in the first ten weeks of 2005. In a May 2005 report, however, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom asked that India be removed from a list of “Countries of Particular Concern,” saying there had been progress toward religious freedom (Hendon, D.W. & Lynn, N.R. 2005, ‘Notes on Church–State Affairs’, Baylor University website, Summer: vol.47: no.3  
[http://www3.baylor.edu/Church\\_State/Notes2005Summer.htm#India](http://www3.baylor.edu/Church_State/Notes2005Summer.htm#India) – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 6).

### **November 2004 to January 2005**

There continue to be actions against India’s Christian minority. On 29 November 2004, a mob broke into Sunday worship at a hall in Mangalore that belongs to the Jesus Bread of Life Ministry and smashed windows and objects in the church. In December a militant Hindu group in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh, filed a complaint with officials alleging that a Christian school was forcibly distributing New Testaments. On 19 January 2005, a mob attacked and burned a newly opened Christian school in the state of Assam. On 19 February, militants from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak and the Bajrang Dal attacked a group of Christian students on their way to a graduation ceremony for the Emmanuel Mission in Kota. Defending minority rights, the Supreme Court on 11 January asked the federal government why Dalats (“Untouchables”) who convert to Christianity are unable to make use of the 26 percent set-aside of government jobs for this caste. Originally, Dalats who converted to Sikhism or Buddhism were also denied, but this was later changed by law. The court noted that this left only the Christian Dalats excluded (Hendon, D.W. & Russell, J. 2005, ‘Notes on Church–State Affairs’, Baylor University website, Spring: vol.47: no.2  
[http://www3.baylor.edu/Church\\_State/Notes2005Spring.htm#India](http://www3.baylor.edu/Church_State/Notes2005Spring.htm#India) – Accessed 19 October 2005 – Attachment 9) (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response IND17599*, 19 October – Attachment 4).

## **List of Sources Consulted**

### **Internet Sources:**

#### **Government Information & Reports**

US Department of State website <http://www.state.gov>

US National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC) website <http://www.nvtc.gov>

#### **Non-Government Organisations**

Amnesty International website <http://www.amnesty.org/>

The Christian Post website <http://www.christianpost.com>

Christianity Today website <http://www.christianitytoday.com>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) website <http://www.hrw.org/>

Voice of Martyrs website <http://www.persecution.com>

#### **International News & Politics**

BBC News (World Edition) website <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>

Rediff.com News website <http://in.rediff.com>

#### **Region Specific Links**

Christian Persecution in India <http://www.aiccindia.org/>

Indian Christians United website <http://www.indianchristiansunited.org>

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh website [http://www.rss.org/New\\_RSS/index.jsp](http://www.rss.org/New_RSS/index.jsp)

## Search Engines

Google search engine <http://www.google.com.au/>

## List of Attachments

1. 'Malayalam' (undated) US National Virtual Translation Center website  
<http://www.nvtc.gov/lotw/months/april/Malayalam.html> – Accessed 19 October 2005.
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