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POLICING THE HINDU-CHRISTIAN TENSIONS

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A STUDY REPORT UNDER THE "GOLDEN JUBILEE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP"



BY
DEO RAJ NAGAR

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PART - I

Chapter - 1

Introduction

After the Second World War, many countries like India, which were under European Colonialism, became free and adopted the Western ideals of secularism and democracy for the governance of their countries. These ideologies of secularism, democracy and socialism etc., took centuries to evolve in the Western countries but we opted for them just after our liberation from Colonial rule.

Even during the freedom movements inspired by Mahatma Gandhi religion and politics were not detached. In fact the greatest factor for the success of Mahatma Gandhi in mobilizing the people of India in the Freedom struggle was his moral and religious appeal. Though, Mahatma Gandhi struck a balance between the religious and secular values and applied the Hindu ethical values to the nationalist movement, the Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru was allergic to religion and put secularism and socialism as the objectives of his government. Mark Juergensmeyer in his book " Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State" writes, "What appeared to be an anomaly when the Islamic revolution in Iran challenges the supremacy of Western culture and its secular politics in 1979, has become a major theme in international politics in the 1990s". The book was written in 1993 and we see the world of today in the new Millenium, much more divided on religious lines than ever before during the last few centuries. Earlier around the 11th Century, we had seen confrontations between the Christians and Muslims during the Crusades for the liberation of the Holy City, the birthplace of Jesus Christ in Israel. There were religious wars between Protestants and Catholics during the mid Centuries of the last Millennium. In the preface to the Indian edition of the above book, Juergensmeyer wrote in 1994 that 'the religious nationalists are not just fanatics' and they are in fact 'waging war against western culture and its political ideology' and 'aim at infusing public life with indigenous cultural symbols and moral values'. According to him, a new cold war is going on at present between the secular and religious ideologies. He concludes the preface to his book with the question about the Religious Nationalism "whether its values can be made compatible with the virtues of tolerance, pluralism and human rights and whether a new cold war between the secular and religious ideologies can be forestalled".

Since the mid 1980s, there has been a steady growth of religious nationalism in the Middle East, South Asia and in the formerly Marxist States of the USSR. We have seen the rise of Islamic nationalism in the countries of Uzbekistan, Turkmistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgzstan, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan in the Central Asia, and the struggles of religious ideologies in the Bosnia – Herzegovina, Albania in East Europe[1]. In India, we saw the rise of Jarnail Singh Bhundawale and Sikh religious nationalism in the 1980s. Islamic and Christian exclusivism had set in reaction among the so far tolerant Hindus to be itself exclusivist in the 20th Century. Since the mid 1980s there has been a tremendous rise of Hindu religious nationalism in India. There was massive appeal of the Hindu organizations for the possession of the Ram Janam Bhoomi site. Early 1990s witnessed the Kar Seva Movement

for building the Ram temple at the Ram Janam Bhoomi in Ayodhya. In the year 1990 October and November lakhs of Kar Sevaks from all over India proceeded towards Ayodhya and in the police firing on 30th October and 1st week of November, many Hindus were killed. On 6th December 1992, the Babri Masjid was demolished. In the 1984 Parliamentary Elections, BJP won only two seats but in the subsequent Elections to the Parliament, it has won from about 100 to about 200 seats out of 545. Quite recently we saw the destruction of two thousand years old Buddha statue in Bamian by Taliban government of Afghanistan. In September 2001 World Trade Centre in New York and Pentagon in Washington were destroyed and the hand of Islamic fundamentalist leader Osama Bin Laden is suspected in the incident. Islamic militancy was reported recently to be on the rise in Bangladesh[2]. It is thus, evident that during the last two decades of the 20th Century religious nationalism has inflammed the world and we have seen all sorts of confrontations and struggles between the Islam and Christianity or Islam and Communism or Christianity and Communism or Hinduism and Islam or Hinduism and Christianity etc., and the way the religious nationalism has forged ahead during the last two decades is unprecedented. About 5 to 10 lakhs people lost their lives during the Hindu – Muslim communal riots at the time of partition. During twenty-six years between 1954 and 1979 there were 5738 communal incidents in which 4509 people lost their lives and many more were injured. The year 1964 was quite unusual with 1070 incidents of communal nature leaving 1919 people killed[3].

Apart from Hindu - Muslim riots there have been only a few other clashes between religious communities in India. Delhi and areas around Delhi, Ghaziabad, Kanpur & other towns witnessed large-scale anti-Sikh riots in the first week November 1984 after Mrs. Gandhi's assassination by her two Sikh guards. India has also seen Sikh Terrorism and militancy from 1980s & till early 90s. The communal sensitivity between the Hindus and Christians till the early 1980s was limited to only a few areas like the certain pockets in the Chhota Nagpur plateau and the North-East. Till the mid 1990s, we saw such communal tensions in district Kanyakumari and a few districts of South Orissa in addition to the above two regions. But during the last three–four years, there have been incidents in many parts of India. During 1997, there were 27 incidents between Hindus and Christians leading to two deaths while in 1998 there were 86 incidents and three deaths and up to October 1999, there were 93 incidents with five deaths. All this shows that the Hindu-Christian communal tension has shown unprecedented rise in the recent past. Though in the past in a period of just sixteen days in March 1982, there were 484 incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians resulting in 21 deaths (11 of Hindus and 10 of Christians) in Kanyakumari [4], but the present incidents are spread all over India.

Christian leaders in Pakistan have also alleged that religious intolerance has risen alarmingly in the country over the past two decades with the passing of the blasphemy law. Six masked men armed with AK-47s fired indiscriminately on 28th October 2001 at about 100 Christians who had assembled in the St. Dominic Church in Bahawalpur (South of Multan near the Indian Border) to offer Sunday morning prayers. Sixteen Christians and a policeman were killed in the firing. In 1997 Muslim mobs in Southern Punjab attacked 13 Churches and a School and burned and looted 100s of houses arising that some Christians had committed blasphemy by throwing tored pages of Quran into a mosque.

India is a country of many religions, cultures, languages, races and ethnic identities. India is birthplace of four major religions Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. India has a wide spectrum of languages, races, - Aryan, Dravidian, Mongoloid, Austro-Asiatic and in some parts of India, like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, even tribes belonging to Negroid race and till recently, India has been known for its values of tolerance and syncretism.

Notes:

1. Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State – Mark Juergensmeyer
2. The Hindu, 20th June 2001, Islamic Militancy in Bangladesh.
3. Appendix II – Page 60 of the National Police Commission, Government of India, Sixth Report, March 1981
4. Venugopal Commission Report into the Kanyakumari riots of March 1982.

Chapter - 2

Areas of Christian population in India [1]

The Christian population is mostly in the coastal areas or in the areas, which make the boundary of India with other countries. It is thus apparent that the Christians occupy very strategic locations in India. Their greatest concentration is in the coastal areas of South India and in the North-East. In the mainland, they are mostly concentrated in the Chhota Nagpur plateau.

The following bar graph denotes the areas of concentration of Christians in different parts of India in terms of their percentage to the total population of Christians in India.

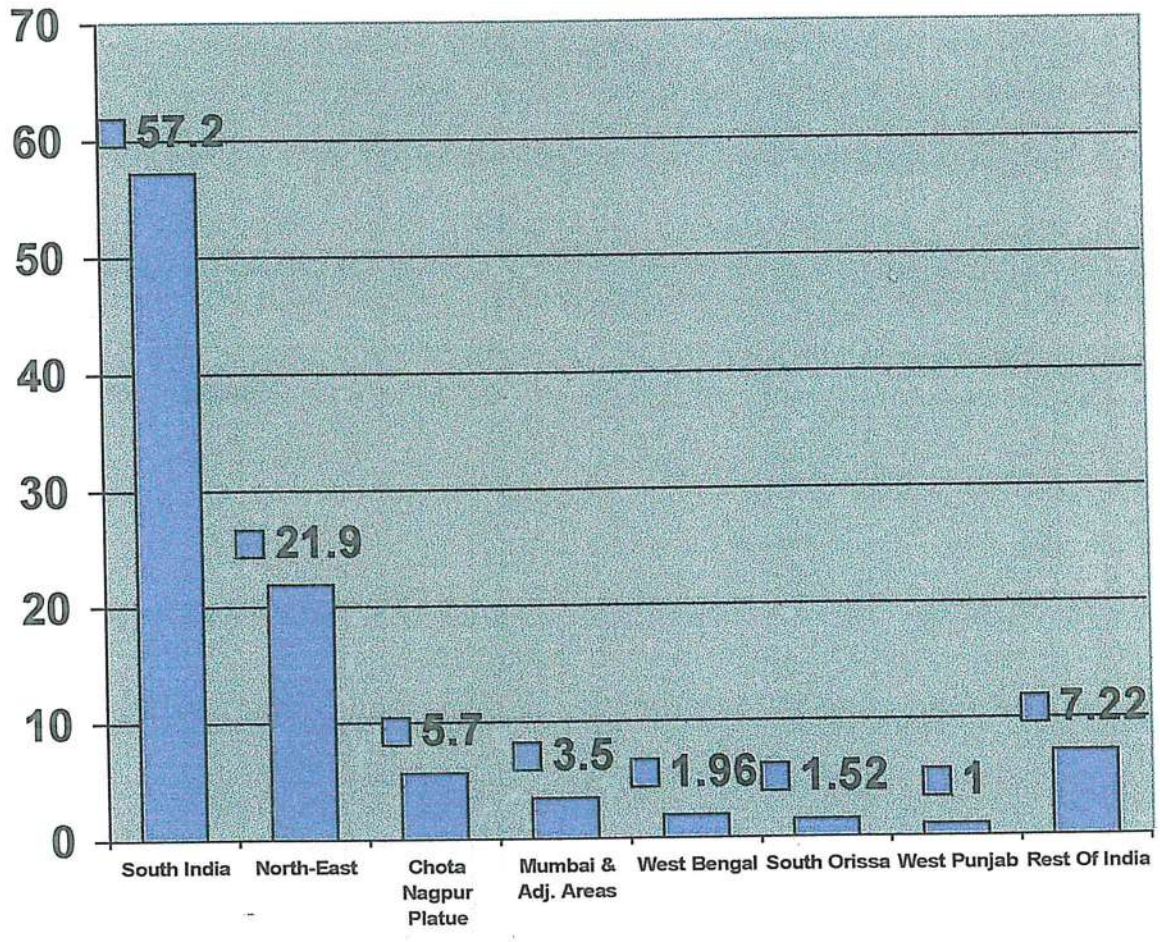


Figure : 01

Whereas Christians are in proportionately greater numbers in the three states Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya of the North-East, they are much more, in absolute numbers, in the

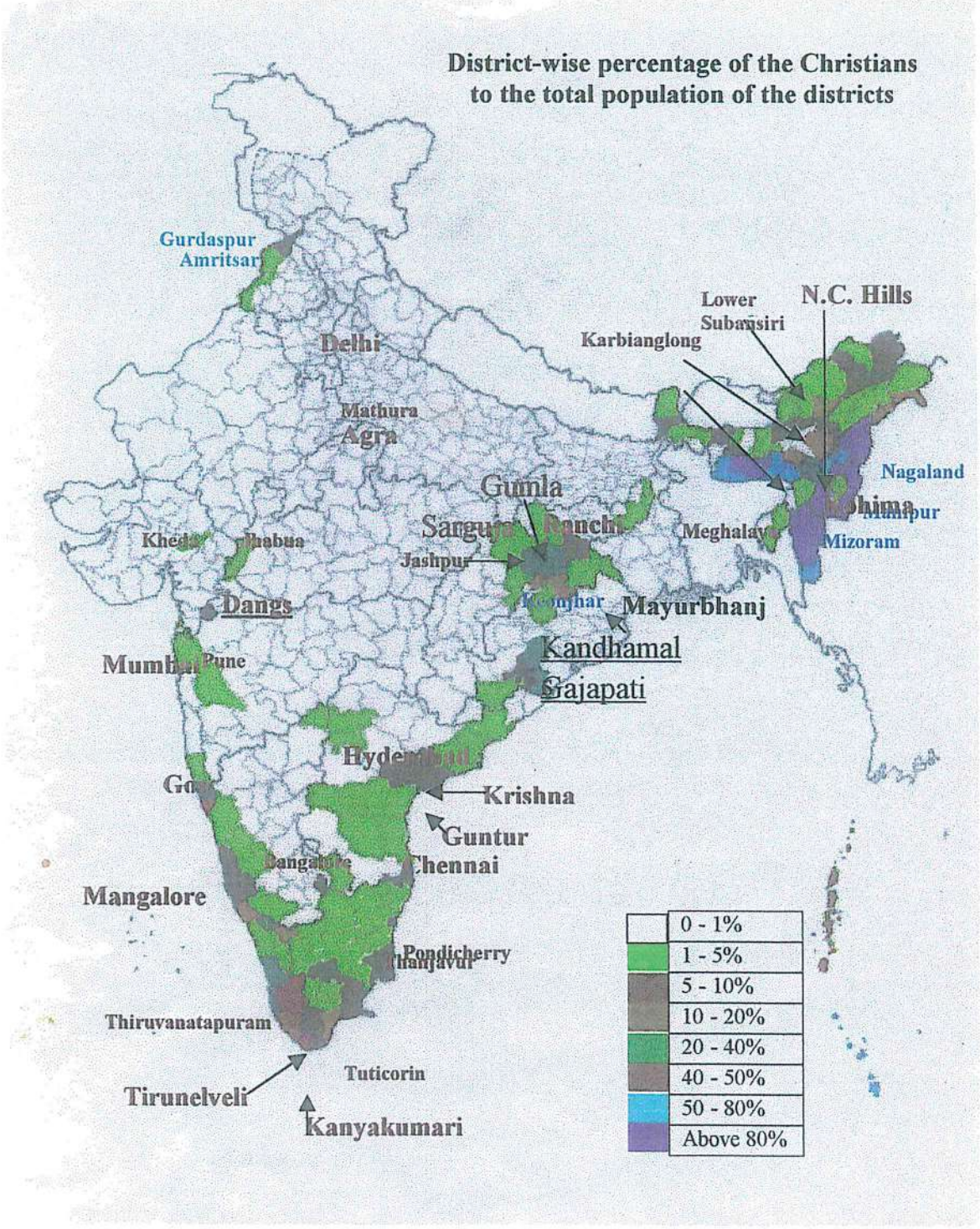
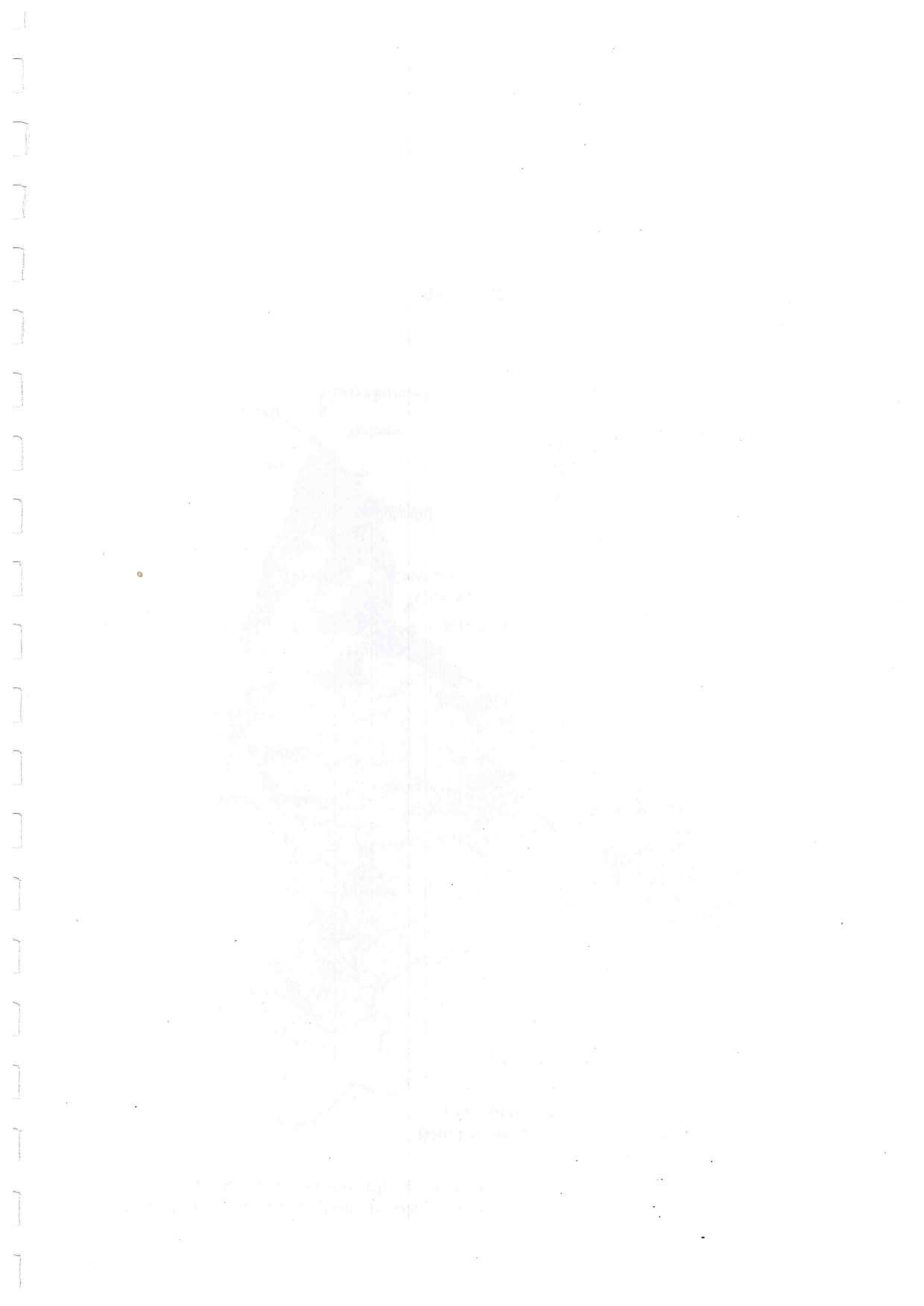


Figure : 02



southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa and Pondichery which account for over 57.4 per cent of the total Christian population. The state of Kerala alone has 28.6% of the total Christian population of the country and together with Tamilnadu (the other southern state of India); the Christian population in the two southern-most states is 44.8% of the total Christian population of India.

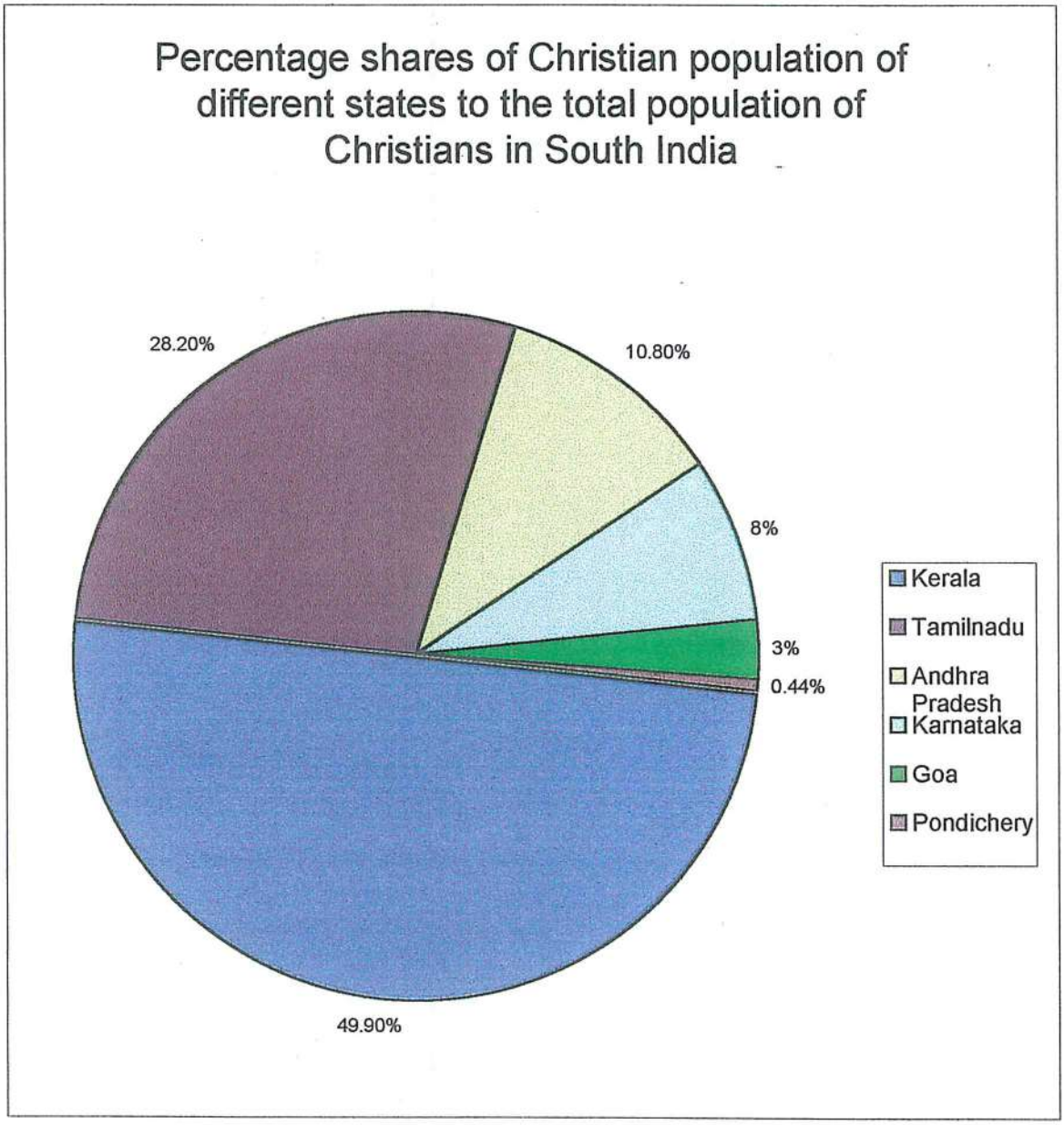
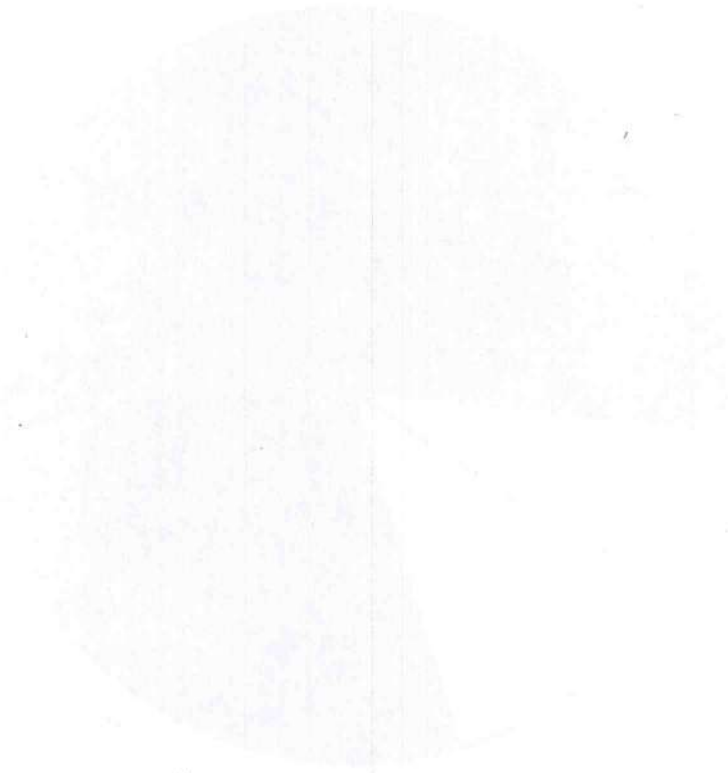


Figure : 03



The seven States of the Northeast i.e., Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Tripura contribute 21.90% of the total Christian population of India. Thus it is apparent that 77.3% of the total Christian population of the country is in the Northeast and four states of South India. Apart from this, in the Chhota Nagpur plateau region, the two districts of Gumla (3,75,549 Christians), and Ranchi (190109), in Jharkhand state, Sundergarh district (259540) in Orissa, and Raigarh district (170923) in Chhattisgarh alone contribute over 5% of the total population of the Christians in India. The Raigarh district has been split into Jashpur and Raigarh but most of the Christian population is in the newly created district Jashpur. Out of the old district Gumla, one more district Shimdega has been created from April 2001.

The districts of Mumbai, Thane and Pune in Maharashtra contribute about 3.5% of the total population of the Christians in the country.

The districts of southern Orissa i.e., Phulbani, Koraput and Ganjam contribute 1.52% of the total population of Christians in India. Apart from this, West Bengal contributes 1.96%, and Goa contributes 1.78% of the total population of the Christians in India. The two districts of Punjab Gurdaspur (120470) and Amritsar (42528) alone contribute to 0.83% of the total population of India.

The rest of India i.e. most of the Northern parts of India (excluding a few districts of western Punjab) and western parts of India excluding three districts (Greater Mumbai, Thane, and Pune) of Maharastra contains just a little above 7% of the total population of the Christians in India.

Uttar Pradesh with 1,99,575 Christians contributes over 1% of the total Christian population of India. Considering the fact that 16.6% population of India is in Uttar Pradesh, the percentage of Christians in this state is quite low. It is only 0.14% of the total population of the state.

The Districts where the Christians are in Majority and the Hindus are the Largest Minority Group:[2]

Christians are the major religious group throughout sparsely populated Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, and in five hill districts of Manipur i.e., Senapati, Taminglong, Chudachandrapur, Chandel, and Ukhrul. The Hindus are a majority religious group in the Imphal, Thoubal and Bishnupur districts of Manipur in the Manipur valley or central Manipur and Muslims are the largest minority group in these Hindu dominated districts. The Hindus constitute 57.7%, the Christians 34.1%, and Muslims 7.3% to the total population of the State of Manipur.

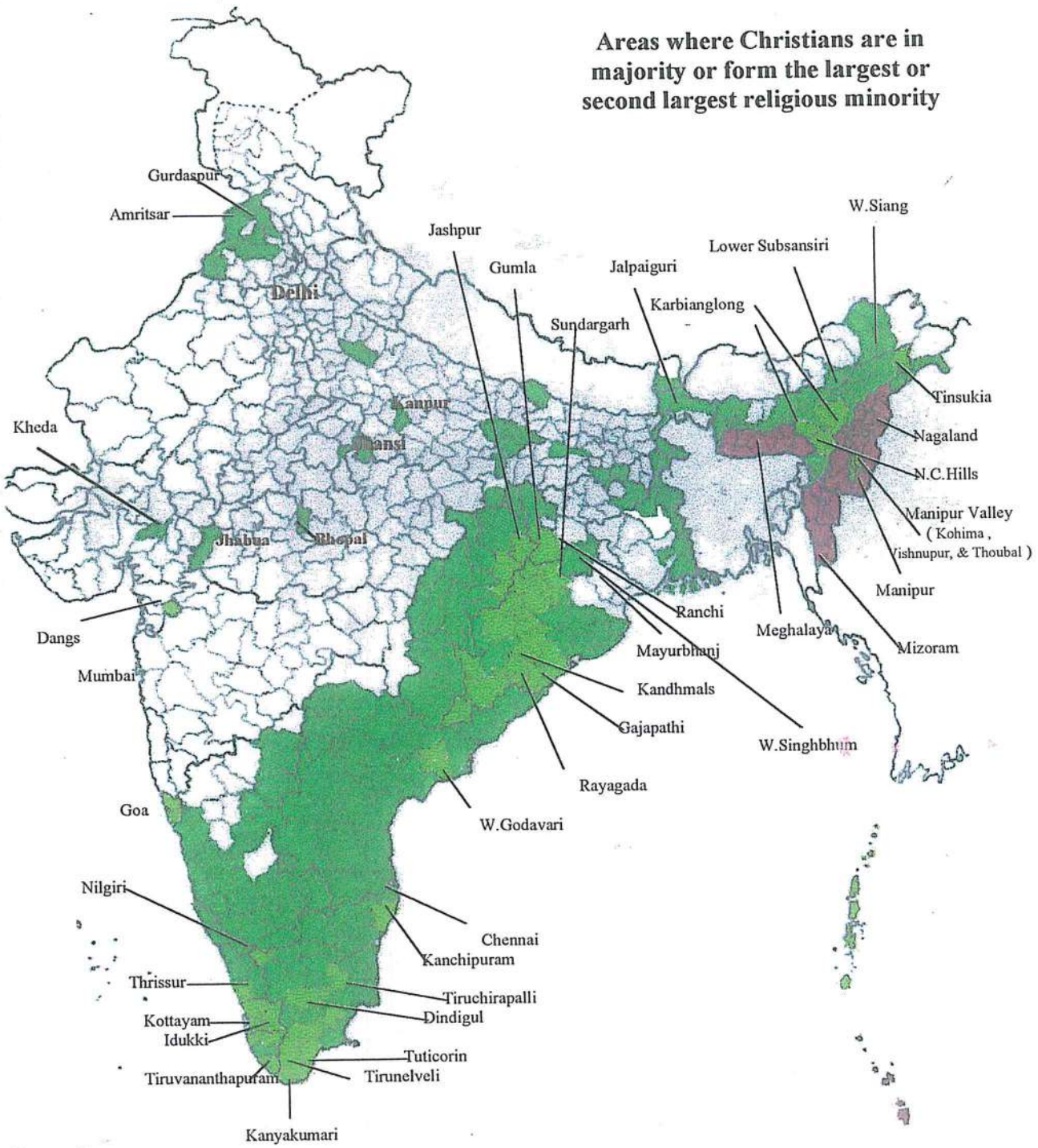
In all the three districts of Mizoram State, Christians are in majority. In Aizwal district Hindus are the second largest religious community while in Lungiel and Chhimtupui Buddhists are the second largest religious community. The highest concentration of Hindus is in Aizwal district (5.64%) where about half of their population is in the city.

In all the seven districts of Nagaland, the Christians are in majority and Hindus are the second largest religious community. They are in greatest number in Kohima district constituting about (22%). One reason for this may be the presence of Armed Forces and Para-Military organizations.

Hindus are the second-largest religious group in most of the above Christian dominated areas in the North-East, the exceptions being Luglei and Chhimtuipui districts in Mizoram, with their large numbers of Buddhists.

In Meghalaya, the Christian population is 64.6% to the total population of the state, while the proportions of the followers of "other religions and persuasions" and the Hindus are 16.8% and 14.7% respectively. In all the five districts of Meghalaya, the Christians are in majority. The Hindus are the largest minority group in the districts of East Garo Hills (20%) and the West Garo Hills (21%). In the rest of the three districts of Jaintia Hills (32.5%), West Khasi Hills, and East Garo Hills, the followers of "other religions and persuasions" form the largest minority group. In the State Capital of Shillong, the Hindu population is 41.6% to the total population. The greatest concentration of Christian population is in West Khasi Hills (90%) and East Garo Hills (80%).

In the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, the Christians are in majority with Hindus as the second largest community in the district of Nicobar.


Areas where Christians are in majority or form the largest or second largest religious minority
Gurdaspur
Amritsar
Jashpur
Gumla
Jalpaiguri
Lower Subsansiri
W.Siang
Delhi
Karbianglong
Sundargarh
Tinsukia
Nagaland
N.C.Hills
Manipur Valley
(Kohima ,
Vishnupur, & Thoubal)
Manipur
Kanpur
Jhansi
Kheda
Jhabua
Bhopal
Ranchi
Meghalaya
Mizoram
Dangs
Mayurbhanj
Mumbai
Kandhmals
Gajapathi
W.Singhbhum
Rayagada
Goa
W.Godavari
Nilgiri
Chennai
Kanchipuram
Thrissur
Tiruchirapalli
Kottayam
Dindigul
Idukki
Tuticorin
Tiruvananthapuram
Tirunelveli
Kanyakumari
Legend:
Areas where Christians form majority group
Areas where Christians form the largest minority group
Areas where Christians form the Second largest minority group

The Districts where the Hindus are in Majority and the Christians Form the Largest Minority Group: [3]

In the seven districts of southern Kerala, i.e., in the districts of Kottayam (the Christian population is 45.8% of the total population of the district), Idukki (42.2%), Pathanamthilta (40.3%), Ernakulam (37.8%), Trichur (24.5%), Allepey (21.7%), and Trivandrum (17.3%), the Christians are the largest religious minority group in the areas of Hindu majority while in Wayanad (23.4%), Quilon (17%), Kannur (10.7%), and other districts of Kerala except Mallapuram, they are the second largest religious minority after the Muslims in the areas of Hindu majority. In Mallapuram district, the proportion of the Muslim population to the total population of the district is 67.4% and the Christians are the second largest religious minority group after the Hindus.

In the nine districts of Tamilnadu (most of them being along the Coromandel Coast), i.e. Chengalpattu-M.G.R, Dindigul-Anna, Tiruchirapalli, Pasumoon Muthuramalinga, Kamarjar, Chidambaranar, Tirunelveli-Kattabomman, Kanyakumari and Nilgiri, and the once-French Pondicherry, the Christians are the largest religious community after the Hindus.

The other State, which has Christians as the second-largest group in many districts is Orissa. In the State of Orissa, Christians are the second largest religious community in the districts of Sundergarh, Sambalpur, Kandhmals, Balangir, Koraput, Rayagada and Gajapati.

In Andhra Pradesh the Christians are the second largest religious community (around 4.4% in the district) after Hindus in district West Godavari. Though in Krishna and Guntur districts, they are the third largest communities after Hindus & Muslims, their percentage in the above districts were around 5.3 and 6.7 respectively in the 1991 census.

In Assam they are the second largest religious community in district Tinsukia (4.9% in the district) Karbianglong (12.4%), and North Cachar Hills (24%) and they are the third largest community closely behind the second largest community Muslims in district Golaghat (6.1%).

In the newly created Jharkhand State, they are the second largest community in district Gumla (32.5%) and third largest community in Pashchimi Singhbhum (2.9%) after Hindus (56.9%) and followers of "other religions and persuasions (37.4%)" and fourth largest religious community in Ranchi (8.6%) closely behind second and third largest Muslims and followers of "other religions and persuasions" respectively.

In both the districts of Goa State i.e. North Goa and South Goa they are the second largest community. In south Goa their percentage in the district (42.5%) is almost equal to Hindus (50.3%), while in North Goa the population of Christians is just 20.2% as against the Hindu population of 75%.

In Gujarat the Christians are the second largest community in only one district i.e. The Dangs and even there the percentage of their population to the total population of the district is just 5.42% as against the Hindu population of 92.8% in the 1991 census figures.

In Karnataka the Christians are the third largest religious community in Dakshin Kannad (8.1%) and Bangalore (5.7%) after Hindus and Muslims.

In district Jashpur of the newly created Chhattisgarh State, the Christians are the second largest community after Hindus. In the predominantly Hindu district of Sarguja, the Christians (2.3%) are closely behind the second largest religious community of Muslims. In Bastar too they are the third largest religious community though the percentage of their population (.6%) in the district is microscopic as compared to Hindus (98.1%).

In Maharashtra the Christians are the fourth largest religious community after Hindus, Muslims & Buddhists in Greater Bombay (4.4%), Thane & Pune.

In Punjab, the Christians are the third largest religious community after almost equally matched strength of Hindus & Sikhs in district Gurdaspur. In the districts of Amritsar, Ferozpur, Jalandhar & Hoshiarpur also they are the third largest religious community.

In Andaman & Nicobar Islands, the Hindus are a majority population with Christians as the second largest religious group in the Andaman's district.

That is all from the point of view of geographical regions. Linguistically, they are mostly in Dravidian, Sino-Tibetan and Austro- Asiatic families of language. There are very few Christians in the Indo-European language regions of North India exceptions being in the region of Dangs, Jhabua, Gurdaspur and Goa.

From the anthropological point of view, the conversions to Christianity took place generally among the Dravidians or Mongoloids (in the North-East) and Austro-Asiatics (the Khasis of Meghalaya and some tribes in Chhota Nagpur region and Orissa).

Notes:

1. All the facts and figures in the following paragraphs in this title are based on Census of India 1991, Series – 1 Part IV – B (ii) Religion (Table C – 9) by Dr. M. Vijayanunni, IAS, Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

Chapter - 3

Growth of Christianity In India

It is said that the Christianity came to India in 58 A.D. with St. Thomas, one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ. But there is controversy as regards this claim, though there is evidence to support that the followers of the Nestorian Church to whom the Syrian Christians of Kerala owe their origins were there in India in the beginning of the 6th Century along the Malabar Coast[1]. Vasco de Gama discovered the sea route to India and landed at Calicut on 20th May 1498. Prince Henry the Navigator, who inspired the Portuguese, voyages, had as his objectives --to spread Christianity[2]. When Vasco da Gama landed at Calicut, he said his quest was for fellow Christians and for spices[3]. During the 16th Century, 'the Portuguese had successfully intervened in wars between rival kingdoms' in Sri Lanka and there were many conversions.

The Portuguese, Dutch, French and English secured bases on the Indian coast. Subsequently, Francis Xavier converted lot of people on Western Coast/Ghat of India during the 16th Century. Robert Noble made Madurai outside Portuguese influence as his mission station in 1606. In India, there was a mass conversion, Spanish-American style, when the Paravas, fishers of the Coromandel Coast were baptized, all 10,000 of them, in 1534, thus gaining Portuguese protection from raiders from the north. There were predictable conversions in the areas around Portuguese bases- Cochin, Madras, Madurai and notably, Goa, a fortified town of Churches and monasteries. In 1548, the first Brahman was baptized[4].

In India, in 1580, a similar opportunity of putting Christian propagandists into the entourage of a mighty ruler had occurred, for Akbar, the Mogul emperor, sent for Jesuit fathers to debate before him. But the hopes of converting the emperor were illusory. Akbar, a philosopher king, was engaged in dilettante experiments to create a new religion, synthesized from his own Muslim faith and Hindu, Parsee, and Christian beliefs. His successor Jahangir (1605-27) took Christianity more seriously, and showed signs of devotion to Christ and the virgin[5]. One of the Missionaries who attended the Court of Akbar was later on murdered in Goa. Thereafter, orthodox Muslim rulers took over the Mogul throne and Christians were subjected to harassment ranging from violence to differential taxation.

The Archbishop of Goa through the Synod of Diamper (Udayamperur, near Cochin) brought the Thomas Christians (Syrian Christians) under the control of Rome in 1599 as they, having little knowledge of the Portuguese (in which the proceedings were conducted), voted for the abolition of ancient Church but many of its members revolted against the control of Pope and a division took place among them in 1653.

In 1605, Roberto de Nobili arrived in India to carry the Jesuit policy of religious adaptation to its logical extreme. For the next 37 years in Madurai he lived the life of an Indian sannyasi (holyman) dressed in ochre robes, wearing no leather, eating no meat, learning classical Tamil and Sanskrit, and striving to get behind the Sanskrit to the forbidden world of the Veda; he refused all contact with fellow Europeans, and debated solely with the Brahmans[6]. In the fashion of Nobili, the Portuguese aristocrat Britto lived like a *sanyasi* but was later on killed[7].

The first Protestant Mission was established in India in 1705.The most famous among the Lutheran Missionaries of the south Christian Friedrich Schwartz reached India in 1750 he

made Tiruchirapalli his camp and got the patronage of Nawab of Arcot and the Raja Thanjavur for the propagation of the gospel. There were about twenty thousand Protestants Christians of the Danish Mission at the time of his death that in 1798. Most of the converts of the German-Danish-English Mission were Pariahs and half-caste Portuguese.

William Carry established himself in Serampore near Calcutta in 1799 and the Baptist Mission was started despite the opposition of the East India Company. He mastered Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali, and Marathi. He along with his two more associates translated Bible into these languages. The first Bengali newspaper "Samachar Darpan" was published in 1818 from this Serampore press.

In 1845 the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church was set up in Chhota Nagpur plateau and achieved moderate success among the Kols. The American Board of Foreign Missions started out Missionaries of various denominations to Madras, Madurai, Arcot and Ahmednagar between 1812 & 1833. In 1833 they started the Madurai Mission. The American Presbyterians chose the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh) and Punjab as the field of their activities. The Basel Mission, one of the Lutheran Missions began its work in Mangalore and in other Kannada speaking areas of Hubli and Dharwar in 1838 onwards. The American Baptists achieved outstanding success in their Telugu Mission.

In 1872, there were 15,06,098 (natives 1246,288) Christians. In 1901, the number of Christian community rose to 2,923,241, of whom 2,664,313 were natives and the remaining Europeans or Eurasians[8]. Of the Native Christians, about two-fifths were Roman Catholics, and one-eighth Romo-Syrian, that is, Syrian Christians who accept the supremacy of the Pope, but conduct their services in Syriac and are allowed a special ritual; one-ninth belonged to the Anglican Communion; one-eleventh were the Jacobite-Syrians; and one-twelfth were Baptists. Of the other sects, the best represented were the Lutherans and allied denominations, who claimed 6 per cent, of the total, the Methodists 2 ½ and the Presbyterians 2 ½ per cent[9].

	India	Provinces	States
India (Total)	294361056	231899507	62461549
Hindu	207147026	158601288	48545738
Animistic	8584148	5899194	2684954
Christian	2923241	1904204	1018977

Table :01

From the above table[10] it is clear that the Christians were 1% of the total population of India in 1901. In the provinces, their percentage to the total population of the provinces was .82% while in the States, their percentage was 1.63% to the total population of the states. This greater concentration of Christians in the states rather than in the provinces directly under the British government looks surprising but can be easily explained because of the large chunk of Christians in Travancore state (now Kerala state).

The Roman Catholics were active in Thane and North Kanara, and the Church of England and the Congregationalists started their Missions in Ahmadnagar.

During the last decade of the 20th Century, there were large-scale conversions by the Baptists in the Telangana region, by the Lutherans in the Chhota Nagpur plateau and by the Methodists in the western region of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.[11].

At the beginning of the 20th Century, there were 1,47,000 Christians, about half of them Baptists, in Burma mostly in the Irrawaddy delta.

As shown above, the native adherents of Christianity rose from 1,246,288 in 1872 to 2,664,313 in 1901.

There were about 1 crore of Christians at the time of Independence and their number have risen to about 2 crores in 1991. In 1971, of 14 million Christians there 8 millions were Roman Catholics.

In 1961 and 1971, they constituted about 2.6% of the total population of India, while in 1981, they came down to 2.45% in 1981 and went further down to 2.34% in 1991[12].

The growth rates of the population during 1981-91 among Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Sikhs were 22.78 per cent, 32.76 per cent, 35.98 per cent and 25.48 per cent respectively, but it was only 16.89 per cent in the case of Christians.

In 1961, whereas 5.53 per cent of the ST population of India returned their religion as Christianity, the corresponding figures in 1971 and 1981 were 6.58 per cent and 6.98 per cent respectively. There was some decline in the percentage of tribal peoples professing to be Hindus. In 1961, 89.39 per cent of the tribals got themselves returned as Hindus, in 1971, the percentage came down to 87.21 but in 1981 it went up to 87.37 percent.[13]

Notes:

1. Page 441, Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Indian Empire, Vol- I, Printed in India by Today and Tomorrow's Printers & Publishers, Faridabad.
2. The Oxford History of Christianity edited by McManners. Page 314,
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid Page 329.
5. Ibid Page 326.
6. Ibid Page 327 - 328
7. Ibid Page 328
8. Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Indian Empire, Vol- I, Page 476, Descriptive, Today & Tomarrow's Printers & Publishers, Faridabad.
9. Ibid (Page 475).
10. Imperial Gazetteer of India – The Indian Empire Vol – I, Page. 493, Printed in India.
11. Ibid. Page 477
12. These percentages are based on Census of India 1991, Series – 1, Paper 1 of 1995-Religion and 1971 Government of India Census, Religion Tables.
13. The Other Side of Conversion by B.K ROY BURMAN – Mainstream February 13, 1999 ---Prof. Roy Burman is on the faculty of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi.

Chapter - 4

Christian and Hindu Ideologies

Christian Ideology

Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem (now in Israel). Jesus taught that God was a kind, loving father, and that people should not fight back when attacked but should turn the other cheek. He stressed the importance of love. Gospels contain teachings of Christ as told by his followers Mathew, Mark, Luke & John, to love God and their fellow humans & to forgive their enemies. According to them, he was Son of God. The gospels also describe miracles, the amazing things he did such as raising the dead. He was tried and crucified during the period of Roman Empire. His followers were convinced that God had raised him from the dead. After 40 days of teaching he rose to heaven.

Gospels also contain a prophetic urgency that stressed the nearness of the Kingdom of God. After Jesus crucifixion in Jerusalem, his disciples begin to spread his gospel. According to them, the duty of evangelization rests on the Christians as Jesus told: "go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Bible contains the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament is sacred both to Jews & Christians.

There are three main divisions in Christianity: Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox Church. In the Holy Communion, the Christian commemorate the Last Supper before the crucifixion of Jesus with bread and wine. Roman Catholic & Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrate communion daily in the form of mass. Most Christians worship by meeting in groups called congregations, pray together & sing hymns.

Abraham gave the idea of one God. This gave birth to three principle religions of the world. 1) Judaism 2) Christianity and 3) Islam.

Roman Catholics believe that the Pope, the head of the Catholic Church, is God's representative on Earth. His authority on religious matters is always obeyed. They have special regard for Mary. They also pray to the Christian saints.

At first, the Christianity was Catholic meaning that it was spread all over the world. In A.D. 1054, the Pope in Rome and the Patriarch, head of the church of Constantinople disagreed and the Church in Rome and the Eastern Church separated. Roman Catholics and members of Eastern Orthodox Churches such as those of Russia and Greece share many beliefs. However, Orthodox Christians do not accept the authority of the Pope. Many Christians in Eastern Europe and Western Asia belong to Orthodox Churches. In their Churches, religious portraits called icons are considered sacred.

Syrian Christians of Kerala belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Baptism is done by sprinkling of water or by immersing in it. Baptism washes away a person's sins. Children are christened, at their baptism. Though, the Christian religion is strictly monotheistic and the Hindu religion also recognizes one God as Supreme Being but the Hindus worship some lesser gods as well. Still there are many similarities in the concepts of Hindu and Christian religions like the ceremony of Baptism, the Holy water or dip in the sacred rivers, the belief in Resurrection or rebirth, the ritual of rosary or *Japmala*, the use of Icons, the worship of Mother Mary (among the Roman Catholics), the use of bells, the practice of meditation and processions, the concepts of salvation Hell and Heaven and of Trinity etc.

Hindu Ideology

According to the famous Indian Social Anthropologist, Shri. M.N. Srinivas, the pantheistic idea that all things are animated by God provides a philosophic rationale for the worship of such objects as stones, trees, animals, and rivers. Village or other goddesses are an all-Indian phenomenon but there are significant differences between the goddess-cults of different regions. Differences are so radical that one wonders whether it is right to put them all into a single rubric.

Hindu philosophical thinking reached the conclusion that no way of life was built upon a realization of the "whole truth". All ways were based on part-truths, and they did not have to give way to one another so long as they were not static or did not come into violent conflict with one another.

To the ways of action or karma, rooted in Vedic ritual, and of intelligence (*jnana*), propounded in the Upanishads, Hinduism added a third religious quest, viz. The love of God (bhakti). The three basic materials (guns or gunas) formed by the union of prakriti and purusa are sattvagun, rajogun, and tamogun. [1]

In the famous Satsang case, the Supreme Court while defining as to who is a Hindu, quoted from the then President of India Sarvapally Radha Krishnan's book 'Hindu View of Life and Indian Philosophy': " -- the development of Hindu religion has always been inspired by an endless quest of the mind for truth based on the consciousness that truth has many facets. Beneath the diversity -----lie certain broad concepts -----. The first..... is the acceptance of the Vedas.---The other basic concept which is common to the six systems of Hindu philosophy is that 'all of them accept the view of the great world rhythm. Vast periods of creation, maintenance and dissolution follow each other in endless succession. ---- It may also be said that all the systems of Hindu philosophy believe in rebirth and pre-existence[2].

Rama Krishna, Buddha, Vishnu comes to restore order and peace to the world and are among the ten Avatars. Brahma with four heads has knowledge of all things; Shiva, the destroyer, rules over death and life of everything in the world; when Shiv dances, he creates life.

According to T.N. Madan, the Hindu tradition employed ideas of ritual purity and pollution to organize a great deal of the social traffic, but to be neutral to a vast range of social observances, leaving the caste group largely free to manage its own affairs. The leading spirit of Hindu belief is self-control. The higher caste, whose higher status is due to their having more observances, and greater purity, despise the castes that have always yielded to impulses. The greater the freedom, the lower the caste. Purity, which is an entirely religious concept, is firmly intertwined with domestic, matrimonial and occupational restraint and observance. No matter how westernized the family, some vestige of observance will be retained, or the social identity will be lost. Self-restraint is thus part and parcel of social status as it is of religion.

Apart from caste-system, another religious doctrine with social repercussions has been that of the 'transmigration of souls'. This is the belief that, after death, each individual is re-born in the form of superior or inferior beings, such as animals, according to his or her conduct in the previous life. Bad deeds lead to rebirth as animals or an insect. This doctrine results in a profound respect for all living things. It is possible to escape from the need to be born again by improving with each life and attaining *Moksha or Nirvana,* the ultimate of Hindu religion and philosophy which represents the state of absolute absorption or assimilation of the individual soul with the infinite or God. Cows are held sacred by Hindus and are not to be killed.

'In Hinduism, one is free to have any and every belief or no beliefs at all, without forfeiting one's religious denomination or affiliation,' Shri M.N.Srinivas writes about Hinduism and Sanskrization. Hinduism is best described as a loose confederation of innumerable cults, the connecting threads of which are found in Sanskritization, and, in the last resort, Brahmins. There are cults of ancestors, of caste, village, and sectarian deities, and of the great gods of Hinduism. There are centers of pilgrimage which draw pilgrims from regions varying in extent from the entire subcontinent to a local area composed of a few neighbouring villages'.[3]

Notes:

1. Introduction to Religion in India, Page 18 by T.N MADAN.

2. 'Religion, Law and the State in India'- Pages 47-49, by Derrett, M., Duncan. J. Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.

3. Village, Caste, Gender and Method: Essays in Indian Social Anthropology, Page 11 by Shri M.N.Srinivas, Oxford India Paperbacks, 1998, Oxford University Press, Delhi.

Chapter – 5

Conversions during the British Period

The Strategy for Conversion to Christianity during the British Period

At Ludhiana in 1862 – 63 during the Punjab Missionary Conference, the Missionary Herbert Edwards concluded by saying that God had not brought them to India for any material progress, but to 'conquer it for God'[1].

The belief that the Indian religions were on the wane was the main reason for confrontational strategy of the Christian Missionaries during the British period. They propagated Christianity through debates, religious discourses, and preached in fairs, festivals, *melas*, (Kumbh melas etc.) Bazaar, weekly markets, streets, crossings etc. The inter-faith contract was confrontational and continuous in northern India. In the *melas*, they preached by distributing copies of gospels and tracts. The hearers left with wounded feelings that never had another opportunity of being healed [2].

They attacked Hindu gods, and Hindu Scriptures. They decreed against Hindu Caste system but themselves behaved as a caste or as a superior race in their relations to the 19th Century Indian missionaries Krishna Mohan Bannerjee and Day etc.

The strategy for conversion was either through 1) itinerating in religious *Melas*, market places etc. or through 2) education. Apart from these methods, the strategy, which worked more effectively in many cases, was the use of medicine, loans, money or rice etc.

It was only during the sepoy mutiny & the depression years in America (as well as civil war period in America – late 1850s & early 1860s) that the Home Board of America took the plea that Missionaries are only to spread the Gospel and not for such charity works as health and education. And giving this reason, the Home Board in America stopped the aid that resulted in closure of the schools run by Missionaries in Assam[3]. It is thus apparent that the Home Board took this plea just because it could not fund the school/hospital etc., at that time.

'Missionaries were much more friendly to heathen whom they wish to catch in their net, than to their converts, whom they have already bagged[4]
A Brahmin convert was a great prize.

Large-scale, low-caste conversion had seemingly demoralized rather than encouraged missionaries. Their first attempt was to convert the Brahmins and they thought that if they succeeded in that, the other castes would follow them.

Wherever Indians went to celebrate their own faith, be it the *ghats, melas, pirs*, pilgrimage sites or great centres of learning, the missionaries followed. It is no accident that the thread

that linked so many Mission stations in Bengal and north India was India's most sacred river, the Ganges.

The first choice for the transmission of Christianity was by an Indian clergy and through the vernaculars as natives were the great means of converting their brethren

Most of the mass conversions took place as a sort of chain reaction and therefore, it was a moment of great happiness and jubilation when they had the first few villagers in a region converted to Christianity as they knew that they could then make substantial in-roads among the people of a particular tribe or caste.

In the North-East, where there was opposition, they established separate Christian villages near the old villages. For the expansion of the Church, the ethnic loyalties were exploited by naming the Churches after the tribes like Kuki Church, Naga Church etc., and thus deepening the ethnic divide between the different tribes.

As the Company extended its direct rule in northern India, Church and State drew closer together. Hiving off Mission followed the flag and here a sort of similarity can be seen in the conversion activities in Latin America in the 16th and 17th Centuries when Conquistadors who conquered the lands, were accompanied by Priests who converted the natives to Christianity and the Christian Missionaries in India worked in that fashion to some extent in certain regions of the North-East.

The help of the administration in Discourses/Debates and bazaar or Mela preachings proved very crucial. Some of the Missionaries like Corrie thought that lot of harm could come to their activities because of official indifference in India, which has a culture where *SIRCAR* counted for so much.

Conquest did not merely give bases to Foreign Missionaries, it also gave them freedom from fear against the natives as well as it had deterrent effect on natives against violence on the Missionaries.

A Missionary admitted that the more success he achieved was due to a pro-Missionary collector, who permitted to preach Christ to such great numbers in Mangalagherri Mela in Andhra Pradesh[5].

Thompson, a Missionary of Christian Missionary Society took advantage of the presence of the Governor General's encampment in Delhi in 1843, to proselytize[6].

G. Aloysius in "Nationalism without a Nation in India" writes, "Mass conversions of the lower orders of society taking refuge in an alien religion was not unknown during pre-British times. However, the second half of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century saw mass movements of conversions, especially to various forms of Christianity, in widely separated parts of the country. It was observed in the 1930s that: 'one half of the Roman Catholics in India are descendants of mass movement converts and, not less than 80% of the

1,800,000 Protestants are the product of mass movement (J.W. Pickett 1933: foreword).--- Group conversions took place all over India---among the outcastes of Gujarat; the Mangs and Mahars of Bombay; the Chuhras and Mazhahabis of Punjab; the Doms of Benares, Kumaon and Garhwal hills; the Dhusiya Chamars of Shahabad (Bihar) and Ballia (U.P), the hill tribes of the North-East; the Karta Bhojas of Bengal; the Mundas, the Oraons and the Santhals of Bihar and Bengal; the Bhils of Central India; the Malas and Madigas of Andhra; the Sambavars, the Shanars and the Pariahs of Madras; the Panchamas of the Kanarese districts of Madras and Orissa etc. However the movement from the traditional religious fold into Christianity took on mass proportions among the Chuhras of Punjab. By 1915 all but a few hundred members of the caste got converted. The converted tribals of Chotanagpur, who in 1857 were 900, were 400,000 in number by 1931. Christian Malas-Madigas of Andhra Pradesh were only a few hundred in 1869, but swelled to 1,225,000 in 1928, and within a short span of three years, several thousand Shanars became Christians. ---Removal of caste and religions disabilities known as Lex Loci Act (1850), administrative measures undertaken to control plagues (1897) and finally the Age of Consent Bill (1902). Each of these governmental steps were occasions for acrimony, bitter controversy, and finally rallying points in developing a pan-Indian, anti-British front. The alien government was increasingly seen as interfering with national religion with intentions of destroying national cultural legacy, tradition and civilization".

Arnold Toynbee in his book "A Study of History" writes about the non-proselytizing nature of the three oldest religions of the world i.e., Judiasm, Zoroastrianism, and Hinduism; "Conversion to Judaism or to Zoroastrianism has involved to a system of law in which religious observances are inextricably intervened with what, to Christian minds, would look like secular regulations. Conversion to Hinduism has involved incorporation in a caste and submission to the restrictions that the Hindu caste-system entails. This explains why conversions to these three religions have been rare, and why their adherents have been no more than half-hearted in their efforts to bring gentiles into their jealously guarded folds[7].
This explains considerably why Hinduism has not been in conversions. One of the reasons, for conversions to Christianity or Islam from Hinduism is that certain castes have been accorded lower status in the Hindu social system. But the caste system has also acted as the greatest hurdle to conversions because they entail social boycott from the members of the caste they belong to and also from the Hindu society as a whole.

Conversions in the Tribal Areas during the British Period

A- Conversions and Hindu-Christian tensions in the Chhota Nagpur region during the British period: The Land Issue in the 19th Century during Lievens time

During the later half of the 19th Century, there was lot of resentment among the tribal people against the Zamindars in regard to the lands and bonded labour.
After the battle of Buxar in 1765, the Moghul Emperor gave the *Dewani* rights of Bengal, Bihar to East India Company and the idea of Land-lordism was introduced even in the areas where the tribal people held land in their traditional rights of communal ownership. In 1793 the permanent settlement was introduced in Bengal and extended to Chota Nagpur. The

Zamindari Police system was started in 1805. Under the system, the Maharaja and Landlords were asked by British to establish Police Stations and appoint Police Officers, who were generally drawn from outside the Chotanagpur Region.

There were tribal uprisings in Chota Nagpur region in the year 1797, 1807, 1812, 1820 and 1832. Till the year 1854, the Chota Nagpur Region was an Agency. In 1854, the Commissionership of Chota Nagpur region was created under the Lieutenant Governor of West Bengal. In the year 1869, the Chota Nagpur Tenures Act over the Bhuniari Settlement was passed. The Rent Law of 1879 allowed the tenant to deposit his rent in the Government treasury in case the Landlord had refused to accept it.

Father Lievens started his career from Torpa Mission (now in district Ranchi) in 1885 and the first converts were Mundas. Helping the Mundas chiefly in questions of land-rent, Lievens advised the people to take the landlords to court. Lievens would loan the money if necessary, and direct them to honourable lawyers. His contacts with the Judges and District Officials also helped the tribals in their cases against the landlords. In the beginning Lievens helped all who came to him. But when the number of those who visited him became too large, he told the people that he would take up the cases of only those who were Christians and only if all the people of the village came to him and embraced Christianity. Those inclined toward conversion went back to their villages to make propaganda at the village gatherings and the whole village became Christian embolic Maximum conversions took place among the Oraons and Mundas of district Gumla and Ranchi.

While they waited for their cases to come up in court, they listened to the instruction in Christian doctrine. Their swelling ranks increased their feeling of solidarity.
These methods worked most effectively towards conversion of the tribal people to Christianity. Within the space of four years, he received more than 65,000 people into the Church. About the year 1890, people from such far places as Jashpur and Sarguja also came to Ranchi for the advice and help from Lievens.

This connecting of the legal advice and help he gave to the tribal people with their acceptance of Christian religion, led to mass conversions to Christianity. Merely by cutting their *Chundis,* many Hindu tribals became Christians. Eighteen missionaries and three priests were sent from Belgium for assisting Mr. Lievens in the conversions. About $¾^{th}$ of the financial help for the mission work during this period came from Belgium. Most of these conversions took place around the years 1886 to 1890 and in the regions of the then district Lohardaga (now districts of Ranchi, Gumla, Shimdega). He toured the areas extensively on horseback. He left India in August 1892 and died of T.B. in November 1893.

The methods used by Father Lievens for conversion led to many confrontations between the converted Christians, and the landlords. Many Zamindars complained to the District Officials, Commissioner and Lieutenant Governor against the Christians and especially against Father Lievens. It was said that he told the tribal people that it was order of the Queen Emperors (Victoria) that every one was to become Christian. There were complaints against Christians as they said that "it is not their Raj and their only *Kachheri* is at Terra (The place

of residence of Mr. Lievens). As many as 50 Christians were convicted for different offences of looting of grain, for civil crop cutting, rioting and assaults. In the jurisdiction of Police Station Kurdeg, four Christians in Police custody on way to Ranchi Jail were released by thousands of Christians. Most of incidents took place in the Beeru and Barway region.

The Christians collected in gangs and went about rioting in the countryside. Six men were accused of beating the horse of the Head Constable of Palkote, and were charged with rioting. Twenty men were accused of cutting and carrying away paddy belonging to the landlord. According to Lillingston, the Deputy Commissioner for Lohardaga, since 1885 and Renny, the officiating Deputy. Commissioner for Lohardaga, the Christians were in rebellion and that Father Lievens was behind them and that these people "have been going about in gangs"[8] and exciting the villagers to various agrarian crimes. They were referred to as "misguided Christians" or *Chundi* cut Christians. In 1890, there was a skirmish between a Jesuit Missionary, Father Cus and his two Catechists on the one hand and the landlord and his men. Father Cus fired and injured the landlord and his men and the two Catechists were also injured. The Father Cus was fined with Rs.100 for injuring the landlord but the sentence was never carried out as he had left the country.

Stuart Bayley, the Lieutenant Governor, visited Chhota Nagpur and mitigated the sentences of twelve out of the twenty-five Christian prisoners. Before leaving Ranchi, Bayley visited the mission school at Ranchi and showed his appreciation of the work being done by the mission for the education and uplift of the people. But it seems that before leaving Ranchi, he had advised the Missionaries to dissociate themselves from the Court cases relating to lands. It appears that the British government had feared the Hindu rebellion in the wake of the large scale mass conversions and in view of the serious law and order problems of looting, rioting and cutting away crops of landlords by converted Christians and therefore the Missionaries were told not to associate themselves with the and the Court cases regarding the land issue. But it did not want to lose the Christians converted in such a large number and therefore, Stuart Bayley, the Lieutenant Governor had himself started the work of consolidation in regard to the converted Christians by mitigating their sentences in many cases and by visiting the Mission and the schools and praising their work. This work of consolidation was later on to be carried out vigorously by starting a number of Christian schools in the region and by setting up Catholic Co-operative Credit Society and other measures.

In August 1895 the Chhotanagpur region saw the Birsa Rising, which was renewed in 1899. Birsa Munda was an ex-Lutheran, and during the Birsa rising, there were attacks against the establishment and on Christian missionaries as well.

B- Conversions in the North East during the British Period

The first American Baptist Mission stations in North East India were not established for the purpose of evangelizing the peoples of that area but as strategic outposts in a campaign to evangelize the Shan tribes of Northern Burma and Southern China.[9] It is thus apparent that the first American Christians were sent to Assam for the objective of evangelization of China. The Missionaries of 19th Century preferred Bengali and Assamis script over Roman

script in the regions of Assam but later on in the 20th Century the emphasis was shifted to Roman script. The earliest Baptist Church Missions established in Assam were Sibsagar, Nowgong and Gauhati in the 1930s and early 1840s. In the beginning the efforts of the Missionaries did not bring about the desired results and despite 25 years of work by 22 Missionaries there were only 50 Assamis Christians in three small Churches[10]. During the 1840s there were mass conversions among the Karens of Burma. The conversions of upper caste Hindus in Assam in 1840s created tensions as Christianity was considered as a foreign religion.

In 1843 an Orphan Institution was set up in Nowgong for evangelistic objectives and the Missionaries believed that there was no higher social service than evangelization of the people. They thought that in the day schools whatever influence they exerted was counteracted by outside influences in the homes of the students and a boarding school offered a far more and continuous Christianizing influence than the day schools.

The first tribal people to be converted to Christianity in Assam were the Garos and just in one day in the year 1867, the number of Christian community in Assam had doubled. In 1886 the number of Christians in Assam was 1,922.

In 1926 about half (45%) of the Christians belonging to the American Baptist Mission in Assam lived in the plains. But the number of conversions in the hills of Assam increased tremendously during the Manipur revival of the 1920s and the mass conversions in the Naga Hills in the 1930s. In 1950 the percentage of the plain Christians was reduced to 11% and in 1958 to 7% [11]. This gives an idea that most of the conversions in the North-East and particularly in the states of Manipur, Nagaland and in some of the other hill-regions took place only after 1926.

The American Baptist Missions got lands for their Mission stations and other institutions in the North-East region at very cheap rates particularly at Impur, Kohima, Wokha, Ukhrul, Kangpokpi and Aizuto etc because these were all believed by tribal people to be hunted by spirits[12].

The first Nagas to be converted to Christianity belong to the Ao clan and by 1926 there were prayer halls or small Christian communities in every Ao village. The Lothas, Sangtams, Angamis, Maos, Semas and other Naga clans were also converted to Christianity. The conversions did not take place smoothly and many of the Christian converts were find and driven out from the villages. But by 1950 they were 50,400 Christians in Nagaland and they constituted 47% of the total membership of Baptist Churches in Assam[13].

They have been serious conflicts between Nagas and Kukis in the past. It is said that the conflicts started when the nomadic Kukis began to settle in areas, which the Nagas regarded as exclusively theirs. There was a Kuki Rebellion in 1917-1919 during the Second World War and among the Zeliangrong Nagas ten years later. During the Kuki Rebellion, the local Nagas helped the British Government in its suppression by giving intelligence and other assistance to the authorities. The failure of the Kuki rebellion was a defeat of the old way of life and large number of Kukis began to convert to Christianity.

Sujata Miri writes, "By 1861, the American Baptists began work among the Garos, ---At the turn of the century, the largest concentration of Christians in North-East India was in Meghalaya. In Manipur the failure of the Kuki rebellion---led to a large number of Kukis embracing Christianity. Until Independence, Roman Catholics had been permitted to work only in Meghalaya and the Assam plains, and to a certain extent in Tripura. However, the large-scale conversion of the tribals was championed initially for not merely saving them from their devilish beliefs but for a more practical purpose. Sir James Johnstone (My experience in Manipur and the Naga Hills 1886) advocated the conversion of the Nagas to Christianity as they will then prove a 'source of strength' to the British government...--- 'Were they Christians, they would be a valuable counterpoise in time of trouble to the vast non-Christian population of Bihar.'--The suppression of the Zeliangrong Nagas by British, the execution of Jadonangm, the imprisonment of Rani Gaidinliu speaks clearly of the means adopted by the British authorities to crush violently any move against the Christianization of the tribal people.'

The British authorities did not permit missionary activity in Manipur State for fear of offending the religious feelings of the orthodox Hindu Manipuris. During 1890s Major Maxwell was the political agent in Manipur and he grew personal friendship with the Baptist Missionary William Pettigrew and gave him considerable assistance in his missionary work in the Manipur Hills. The Manipur Hills were under British Administration. Pettigrew started a school. In this Major Maxwell who made it clear to the Tangkhul chiefs, when visiting Ukhrul that they should send their boys to the school assisted him[14]. Pettigrew did not allow the converted tribal Christians of the Ukhrul area to participate in the local in the village festivals, which lead to back to tensions in the tribal society. In 1910-11 Pettigrew was appointed Superintendent of Census by the Political Agent and was assisted in the work by Christian teachers and students from Ukhrul. This helped Pettigrew and his converted Christians in opening the way for the Mission in non-Tangkhul areas.

Conversions amongst the Scheduled Caste People

David Arnold writes about the conversions of Malas and Madigas in his paper, "Famine in Peasant Consciousness and Peasant Action Madras, 1876-8 ", 'The 1876-8 famine marked the beginning of a mass conversion movement among Madiga and Mala untouchable labourers in the southern Telugu districts. It has been argued that this movement had its origins before the famine in the changing ideas and attitudes of the untouchables to their position of extreme subordination in rural society: the impact of colonialism and missionary activity may have encouraged the Madigas and Malas to question their customary roles. But the famine seems to have provided the essential impetus through the failure and inability of higher castes to help the labourers in their distress, and the contrasting readiness of the English and American missionaries to do so. According to census reports the number of the Indian Christians in Nellore rose from 3,012 in 1871 to 20,794 in 1881, and in Kurnool from 3,855 to 11,484. There were significant but not such spectacular increases in other famine districts. Not all those converted remained attached to the Church after the famine. The 1891 Census suggested that many of those converted during the (1876-8) famine gave only

such allegiance to their new faith as would secure them the material advantages which the missionaries were able and willing to offer'; as grain prices returned to normal, the initial material incentives lost their attraction. But a great many of the famine converts remained Christians. The crisis had brought about a lasting severance from their old religion.[15]

Conversions of Scheduled Caste people in Bihar during the British Period

There were lots of conversions among the people belonging to Scheduled Caste in Bihar during the 1930s and even before that. There was lot of reaction to this among the Hindu community. The following notes from the files of Special Branch, Bihar and the Newspapers are given below to have an idea about the conversions and the tensions in the region at that time:

Jagjivan and other speakers criticized the missionary activity at a conference of the depressed classes in Champaran was referred to in deprecatory terms, especially by Jagjivan Ram. The working committee of the B.P Hindu Sabha passed the resolution expressing its indignation at the unfair and improper methods very often used by the Christian Missionaries in course of their activities towards proselytization of the depressed class Hindus in the Patna, Tirhut and Bhagalpur divisions and. The Committee drew the attention of the Government and the Police authorities towards the necessity of checking the employment of illegal and improper methods by Christian Missions.[16]

It was reported in the newspaper "Search Light" that Hindu circles in Bihar were considerably perturbed and agitated at the alarming news that some hundred Harijans had been converted to Christianity in police stations Peru and Sabar of Shahabad district and that some converts had been transferred to towns and this process was going on unrestricted. Babu Jagjiwan Ram, M.L.A visited those areas along with some prominent members of the B.P Hindu Sabha to investigate the matter.[17]

Regarding the conversion of Harijans to Christianity in Shahabad district, it was reported in the newspaper " The Indian Nation" that an enquiry done on behalf of the Shahabad Harijan Sevak Sangh into the matter revealed that, about 40 years ago, a Methodist Episcopal Christian Mission was established at Arrah in the district of Shahabad and about 3 thousand Harijans in the jurisdiction of police stations Piro, Shahpur, Dumraon and Nawa Nagar and mostly belonging to the Ravidas Community were converted to Christianity up to the year 1931. It was said that most of them embraced Christianity very soon after the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1917. The Roman Catholic Mission engaged the unemployed and illiterate old converts as teachers through whom their propaganda was carried for fresh conversions. The Harijan teacher was generally an influential man or related to such a person. Whenever they came to learn that some tension or actual litigation was going on between the Harijans and other villagers, they at once seized the opportunity to take up the side of the poor Harijans and helped them with money and advice. They were thus hailed as saviors and conversion followed as if to repay the obligation. Both the Catholic and Protestant missions were involved in proselytizing activities. Whenever a village *Harijan* leader accepted the new faith almost all belonging to his clan followed him and in this manner mass conversions took

place. It was reported that in all the cases of conversions new or old, not a single instance could be found in which the acceptance of the new faith had been due to any religious conviction. The missionaries exploited the unbearable conditions resulting from unjust exactions and humiliating treatment, which led to resistance and resentment among them. Resistance led to quarrels, which sometimes reached courts. Most of the old converts followed their old religious and social customs and ceremonies unchanged and some of them reverted to their old faith. It was reported that those of the new and old converts who were still continuing as nominal Christians were willing to return to Hinduism if their grievances were removed. Their grievances as disclosed during the enquiry centered around forced labour for their *maliks* and other caste-Hindus of their villages at about half or even less wages than they would have got for the same kind of labour in other villages. They were forced to work for their Maliks and other caste-Hindus villagers on occasions of marriages and deaths in their families on almost no wages. They were charged 6 as. (1 anna = 1/16 of a rupee) per year per family as Mutharfa (house rent). They had to pay Re.1, Rs.2 and Rs.3 or Rs.4, for the hide of every dead cow, bullock or buffalos respectively to their owners if they failed to deliver corresponding number of pairs of shoes to them. Their wives were paid only annas four for a male or two annas for a female child born in the house of their caste Hindu villagers where they had to work as midwives The levy of *Chowkidari* tax on them was generally excessive. They were not allowed to draw water from wells used by Caste Hindus and to enter temples nor were Brahmin priests available to recite religious *kathas* at their houses. The Newspaper "The Indian Nation" dated 12-6-1937 reported.[18]

Newspaper "The Indian Nation" Sunday, June 13, 1937 reported "*Harijan* is too very ignorant to have any religious convictions at all or he is so much dissatisfied with his lot that he finds a change of faith justified by the picture of economic and social advantages that are dangled before him. The position, if properly assessed, will be found to be an extremely serious one and the Hindu community will have to decide for itself as to what course it should adopt to check this progressive denudation of its ranks by missionary propaganda. The question is: Is the Hindu community prepared to continue to take a philosophic attitude and watch with unconcern this process of conversions of the Harijans on a large and ever larger scale into Christianity? From the social, the political and the economic standpoints, this unchecked denudation of the Hindu ranks is bound to affect adversely the Hindu community as a whole. Should it not, therefore, take steps to prevent this process and should it not devise adequate measures for the same? For this purpose, there is a necessity for thoroughgoing investigation into the causes that compel the *Harijan* to leave the Hindu fold and for measures intended to eradicate those causes, which lead to this undesirable result. There is need also for a radical change in the outlook of the caste Hindus in respect of their treatment of the *Harijans* and above all there is need for the abandonment of that attitude of indifference on their part, which provides a favourable opportunity for the Christian missions to exploit the situation. It is not our idea that freedom should be denied to any person to find spiritual solace by embracing any religious faith that he likes. But our idea is that conversion from one religion to another should always be the result of the conviction born of an understanding of the religious tenets of the respective religions. There is nothing to suggest that en mass conversion of the *Harijans* by the Christian missions satisfies any of these imperative requirements. A great responsibility devolves upon Congressmen, social reformers among the Hindus and upon the educated members of the depressed classes in the

province themselves and it is for them to realize the far reaching implications of the situation and do the needful."

Newspaper "Search light" dated 12-10-1937 reported, "To Frustrate Christians Move, Babu Jagjivan Ram is visiting Jagdishpur".

The File No. 148/37 of CID S.B, Patna contains as below:

"I am told by the reliable source that the Kamia class (Workmen) of village Marcha Marchi in P.S. Fatwah Dist. Patna have due to some differences with their maliks, refused to work. This incident has been taken advantage of by the Missionaries who want to baptize the whole lot of them numbering nearly 300. About eight of ten Christians Missionary workers have already gone there and are providing them with money and materials to build up their houses etc. This news however has reached Patna to the ears of the Hindu Sabha and Aryasamaj workers; who, it is said, have deputed its members-- to go to the village and find out the truth and what actually the Missionaries are up to in the village. The idea is that they will approach the men not to become Christians and in this if they are interfered by the Missionaries, they should at once report the matter at Patna head office for further action."

Conversions and Acculturation in Schools during the British Period:

Apart from street preaching, education was another strategy for preparing the mind for receiving the Gospel. But this strategy of evangelization through education was adopted only subsequently when direct Evangelism did not yield desired results.

Madras Native Association a branch of British India Association established in Calcutta in 1841 attacked the Company's policy of grants-in-aids to the missionary schools.[19]

The education policy of 1854 of Sir Charles Wood provided for grants-in-aids to missionary schools.[20]

Education became a highly contentious aspect of Company policy. By 1858, the Mission had 500 schools with an enrolment of 38,607 students in South India. In 1861 there were 75,475 students in Missionary schools and by 1871 the number had risen to 1,22,374.[21] It was in this English Medium educational system that the real battle for acculturation took place. English language itself is more or less pervaded with the ideas and sentiments of Christianity. The aim was to evangelize the pupils, with missionaries as teachers, imparting useful and eagerly desired knowledge and following it up by preaching the gospel to the impressible minds. Their object was to correct their ideas of what God requires, and to convince them that they are sinners, and that nothing they are doing or can do is of avail to remove their guilt. Some of the missionaries thought that education even if it is secular and not missionary education would loosen the hold of idolatry, superstitions, ritualism, caste, prejudice, etc. and thus

would predispose and prepare the Hindu and Muslim minds to receive the word of God and the pupils would carry the Gospel message back to their homes.

Rev. Forman of, American Presbyterian Mission, Lahore, declared the opinion at the Punjab Missionary Conference, 1862-63, Ludhiana that the mission schools should freely admit their ambition for conversion.[22] According to Robert Clark, English schools in the cities exercised a greater influence than acknowledged. How impartial a pursuit of knowledge can be when the declared objective is the mass conversion of Indians?[23]

George Pearce, a Baptist Missionary was to enjoy considerable success in conversions of students during the second quarter of the 19th century in the various schools he ran, first at Chitpur, then Howrah near the Kalighat temple.[24] Such themes as "The conversion of St.Paul" in 1841 or "The Falsity Hindu Religion" in 1842 were given in essays to the students in the schools. In 1843 Robert Noble opened an English School in Masulipatnam on the lines of Duff's Institute in Calcutta, but only upper classes students, the Brahmins and some Sat (clean) Sudra castes were enrolled. In the 1840s, the English school of Machilipatnam was held responsible for controversial conversions and it was viewed by the citizens of the town as thoroughly opposed to their religions. In 1846, a converted *sudra* student was forcibly carried away by his friends from the school compound. The number of students became half after the scandal. Two other conversions in the school in 1852 of Venkataraman, a Niyogi Brahmin and Nagbhushanam aroused lot of public out-cry and anger. In July, both sought refuge in Noble's house, always an open house for converts. Near the time of baptism there were angry attempts to seize the young men from Noble's house, always an open house for converts, and he decided to anticipate a court meeting, which had been fixed for 1 August 1852 to challenge their would-be conversion. He baptized them the previous evening. Hindu aspects of their names, offensive to Christian sensibilities, were removed. Venkatraman lost Venkat, meaning Vishnu, Nagabhushanam, Naga, a Hindu serpent god and they became Ratnam and Bushanam. The next day, Noble accompanied them to the court. Anantam was not yet sixteen, and this led to a severe grilling by the Collector in his office. There was a tremendous disapprobation and anger from the crowd' outside the office. The Judge allowed them to return to his house. A few days later, however, when yet another Brahmin sought baptism, there was such a furious attack on Noble's house that the would-be convert lost his nerve. Venkatraman was almost an orphan as his father was invalid and his mother had died in his early childhood.

During the 19th Century, there were conversions in the school run by the blind Cruickshanks at Trinelvelly and the Scottish Mission School run by John Anderson in Madras.[25] Education was also thought of as a means of fashioning a loyal administrative elite through whom the British could rule India.

The high castes saw the advantage of learning English.[26] English education was seen to be the passport to administrative employment. Elite families, though they had learnt of the risks involved, valued an English education so highly for their sons that they persisted in sending them to missionary schools. They persuaded themselves that they would recognize the

danger signals and withdraw their children in good time. The Indian Christians drawn nearly entirely from the lower castes were looked down upon and despised. It seemed impossible that they could be the evangelists of India. Dr. Duff, therefore, conceived the plan of converting the Brahmans by means of English education saturated with Christian teaching and with the help of the English providing them with Government jobs. Almost womanly tenderness and affection towards the students and an Indian susceptibility to kindness from Europeans was a common strand in conversion stories. Some of the students proved to be malleable and the missionaries performed the role of surrogate fathers to perfection.

Any discussion of the British Raj and its imposition of English studies in India should take note of T.B. Macaulay's famous Minute on Education (1835): "We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. 'Masks of Conquest' is a major addition to the ongoing discourse on colonialism and nationhood. The story of how government measures promoted English studies is a complex one of competing ideologies within groups of educated thinkers. Many details of her book will, no doubt, generate further researches aimed at "decolonizing the mind".[27]

An Oraon Sanatan Adivasi Leader of Ranchi has been made propaganda for the abolition of reading Bible in the schools as it was based on unjust principle and violated the educational code. A Sanatan Adivasi meeting held in the jurisdiction of Police Station Sesai, Sub-division Gumla, District Ranchi under the president-ship of Biswa Mahato, urged the Government to stop aids to schools who persist in this practice [28].

Conversions among the elite classes were very rare and took place in trickle and generally in the 18th and 19th centuries and mostly in the schools. Convertions among the Scheduled Caste and tribal people took place on caste and tribal lines and were generally on mass scale.

Notes:

1. 'Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India', Page 21, by Copley Antony – Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.
2. Ibid Page 25
3. 'The Mighty Works of God' – A Brief History of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East-India, Page 41 to 43, by F.S. Downs, – Lakshmi Printing Press, Panbazar, Gauhati. 20.
4. 'Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India', Page 20 – 21, by Copley Antony – Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.
5. Page 157, Ibid.
6. Page 126, Ibid.
7. 'A Study of History' abridged and illustrated edition, Page 335-36, Arnold Toynbee.
8. 'Crisis in Chota Nagpur' by Fidelis de Sa: A Redemptorist Publication, Bangalore, India 1975.

9. The Mighty Works of God – A Brief History of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India: The Mission Period 1836-1950 by F.S.Downs – Page 14, Published by the Christian Literature Centre, Panbazaar, Gauhati-1, Assam 1971.) .
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Famine in Peasant Consciousness and Peasant Action Madras, 1876-78, Pages 74, 75 by David Arnold. Subaltern Studies III – Writings on South Asian History and Society edited by Ranajit Guha – Oxford India Paperbacks, 1994, Oxford University Press, 1984, Delhi.
16. The File No.148/1937 of Bihar CID Special Branch, Patna.
17. The Newspaper "Searchlight" dated 20-4-1937 reported that "Hindu circles in Bihar are considerably perturbed and agitated at the alarming news that some hundred Harijans have been converted to Christianity recently in Peru and Sabar thanas of Shahabad district.
18. The Newspaper "The Indian Nation" dated 12-6-1937 reported "In connection with the conversion of Harijans to Christianity in Shahabad district, an enquiry was made on behalf of the Shahabad Harijan Sevak Sangh into the matter.
19. Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India, Page 184 by Antony Copley, published by Oxford University Press, Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.
20. Ibid. Page 170.
21. Ibid. Page 22.
22. Ibid. Page 20.
23. Ibid. Page 20.
24. Ibid. Pages 69 and 217.
25. Ibid. Page 188.
26. Ibid. Page 80.
27. Literary analysis; Culture and Power by Malashri Lal about the book Masks of Conquest by Gauri Viswanathan in Indian Literature- Sahitya Akademi's Literary Bi-monthly No.144, July-August 1991, Vol.XXXIV, No.4, page 169, Editor D.S. Rao.
28. File No. 60/1942 of Special Branch, Patna.

Chapter - 6

Exclusivism in Christianity

The Christianity believes in one God but at the same time they assert that one's salvation can be achieved only through Jesus Christ i.e. only when one becomes a Christian. The proselytizing activities of the Christianity are attributed to the exhortation by Jesus Christ to spread his message throughout the world. But according to Arnold Toynbee, "The transformation of Christianity and Islam into religions for all Mankind was achieved by followers of the founders. It was not the intention of the founders themselves. In the Gospel according to Saint Matthew, he is reported to have instructed his emissaries not to visit the gentiles or the Samaritans, but to go rather to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel'. In the Gospel according to Saint Mark, he is reported to have taken the same line"[1]

This urgency of spreading the message of God leads to many tensions in the areas wherever the Christian Missionaries work. It also leads to supra-national loyalties.
Missionaries were sometimes conscious agents of imperialism, but many saw a providential link between the material superiority of the West and the moral superiority of Christianity, which also seemed self-evident to them. Missionaries were generally willing to accept help from Western powers in gaining access to hostile countries, and in providing protection for themselves and their converts in time of need.

The Niyogi Committee remarked as below in its report:
"Young, independent India, still smarting under memories of the partition of India on grounds of religion is very sensitive to anything dangerous to the solidarity and security of the country. Even terms like "Kingdom of God" must be explained in their true spiritual sense in order to obviate the hurting of any susceptibility."[2]

Arnold Toynbee writes in 'A Study of History,' "Non-Christians have usually been regarded by the Church as enemies of God to be overcome by force, but if they submit to baptism these inferior idolaters will be accepted as equal members of the community of true believers civilizations". Toynbee, Arnold[3]

Thus confrontation is inherent in the Christian ideology (Church theology) itself, which makes it the duty of Christian convert to convert others so to speak. For this they even risk their lives and sometimes, when their activities lead to confrontations and resistance from the people in majority in certain areas, it brings in them a sort of persecution mania.
According to the Hindu religion one's salvation can be achieved by following any of the various paths.

Verrier Elwin writes in his book "Leaves from the Jungle": [4]
"My contact with Mahatma Gandhi and his followers, however, apart from anything else, made it impossible to believe that there was only one way to Heaven".

We may see in certain cities like Bangalore such posters or writings on walls, or on the three-wheelers "Christ alone heals", "Jesus saves".

In the inter-religious conferences, the Christian participants are generally not prepared to accept the equality of all religions and they assert that the Christianity is a superior-most religion. In the inter-religious conference of 1893 at Chicago, the Christian spirit pervaded the conference from the first day to the last and Christ's prayer was used daily. At the Conference, Swami Vivekananda proclaimed "It is the same light through different colours....But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns; the Lord has declared to the Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna, ' I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls. And wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, know ye that I am there".[5]

There have been some exceptions during the British Period to the general rule exclusivism in Christianity but even there exclusivism around Jesus Christ dominated. The Christo Seva Sangh was set up Ahmednagar in 1922 as a Christian ashram movement on the lines of Gandhi's Ashram and was later on shifted to Poona in 1928 and was known as Winslow's Poona Ashram. Verrier Elwin first worked as a missionary in the ashram, but later on left it because of its Christ -centred exclusivism.

Notes :

1. 'A Study of History' abridged and illustrated edition by Arnold Toynbee.
2. The Report of the Niyogi Committee.
3. A Study of History' abridged and illustrated edition. P.432.
4. Leaves from the Jungle – Life in a Gond Village, (Page No:xxvii of the foreword) by Verrier Elwin, Published by Oxford University Press, 1992
5. The Ways of Religion – An Introduction to the Major Tradiations: Third Edition, Edited by Roger Eastman, Published by Oxford University Press, 1999, Page 7

Chapter – 7

Hindu-Christian Tensions during the British Period

In 1813, the East India Company allowed the Missionaries to enter India and preach. Till 1833, the Missionaries had to take licenses from the Company officials. Military men and governors, often themselves military, feared for the loyalty of Indian *sepoys* and threats to public order, should missionary activities be encouraged. The Court of Directors of the East India Company had some reason for caution. Protestant missionaries denounced Hinduism and Islam as devilish, sometimes taking to the streets to do so. Such tactlessness, many officials thought, would cause disorder, and in 1806 a mutiny at Vellore, in South India, was blamed on proselytizing zeal. An angry public response in Travancore in the 1820s was also linked to the pro-Missionary policies of Colonels Macaulay and Munro. In Tiruchendur (south of Tuticorin in Tamilnadu) a communal tension flared up between the Hindus and Christians and brought to a head in 1845. An Inter-Caste alliance was formed in 1841 under the leadership of a Nadar soothsayer.[1] Hindu protest lay in their alarm at the withdrawal of the government support for temples and its devolving responsibility to Indian Trustees. The effective Hindu resistance was limited to a 20- mile radius around the temple complex of Tiruchendur. The cause of the trouble was the irresponsible intervention of a Christian School Master taking on the self-appointed role of a Panchayat committee, which had antagonized local Hindus.[2]

By 1845 about 20 Christian villages were destroyed in District Nalloor. There was a serious resistance movement against the activities of Christian Missionaries at Trinelveli by the Vibhuti Sangham (or Sacred Ash Association). Four Vedas Society, based in Salai Street, Madras had already earlier successfully petitioned against the erection of a church in their street.

During the 1857 Revolt, Rev. Jennings, his wife and daughter, and the convert, Chimman Lal were murdered in Delhi.[3] One of the causes put forward for the rebellion was the provocation given by the activities of the Christian Missionaries, which was strongly resented to by both the Hindus and the Muslims. On the other hand, the Missionary organizations took the offensive and tried to reverse the Company's policy of religious neutrality and argued that there had been no rebellion in Bengal and Madras and had the Company actively supported Mission, the rebellion would never have happened. The mutiny and revolt in northern India in 1857 revived fears of the political danger of missionary activities, but most conversions were in fact in the South, and as there was no mutiny in the South in Bengal, these fears were short-lived. After the rebellion of 1857, the Baptist Missionaries like Lawrence of the Mongher Mission turned imperialist and asserted that until the Indians are Christianized, they will be unworthy of confidence. They put their faith in force: nothing but the strong arm of power will keep the people, especially the upper classes, loyal.

During the 1857 rebellion, the Missionaries had to leave Chota Nagpur and escaped to Calcutta. The Hindus destroyed what they could of the mission's property. The Christians in many villages were assaulted and their houses were plundered and burned and the slogans 'out with Christians and with the missionaries' were shouted. Even before the mutiny in 1855, Herzog, a Lutheran Missionary was attacked and left for dead on the road. During the years 1858-59 there were serious clashes resulting in killing of one Zamindar and four others and a Christian. In one of these clashes, the landlord and two of his followers were killed, while the Christian died of his wounds. Dalton, the then Commissioner of Chota Nagpur from 1857-1859 called the Christians a "new band of agitators".

In the south, in 1858, Hindus had come out of the streets after permission for transit of a funeral procession of a low caste Palla Christian through a street occupied by high caste Hindus, mostly Vellalas in Tirunelveli. At least ten people were killed in the police firing. Earlier thirty nine bodies had passed along this route during three years before 1858, and nineteen of these had been low-caste, but none, it appears, a Palla. It is said that the vehemence of the upper castes derived from their success two weeks before, when residents' objections had altered the burial plans of a Christian weaver; and more generally from confidence that their just cause enjoyed government support, because a collector had in 1853 ordered that the customary rules forbidding objectionable low-caste movement through town streets were to be respected.

It was said that the arrival of Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott, leaders of the Theosophical movement, with their praise for Indian religions and ridicule of Christian Mission, did much to galvanize Hindu resistance. Col. Olcott gave a lecture in the inner precincts of Saivite temple in Tirunelveli.[4] There were confrontations in Madras between Protestant mission and Hindu organization like Hindu Preaching Association and Hindu Tract Society in the 1880s.[5]

According to the Niyogi Committee, there was a rebellion in 1910 in the Bastar State, which was attributed to Mr. Ward, a missionary.

In the North-East, Jodonang, a Rongmei organized a movement similarly on the lines of Kuki Rebellion against the British between 1929 and 1931. The movement was knows as Kampai cult. The Nagas particularly of the northwestern hills resented the imposition of an alian administration that threatened the old way of life. The resentment was directed against the Kukis the government and as well as against the Christians. Jodonang drew a large following among the Zeliangrong tribes of Manipur, North Cachar Hills and Nagaland. He was later on arrested by the British authorities and executed. His close associate 'Rani'Gaiduiliu was also arrested and later on released. But after the revival of the Kampai cult, she was arrested again and was later on released in 1949 when India became Independent. Just as the Nagas had assisted the government against the Kukis in 1917-1919, the Kukis assisted the government against the Nagas.

Two Christians Mr.P.J.Hill and Mr. Bevis, were arrested Under Rule 129 of the Defense of India Rules in 1939 on the suspicion that they were engaged in the activities, prejudicial to the state. They were suspected of religious activities in the important Railway Centres and in

coalfields areas. They were arrested by Additional SP, Dhanbad Mr.P.K.Mitter in 1939, but were later on, released after subsequent inquiries by senior officers.[6]

Pangs and sufferings of the Converts and their Families

Due to the inextricable link between society and religion in Indian life, to reject one's religion was to reject one's society, and hence to inflict on oneself that most punitive of sanctions, ostracism. Most bitter was the divide from one's own family. On sons fell all kinds of customary obligations to the family, especially in *Shradha* or funeral rites, and hence their conversions were particularly dreaded and resented and most acutely when convert was the only son.

In the eyes of the Hindu Community, conversion was a living death. The convert was cut off from his family and socially ostracized. And such was the nature of Christian exclusivism in an age of empire that mission sought to drive converts as far as possible from their former social and religious loyalties. Wives of converts lived like widows. A mother of a convert under paroxysms of grief violently knocked her face against the wall. After conversion, his wife did not join him and lived as a widow. One of the convert's father's regret in 1852 was not that his only son had embraced Christianity but that he had broken caste. He had not dared to visit his son in Masulipatnam.

For the converts, the process of acculturation was a painful one. The converts did not know where they should stop, how far they should go as regards their Europeonization, when they found themselves in no-man's land in the middle of two cultures and two societies.' Acculturation never made one a sahib as the British were.'

Notes:

1. Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India, Page 150 by Antony Copley, Published by Oxford University Press, 1999.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. p.125.
4. Ibid. p.125.
5. Ibid. p.185.
6. Special Branch file No.248/1939, DGP Headquaters, Patna, Bihar.

Chapter 8

Attacks on Hindu Religion, Customs and Gods

Several Missionaries during the British period attacked the Hindu Gods, religion and customs in the following manner:
'You cannot assume that they believe in the 'unity and holiness of the divine being, the responsibility of man, etc'. God was everywhere and 'all their subordinate deities were only in the way', 'Ram, himself not free from sin'. 'I am here alone in the middle of Satan's kingdom'.' That Indian temples were homes for the gods rather than places of worship, had come to the temple to sell, to petition, to render thanks'.' Caste is indeed an iron hand from Satan's forge'.' Vishnu, Siva, Durga and other popular gods and goddesses are visible personifications of the hidden man, viz. Impurity, licentiousness, theft, lying these are the gods that crowd the country'.' They worship a million Gods, from inanimate sticks and stones to everything that lives and creeps on the earth-cows, monkeys, snakes, etc. ---- worship of Husband by Wives, ----- India's trouble is religion, not the lack of it'.

"A weltering chaos of terror, darkness and uncertainty. It is a religion without an apprehension of a moral evolution, without definite commandments, ----- -Childishly superstitious animalism".

There was an attack on Hindu pilgrim Centres Varanasi, Mathura, Brindavan, which were referred to as no more free from sin than other places.

According to the Niyogi Committee, a Christian preacher addressed persons in the market place and uttered deprecatory remarks against the lives of Rama and Krishna in a manner offensive to the Hindus.[1]

Only after the growth of Hindu organizations in the early part of the 20th Century, did the British Government bring about the 1935 Amendment, adding a new section 295A to the IPC, which deals with, attacks on gods and religion.

Note:

1. The report of the Niyogi Committee, Page 119.

Chapter 9

Growth of Hindu Resurgence and Organizations during the British Period and their Ideology

In the initial stages of Hindu revivalism in the early 19th Century there was a positive attitude towards Christianity. The movements of Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj started as reform movements in the Hindu religion in the face of cultural encounter with the Christianity and Western culture. The Brahmo Sabha was established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1828 in Calcutta and was superseded by Brahmo Samaj in 1843. Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) founded the Arya Samaj in 1875 at Bombay. The transformation of positive attitude towards Christianity into a negative one occurred in 50 years between the deaths of Ram Mohan Roy and Dayanand Saraswati in 1883.[1] Bankim Chandra Chatterjee turned Vaishnavism away from Christianity and into a proto-nationalist movement.

The Hindu Mahasabha was founded in 1915. In 1923, Mahasabha leader V.D.Sawarkar wrote a book "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu" with its agenda of the protection of Hindu interests like cow protection and the promotion of Hindi language and Devnagri script. Hindus, included in this broad category were Sanatan Dharmis, Arya Samajis, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs and even tribal communities such as the Santals. It is not surprising that Savarkar should have concluded that, 'the Bohras and such other Mohammedan or Christian communities (as are descended from converted Hindus) possess all essential qualifications of Hindutva but one, and that is that they do not look upon India as their Holyland'. These communities are therefore excluded from the 'nation', although they remain in the 'country'. Savarkar's momentous declaration – 'a coherent and powerful pattern of concept' has in recent years acquired the undisputed status of the manifesto of Hindu fundamentalism, which is totalitarian in relation to those forcibly grouped together as 'We Hindus', and exclusivist towards those stigmatized as the spiritually alienated 'Others'. Savarkar diluted Dayanada's emphasis upon respect for the scriptures and replaced it by an overwhelming stress upon culture. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, a medical practitioner and an active Congressman, and five collaborators, founded an organization at Nagpur in 1925, two years after the publication of Hindutva, for the protection of Hindu culture. The name Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) that is 'the national organization of volunteers' was given to it two years later.

According to Golwalkar's definition, the Hindus were the sons of the soil and Muslims and Christians were the 'invaders'. Guru Golwalkar himself had bracketed Christians with Muslims and Communists as anti-nationals. The Jews and the Parsis were 'guests' for they did not entertain political ambitions.[2] Shayama Prasad Mookerjee established a new political party, Jana Sangh, in 1951. After the ban on the RSS imposed following Gandhi's assassination had been lifted in 1949, Golwalkar said that there was no land other than India that the Hindus could call their own, but 'we do not say that Hindusthan is the country of Hindus only'. In 1969, he asserted that an invitation to the descendants of converts (Christians and Muslims), to rejoin their family' could not be called 'irresponsible.' 'Those returning (Ghar Vapsi – and 'transformation') could, he declared, continue their non-Hindu

modes of 'worship'. In 1971, he said: 'The Hindu is born secular. He accepted the truth that there are different paths to God Realization.[3]

Sister Nivedita, disciple of Swami Vivekananda, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Annie Besant, Aurobindo, Mother, Bhartendu Harishchandra, Golwalker, Deoras, Ashok Singhal, Giriraj Kishore, and K.N Govinda Charya – they all have one thing in common. They are all critics of Christianity.

Notes:

1. Modern Myths, Locked Minds – Secularism and Fundamentalism in India, Page 218 by T.N Madan, Published by Oxford University Press, 1998.
2. Ibid. Page 223
3. Ibid. Page 225

Chapter 10

Cultural Encounters and Synthesis

The clash between East and West is essentially one of culture and civilization. It has led to tensions and cultural problems. Hindu values are quite different from those of the West and one may ask if a synthesis between these two is possible. But both cultural synthesis and encounters have followed. This conflict and synthesis has expressed itself in the on-going process of Sanskritization, Westernization and revival and re-assertion of tribal customs and rituals in India and in the demands for or agitations against one or the other language or script.

Different writers have expressed different views about the effects of Western culture in India.

Weber argued for a causal relationship between the Protestant ethic and the rise of rational capitalism in Western Europe. He regarded the *samsara* belief in the transmigration of souls and related *karma* doctrine of compensation as central to the doctrines of Hinduism. Weber wrote '*Karma* doctrine transformed the world into a strictly rational ethically determined cosmos; it represents the most consistent theodicy ever produced in history. Hindu culture and society, Weber believed, were immune to change, and India was incapable of the kind of socioeconomic historical developments that took place in Europe.'

Mark Tully writes in the Introduction to his book "No Full Stops in India", 'America is concerned about educating students to propagate the America way of life and keep its economy expanding. Cultural imperialism of the West, imperialism now strengthened by our success in the battle with communism. The best way to destroy a people's culture and identity is to undermine its religion and its language. West is paying a very heavy price for its lack of religion, but it has made the economic progress to achieve other goals in life, ephemeral though they may be. What I think is manifestly wrong is to disturb the religious beliefs of those who have no hope of any other comfort, Mahatma Gandhi, those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means'.[1]

T.N. Madan writes in, 'Pathways', 'All the text books record that the Battle of Plassey in the plains of Bengal in 1757 laid the foundations of the British *imperium* in India. It is also taught that better guns, better goods, and better government enabled the British to capture India militarily and economically. And yet we might suggest that for India the battle had already been lost, say in 1606, when Jesuit missionary, Roberto de Nobili, walked the streets of the ancient Hindu city of Madurai, dressed as a Brahman—holy thread and all – possessing knowledge of Hindu scriptures, but converting people (mostly those of the higher castes) to Christianity. He and his successors never made many converts; Christianity had, in fact, arrived in India, if we go by well-established tradition, with the Apostle Thomas at the very beginning of the Christian era. What the new missionaries represented was the cultural invasion of Asia by the West. It is in this sense that the Indians may be said to have lost their

souls before they lost their territories or markets. Ultimately all the processes were unified. Colonized lands are always populated by colonized minds.'[2]

Jacob S. Dharmaraj in 'Colonialism and Christian Mission: Post Colonial Reflections' writes that 'the Serampore Mission was carried out with colonial monetarism and with the help of colonial Government' and Alexander Duff's assertion 'to negate culture is to deny power and a legitimate identity to people.[3]

In his pioneering study, Orientalism, Edward Said had described the Orient as a construct of the Western imagination. Orientalism was, he said, "a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the orient. "Said drew his examples from the Arab-Islamic world. The references to India were tangential.[4]

In the beginning of the 20th century, Gandhiji used effectively the call of swadeshi to inculcate a sense of pride on our own culture and tradition. The economic aspect of his call was the boycott of imported goods, the patronization of Indian products, and the introduction of *khadi*.

In it's National Council Meeting at Udaipur in Rajasthan in June 1999, the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch (SJM), the socio-economic front of the RSS, launched a 'Swadeshi Week', a campaign over Swadeshi.

Even many Christian Missionaries admit that the Indian Christianity had to be grounded in Indian culture.

Kunal Ghosh writes, 'Christian missionaries in India have not always been so unkind to indigenous scripts. The Indian civilization has always accorded a place of honour of to Syncretism or *samanvay*. Reverned William Carey a Protestant priest and a missionary of the Sri Rampur Mission, who taught at the Fort William College of Calcutta in the early nineteenth century, was a patron of the newborn Bengali prose. Bengali Christians love their Bengali script and literature just as much as the Bengali Hindus. I wish to draw the attention of my fellow countrymen in North-East India to these shining examples of syncretism.'

Arnold Toynbee writes in, 'A Study of History', 'It is true that the West has maintained a cultural assault on the other living civilizations of the world for the past five hundred years.'

Toynbee further writes, 'In our present-day world it is imperative that different cultures should not face each other in hostile competition, but should seek to share their experience as they already share a common humanity.[5]

Qurratulain Hyder absorbed and internalized the four great religions of the world, namely, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam and the cultural ethos emanating from them. Her novel 'Safinae Ghame Dil' is the story of four families representing the three major religious communities of the sub-continent-Hindu, Muslim and Christian-highlighting the perfect harmony in which they lived. Through the fate of these families, of which the writer's family is one, she has woven the fate of the whole nation. [6]

Notes:

1. No Full Stops in India, by Mark Tully, Published in Penguin Books, 1992
2. Pathways : Approaches to the Study of Society in India by T.N. Madan, Oxford India Paperbacks, 1995 Second Impression-2000 (Page 233 – 34).
3. 2. Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India, pages 254, 255 by Antony Copley about book Colonialism and Christian Mission by Jacob S. Dharmaraj: Post Colonial Reflections. Delhi, 1993, Published by Oxford University Press, 1999.
4. Literary analysis article; Culture and Power by Malashri Lal about the book 'Masks of Conquest' by Gauri Viswanathan on Page 173 of Indian Literature: Sahitya Akademi's Literary Bi-monthly, No.144, July-August, 1991, Vol.XXXIV, No.4, Edited by D.S. Rao.
5. A Study of History, Page 319 by Arnold Toynbee.
6. Indian Literature- Sahitya Akademi's Literary Bi-monthly No.142, March-April 1991, Vol.XXXIV, No.2, Pages 84 - 87 Editor D.S. Rao

PART – II
Research Design

Research Design

Need and Importance of the Study

India is country where religious feelings run high, as the materialism of the West has not yet taken its roots in the Indian society though, earlier Hindu-Christian tensions/riots were generally unheard of. It seems to be a very recent development and as such a new problem-area for police, about which it is not traditionally geared up to deal with, though such kinds of incidents took place during 1857 mutiny on a large-scale but that is long time back. In fact the system of police, which prevails now in India, had its beginnings from 1860-61 just after the mutiny. But again the Hindu-Christian tensions of those days may not be relevant for us today as then the British were in power and now we are an independent & democratic nation. The first fifty years of Independent India saw such incidents only in a few localized areas like Kanyakumari, Chhota Nagpur plateau, a few districts of South Gujarat etc. The last three-four years have seen a geographical spread of the incidents to many other areas of India Particularly in the tribal-belt. Thus this is not surprising that the police in the states of Orissa and Gujarat did not know much as to how to deal with this new kind of development & such recent trends in the Indian polity & society. Thus the subject of my project-report will throw light on how far we have been able to deal with these incidents successfully, where we have erred, what went wrong, and what could have been better methods in tackling them, and if something has been lacking on the part of police.

If we have a better understanding of the problem & its magnitude then we can handle it is a better way & thus can also improve our detective/investigative and preventive methods of dealing with Hindu-Christian tensions/riots and then the Policemen can also be accordingly sensitized. The methodology has involved the following points to have a better under-sanding & clear picture of the problem.

Statement of the Study

The Study was worded as "Policing the Hindu-Christian Tensions in India."

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were:

1. Origins & history of the Hindu - Christian Tensions.
2. Causes
    - (a) Psychological: -Mob psychology; Effects of indoctrination; Mutual-hatred campaigns etc.
    - (b) Social: - Hindu & Christian ways of life, cultures etc.
    - (c) Ideological.

(d) Religious: - Primitive methods of worship & tribal religions; Missionary zeal and activities; Activities of religious groups; Religious fanaticism etc.
(e) Political: - Power politics, elections etc.
(f) Communalism in general.
(g) Economical.

3. Forms and patterns of violence, tensions, confrontations, mob-attacks etc.

4. If forces from outside the states are involved.

5. If forces from outside the nation involved.

6. Methods of policing in India.

7. Law & order aspects of the problem (I) present organizational set-up, equipments etc. (ii) present information & communication, and Intelligence network. How fast do the affected the district units or police stations know about incidents happenning & developments taking place in the remote areas? -Response time etc- Role of peace committees etc.

8. Investigation/detection/conviction aspects.

9. If the present law has adequate teeth to deal with the problem.

10. Action: - If police face any problems when it comes to taking action against some persons/groups etc.

11. If any link between politicians & criminals.

12. Minuscule minority Vs majority: - If the same police methods, which are generally used to deal with Hindu-Muslim tensions/riots, are relevant and useful here.

13. Present Law, organizational set-up & methods to deal with the problems & what could be better methods etc.

14. If there is need of training & sensitization of policemen to deal with the problem more effectively & what should be the input of such training etc.

15. Study and analysis of the Hindu-Christian tensions since Independence and see if some special characteristics/patterns can be discerned.

16. Interviewing officers, particularly those who dealt with the problem, and people belonging to both the religious groups etc.

17. If attitude of police in particular and of Government Servants/officers in general is that of particularity and indifference to the problem.

18. Identification of contentious issues.

19. Identification of the areas having tensions: - It the problem is confined to tribal areas; Among tribal areas and population which areas and population have been most affected and why.

Collection of Sample

I visited seventeen states during the study, namely Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chattisgarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh, and met offiers and prominent members of both community and officers and serving in affected districts and those who had earlier served in the districts where there had been problem in the past. From the above states, relevant data about the incidents of Hindu Christian communal nature and other information regarding the people of the affected districts were colleted.

Response data from eighty officers was collected in regard to the following objective and descriptive questions.

QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONS

Q. 1. How far have the police been able to tackle the problem with professionalism?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q. 2. How far has the Police been able to tackle the problem with impartiality?
Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

Q. 3. How far is the predominantly majority community composition of the Police Force responsible for the tensions and recurrence of incidents?
Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

Q.4. How far will the suitable representation of the minority community in the police of the sensitive districts will help in controlling the tensions and incidents?

Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

Q.5. To what extent have the Christian and Hindu Organizations/Missionaries been responsible for the tensions and incidents?

. Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

Q.6. How far is the political interference in police working responsible for the problem?

. Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all

Q.7. How far will the posting and transfer of Officers on objective considerations in sensitive districts help in controlling such communal situations? ?

. Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.8. How far is a bad or good leader in the district police, responsible for the deterioration or improvement of such communal situations? In other words how far is the effectiveness of good leadership in the police at the district level, helpful in controlling such situations?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.9. If the incidents and tensions reflect the failure of the intelligence machinery of the police?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.10. If much remains to be desired as regards the training of the police personnel for dealing more effectively with the problem. ?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.11. How far is the enlisting of the public cooperation by the police helpful in dealing with the problem?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.12. To what extent are the preventive measures effective in controlling such communal situations?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.13. How far is police professional and impartial in the investigation of such riot cases?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.14. How far are the arrests of ring leaders of riot-cases, effective in controlling situation?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.15. How far is the police itself responsible for the tensions and the incidents?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.16. To what extent are socio-cultural and economic factors responsible for such communal situations?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

Q.1. What are the causes for tensions between Christians and Hindus or between converted and non-converted tribal people?

Q.2. What could be the possible contentious issues in future between Hindus and Christians (or between converted or non-converted tribals) that might give rise to tensions?

Q.3. What can be done for the prevention of these incidents?

Q.4. What agencies can help police in such communal situations?

Q.5. If the police has any constraints and limitations in dealing with the problem?

Q.6. If you have worked or lived in any district / area with mixed Hindu- Christian population or dealt with or known any Hindu-Christian tension/incident in your state, kindly write a note about it.

Q.7. Any other comments

Procedural steps of the Study

The Research Data about Hindu-Christian tensions and the police methods to deal with it, had been collected through both historical and empirical methods. For this a study of the literature of the subject, like books, magazines, journals, documents and police records was done after collecting them. Eighty officers of Police and other services filled up Questionnaires each containing sixteen objective questions and seven descriptive questions. Out of these 80 officers, 10 were from non-police government departments. Out of the rest of the 70 Police Officers, 15 were of the IG rank and 55 were of the rank of SP and DIG.

Apart from this 40 Police Officers and 4 Revenue Officers who had either dealt with the Hindu-Christian Tensions or were posted in the areas affected with the problem were interviewed. Similarly 31 persons from the public including Hindu and Christian Missionaries, media-men of the affected regions were also interviewed. The substance of the interviews has been added in the different chapters dealing with State-wise analysis of the Hindu-Christian Tensions in Part III of the Study. The interview of the Police Officers gives a Police perspective of the problem, while interview of the prominent and influential citizens of the concerning areas gives a wider perspective of the problem in those areas.

Topical analysis is in the light of or in the framework of –topics generally center around certain premises regarding methods of policing or certain myths about police or in respect of causes of tensions and certain patterns of tensions and incidents that have emerged after state-wise analysis.

Some conclusions have been arrived at in the state-wise analysis and the questionnaire-response analysis and they have been put concisely in the topical analysis or in the conclusions (findings) and the suggestions wherever it seemed relevant and necessary to do so --

Idea about the people we will have to depend in the accounts—Gazetteers etc-----the people are not machines ----though sometimes they act like bonbustible material but perhaps all of as have been like that at some stage of our life or development.

Definitions of Key-Terms: -

Hindu – The word 'Hindu' means a follower of Hinduism or Hindu ideology which has been elaborated in Part – I, Chapter - 4.

Christian – The word 'Christian' means a follower of Jesus Christ or Christianity or Christian ideology which has been elaborated in Part – I, Chapter - 4.

Police –The civil force of a State, or the department of the Government, responsible for maintaining public order and safety, enforcing the law and detectinig crime.

Q.13. How far is police professional and impartial in the investigation of such riot cases?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.14. How far are the arrests of ring leaders of riot-cases, effective in controlling situation?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.15. How far is the police itself responsible for the tensions and the incidents?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

Q.16. To what extent are socio-cultural and economic factors responsible for such communal situations?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

DESCRIPTIVE QUESTIONS

Q.1. What are the causes for tensions between Christians and Hindus or between converted and non-converted tribal people?

Q.2. What could be the possible contentious issues in future between Hindus and Christians (or between converted or non-converted tribals) that might give rise to tensions?

Q.3. What can be done for the prevention of these incidents?

Q.4. What agencies can help police in such communal situations?

Q.5. If the police has any constraints and limitations in dealing with the problem?

Q.6. If you have worked or lived in any district / area with mixed Hindu- Christian population or dealt with or known any Hindu-Christian tension/incident in your state, kindly write a note about it.

Q.7. Any other comments

Procedural steps of the Study

For brainstorming first a survey of the literature on the topic of research was done through browsing of relevant information in different magazines, newspapers, and books. This helped a lot in getting acquainted with the topic and its various dimensions and different perspectives.

The Research Data about Hindu-Christian tensions and the police methods to deal with it, had been collected through both historical and empirical methods. For this a study of the literature of the subject, like books, magazines, journals, documents and police records was done after collecting them. Eighty officers of Police and other services filled up Questionnaires each containing sixteen objective questions and seven descriptive questions. Out of these 80 officers, 10 were from non-police government departments. Out of the rest of the 70 Police Officers, 15 were of the IG rank and 55 were of the rank of SP and DIG.

Apart from this 40 Police Officers and 4 Revenue Officers who had either dealt with the Hindu-Christian Tensions or were posted in the areas affected with the problem were interviewed. Similarly 31 persons from the public including Hindu and Christian Missionaries, media-men of the affected regions were also interviewed. The substance of the interviews has been added in the different chapters dealing with State-wise analysis of the Hindu-Christian Tensions in Part III of the Study. The interview of the Police Officers gives a Police perspective of the problem, while interview of the prominent and influential citizens of the concerning areas gives a wider perspective of the problem in those areas.

Topical analysis is in the light of or in the framework of topics generally center around certain premises regarding methods of policing or certain myths about police or in respect of causes of tensions and certain patterns of tensions and incidents that have emerged after state-wise analysis.

The report was prepared after analysis and interpretaton of data collected as explained above.

Delimitation of the Study: -

The focus of the study was on all the incidents and cases of tensions between Hindus and Christians or between converted and non-converted tribals in the whole of India after Independence. Though the study was done for the whole of India, special attention was focused on certain areas where many incidents have taken place during the past for example, the areas of North Orissa, South Orissa, Northern Chattisgarh, Chhotanagpur plateau, North-East, South Gujarat and Kanyakumari.
The Part – I of the study deals with the introduction and other topics related to the study. In this part, the conversions and the tensions during the British period have also been covered and generally the material in this part has been taken from various books.

Definitions of Key-Terms: -

Hindu – The word 'Hindu' means a follower of Hinduism or Hindu ideology which has been elaborated in Part – I, Chapter - 4.

Christian – The word 'Christian' means a follower of Jesus Christ or Christianity or Christian ideology which has been elaborated in Part – I, Chapter - 4.

Police –The civil force of a State, or the department of the Government, responsible for maintaining public order and safety, enforcing the law and detecting crime.
India has a federal structure in which there is a center and different states. According to the Constitution of India, maintenance the public order is the responsibility of different states.

Public Order – A condition in which the laws regulating the public conduct of members of a community are maintained and observed; the rule of law or constituted authority; absence of riot or violent crimes.

In the case of Dr.Ram Manohar Lohia v. State of Bihar, 1966 ISCR 709 = (AIR 1966 SC 740) Justice Hidayatullah held that any contravention of law, always affected order, but before it could be said to affect public order, it must affect the community at large.

Distinctions between Public Order, Law and Order, Public Safety

Tensions - A situation, especially a volatile one, characterized by strained relations between people, communities or nations. Definition in The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary 1993 edition.

Here the word 'tensions' include communal situations, conflicts and riots and also include unilateral attacks by members of one community on members of another community or it's culture, religion, institutions and traditions etc.

Communalism – The word 'communalism' has been defined in The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary 1993 edition as the principle of communal organization of society i.e. the organization of society on the lines of different communities.

Riot – The word 'riot' means the violence, tumult, public, disorder; and instance of this; a violent disturbance of the peace by a crowd; an occurrence of public disorder.

Religion – The word 'religion' means a state of life bound by religious vows; the condition of belonging to a religious order; Belief in or sensing of some superhuman controlling power or powers entitled to obedience, reverence, and worship, or in a system defining a code of living especially as a means to achieve spiritual or material improvement; acceptance of such belief

as a standard of spiritual and practical life: the expression of this in worship etc; Religious rites; A particular system of such belief.

Tradition – The word 'tradition' means, 'A statement, belief, custom etc., handed down by non-written (especially oral) means from generation to generation; such beliefs etc. collectively. A long established and generally accepted practice or custom; A doctrine usually regarded as having divine authority without written evidence.

Convert – (Cause to) turn to and adopt a particular faith , belief, opinion, religion etc. ; (cause to) change one's religion and adopt another religion.

Tribe – A group of (especially primitive) families claiming descent from a common ancestor, sharing a common culture, religion, dialect etc., and usually occupying a specific geographical area. They generally live in the regions, which were earlier dense forests, or hills and some of them still profess primitive religions, sometimes known as "Animism" in which the worship of ghosts and spirits is a most important element. The tribes are sometimes called aboriginals because of their being the earliest inhabitants of the country.

Culture – The distinctive customs, achievements, products, outlook, etc., of the society or group; the way of life of a society or group; A particular form, stage, or type of intellectual development or civilization in a society, a society or group characterized by its distinctive customs, achievements, products, outlook etc.

Ideology – The branch of philosophy dealing with the origin and nature of ideas; Ideal or abstract (especially impractical) speculation; a system of ideas or way of thinking pertaining to a class or individual regarded as justifying actions and especially to be maintained irrespective of events.



PART – III
State and Region-wise Analysis

Chapter - 1

Case Study Jharkhand

The State of Jharkhand was created in the year 2000. It is interesting to note here that the beginnings of the demand of a separate State lay in a Christian organization. In 1898, the Chhota Nagpur Christian Association was formed and in 1915 its name became Chhota Nagpur Unnati Samaj and since 1938 this was known as Advisasi Mahasabha. The Adivasi Mahasabha was superseded by the Jharkhand party as announced by Jaipal Singh in 1950 at Jamshedpur.[1]

According to the 1991 census, there were more than eight lakh Christians in the districts, which are now under Jharkhand State. The Christian population of the Jharkhand state contributes over 4.1% to the total population of the Christians in India.

The percentage of Christian population to the total population of the district in the following districts, where Christians are in substantial number is as follows 1) Gumla 32.5%, [with 3,75,549 Christians according to the 1991 Census] 2) Ranchi 8.6% [with 1,90,109 Christians] 3) Lohardaga 3% 4) Pashchimi Singhbhum 3% 5) Sahebganj 2.7% 6) Dumka 2.2%, 7) Palamu 1.8%, and 8) Purvi Singhbhum 1.3%.

There are three main denominations of Christianity in the above districts 1) Roman Catholics, 2) CNI and 3) Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission. The first Mission to be set up in Chhota Nagpur region in 1845 was the Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission, and had achieved moderate success among the Kols even before largescale conversions to Roman Catholicism due to the efforts of Lievens in the late 19th Century. The bulk of the Christian population follows the Roman Catholic religion and most of the conversions to this denomination in this region took place due to the efforts of one man, Father Lievens around the year 1890, as he took up the cause of giving legal advice to the tribal tenants in their cases against the landlords. Due to the advice and help given by him, lot of tribals got their lands back and this Father Lievens used for their conversion to Christianity.

Hindu – Christian tensions in the Chhotanagpur region since Independence

Lots of tribal people in the districts of Pashchimi Singhbhum (37.5% to the total population of the district), Gumla (21.5%), Purvi Singhbhum (14.8%), Ranchi (10.3%) and Lohardaga (8.8%) have shown themselves as following "Other Religions and Persuasions" in the 1991 Census. In the neighboring district Mayurbhanj in North Orissa, the percentage of tribal people following other religions and persuasions was 19.1%. In the Census data, the followers of tribal religions and other smaller sects not covered by the categories of main religions like Hindus, Muslims, Christians etc., have been clubbed together as "other religions and persuasions". Each tribe follows its own tribal religion for example, the Oraons follow the *Sarana* religion The presence of such a large number of people following their

tribal religion suggests that there are not only Hindu-Christian tensions but Tribal-Christian tensions also and sometimes even Tribal-Hindu tensions also in the above districts. Most of the above districts have a sizable Christian population, which leads to many tensions between the groups of different religious communities.

Jaipal Singh in the 1930s started a movement for the creation of Jharkhand State as the homeland of the aboriginals who predominate in this area and who must rule over it. In 1938 about a lakh of aboriginals mostly of Ranchi and Singhbhum attended the conference of Adibasi Mahasabha called by Jaipal Singh at Ranchi and made it an issue before the elections to the Provincial Assemblies in 1939. But with support of the Tana Bhagats who formed a fair percentage of the aboriginals the Congress outvoted the Adibasi Mahasabha candidates. It is said that the Adibasi Mahasabha leaders combined with the Muslim League and started disturbances at different places in district Gumla. Mr. Bonifus Lakra, an Adivasi pleader of Ranchi and resident of police station Raidih in Gumla had joined the Congress party leaving the Adibasi party and subsequently the Adivasis, mostly Christians, assaulted him. After the 1939 elections, the society in some distrits like Gumla was divided into the Christian Adivasis on the one hand and the non-Christian Adibasis, and Hindus on the other hand particularly in the villages falling under the areas of police stations Chainpur, Raidih, Basia and Palkot of district Gumla. After Independence Mr. Jaipal Singh renewed his activities and organized a series of meetings and processions. In September 1947, he organized a mass rally of the Adibasis on the occasion of the visit of the Sub-Committee of the Constituent Assembly appointed to enquire into the question of creating Chhotanagpur as a separate province. A large number of Christian Adibasis joined the rally. In Octobere1947, a huge meeting of the non-christian Adibasis was held at Baghima in police station Palkot under the presidentship of Theble Oraon of Ranchi. After this meeting a conflict started between the Sanatan Adibasis and the Christian Adibasis. The Sanatan Adibasis who had hitherto formed a majority of supporters of Adibasi Mahasabha withdrew themselves from the Mahasabha accusing it as a pure Christian Organisation. There were many meetings of Christians at different places in October 1947. There was a festival of the Chistians on 01-11-1947 when the Christians in large numbers gathered in the Chruches. The non-christians viewed these gatherings with suspicion. At the same time a rumour was afloat that the Tana Bhagats would attack the Christian Adibasis. There was a similar counter apprehension in the minds of the Tana Bhagats. Elias Prachar and others of Chhatarpur in police station Chainpur threatened the Tana Bhagats to leave Jharkhand. In November 1947 some non-Christians of Chattarpur in police station Chainpur who were in minority and apprehended an attack, abandoned their houses and spent their nights in the jungles. The matter came to the notice of the Police and the authorities who at once reached to the panic striken areas of police stations Chainpur and Raidih in district Gumla and restored their confidence who thereafter returned to their villages from the jungles and from the neighbouring states of Jashpur and Surguja. It came to light that the Missionary heads were in league with the Adibasi agitators particularly in police stations Chainpur and Raidih. The Pracharaks and some aboriginal Christian Fathers of the Churches were the medium of preaching for the seperation of Jharkhand. They took advantage of the gatherings in Churches on Sundays and on festival occasions. The Christian 'Ganjhus', and teachers, also supported the movement. Again in December 1947, a meeting of the Christian Adibasis was held at Birkera in police station Raidih and passed resolution

for the seperation of Jharkhand. In October 1948 there was a meeting of the Christian Adibasis at Patratoli in polive station Raidih and it was told to the audience that the Central Govt. have partially acceded to their demand by declaring portions of Chhotanagpur as a Scheduled area and that this was a step towards Jharkhand.

Most of the incidents of communal nature have taken place after 1986.

Hindu Christian Tensions in 1986 after rumours of poisoning of wells of Christian villages:

In August and September, 1986 there were many cases of attacks on Hindus by Christians in district Gumla, and other adjoining areas of district Ranchi, Lohardega etc. following rumours among the Christian community that the Hindus had poisoned their village wells. The cordial relationship between the two communities was seriously disturbed and there were cases of spreading hatred and disharmony by speeches, rumour-mongering etc., resulting in attacks on innocent people.

On 26th August 1986, a Christian mob attacked the three unknown persons in village Lamboi Bazartand in the police station Jaldega, district Gumla, suspecting them of having been involved in the poisoning of the village well. A few moments before the incident, a girl had become indisposed and unconscious near the hotel and thereafter a rumour spread that some Hindu strangers had poisoned the village well. The vagrant goldsmiths had come to the village for the weekly *haat* on that accursed day, and had a few bottles of acids with them for cleaning the jewelry and it was believed by the mob that these strangers had poison in the bottles and the drinking of the water from the village well poisoned by them had caused the unconsciousness and ailment of the girl. The deceased tried to convince the mob that they were vagrant goldsmiths and had acid, sulpher and *tutia* for cleaning the jewelry and utensils and that they had not poisoned the village well. But the mob frenzy acted under the influence of the panic and anger caused by the rumour mongering. One person was killed near a hotel. Some people tried to save him by locking him up in the nearby Primary Health Centre of the village. But he was forcibly taken out and killed. Subsequently his two other colleagues, who had reached the spot after hearing about the incident, were also murdered by the mob at a distance of only about 10 – 12 yards away from the hotel. Two more colleagues of the deceased escaped lynching at hands of the mob as they were escorted away by a Muslim on a motorcycle. One of these two survivors, Timu Mandal was the brother of one of the three murdered by the mob. Shri Timu Mandal deposed in his statement that he along with his colleague tried to save them as they had been badly mauled by the mob and wanted to give them water but the village *chowkidar* and the *sarpanch* told them that they had not been attacked and injured for having been allowed to survive and told them to go away from the spot otherwise they too would be killed. The incident took place after 2 p.m. when the crowd at the weekly *haat* had become thin and there were only about 1,000 men at that time. The case was charge sheeted under sections 147/ 148/ 149/ 302 IPC. Police investigation found that all the three murdered strangers were vagrant goldsmiths from district Madhubani who had acid bottles with them for the purpose of cleaning silver ornaments and other jewelries and utensils. All the twelve accused named in the FIR and belonging to the Christian community including the village *chowkidar,* were arrested and charge sheeted in this case.

Though according to a report of S.P. Gumla dated 11th September 1986 mentioned that there was no evidence against the village *chowkidar* Joseph Horo as he had reached the spot after the incident, but it seems that later on, he was also charge sheeted as the other reports from district police Gumla suggest.

As many as 27 cases were registered in different police stations of district Gumla during the months of August and September 1986 following the rumours of poisoning of village wells. Out of these 7 cases were reported from Gumla sub-division and 20 cases from Shimdega sub-division. There were as many as 75 accused in the above 27 cases out of which 34 were arrested and 33 surrendered in court in the month of October 1986 itself. Two accused were found by police investigation to have been falsely implicated. There were many cases registered by Christians regarding poisoning of wells by Hindus, which ended in final reports. These cases were registered under sections 268/269/277/284/153B different sections of IPC. The cases against Christians for spreading the rumours of poisoning of wells etc. were registered under the sections 147, 149, 124A, 505, 153 A, 295A, 153 B and 34 IPC and generally ended in charge sheet.

The police stations affected by the rumour mongering of the village wells, were Jaldega, Thethaitangar, Kamdara, Dumri Bolba, Kolebira, Kurdeg and Bano.

In September 1986 in village Birkera Ambatoli police station Simdega there was an attempt to kill one Baijnath Munjhi by 14 named Christian accused, the case was charge sheeted against all the accused.

There were some complaints too, of police harassment and false cases by a section of the Christian community, which were not found true by enquiries. This needs to be mentioned here that the Pope visited India in February 1986 and there was an atmosphere of heightened religiosity among both the Christians and the Hindus. The Roman Catholic Christians may become overzealous and over-enthusiastic about the visit by Pope, while the Hindus might get reactive because of the supra-national loyalties of the Christians on such occasions.

Other incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians since Independence

1. During 1964 there were many Hindu-Muslim riots in India. After harrasment and persecution of Hindus in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan), some Hindus arrived in India with mutilated bodies whose sights provoked Hindu-Muslim riots in Rourkela and Jamshedpur and other towns. Muslims living in isolated localities surrounded by Hindus fled to safer places. On 23rd March 1964 a mob of thousands of Hindus surrounded a mosque in Gerda in Ranchi district, where some Muslims from vulnerable locations had taken shelter and consequently some Muslims were killed. On 24th March, Father Herman Rasschaert S.J. (Society of Jesus) started on bi-cycle to Gerda from Kutungia, his parish also in Ranchi district and which is on the 12 Km from Gerda to Kutungia. He asked the mob not to kill the Muslims. For saving lives of Muslims, he lost his life, as he became a target of mob-frenzy.[2]

2. There was a case of arson to a Church in village Sisai police station Bharno. district Gumla in April 1992. In this case three people of village Varamda police station Bharno were charge sheeted under sections 436 and 295 IPC.

3. In March 1994, an association Kalisia Maitri Samiti, Lohardega was constituted with the objective of raising voice against the harassment of Christians. Shri. Francis Gid, the Secretary of the above Committee is a pastor of CNI Church. He is of the view that all the Christians belonging to different denominations are one and are children of God, and that the Christians of the district Lohardega are tribal people and as such they haven't severed their links with the tribal culture.

4. In April 1994, in Village Hakaduba under police station Khunti, district Ranchi, 13 unknown accused persons killed three Munda Adivasis. The motive for murder was the continuance of their relations with the tribal Christians of the village. Earlier all Munda Adivasis were followers of *Sarana* religion, but a few years back some of the Munda Adivasis who had gone for inter-caste marriage, were outcast from the Sarana religion and society. Subsequently having felt neglected and insulted by their own people, they had embraced Christianity. Though Etwa Munda was the follower of the Sarana religion, but despite threats of social ex-communication, he maintained good relationship with the Mundas converted to Christianity. This infuriated the Munda followers of the *Sarana* religion. Some of the accused were blind supporters of RSS. The incident was said to result from the provocation given by RSS and Bajrang Dal supporters. The case was charge sheeted against all the 13 arrested accused persons. In this case, the victims were not from the Christian religious group but were from the tribal society following the *Sarana* religion.

5. In September 1994 about 10 - 12 unknown persons entered forcibly the Karundabera church in Pinjara Dipa in the jurisdiction of police station Palkot in district Gumla and killed Father Lawrence Kujur, Junior Father Joseph Dung Dung, and Brother of the Church Anup Amar Indawar by sharp cutting weapon. They also used a bomb causing damage to the windows. The motive of murder was found to be expulsion of a student Ajit Kindo from the school in August 1994. Besides him, two main accused were also students of that school. CID investigated the case under supervision of superior officers. In this case six accused were arrested and subsequently charge sheeted. The accused Ajit Kindo was also later on murdered when he escaped from Ranchi jail. In this case two accused were sentenced to death and the rest three were sentenced to life imprisonment. It is said that Professor Bernard Minz tried to give political colour to the incident.

6. In September 1996, a Christian Nicodin Purti put forcibly a piece of beef purchased from Kota Bazar in the mouth of Jhadu Gop. On coming to know about the incident, the members of the local VHP organized a *Shuddhikaran* ceremony and after a meeting imposed a fine of Rs.4,000/- to be paid to Jhadu Gop by Nicodin Purti. Member belonging to either side did not register any case. In village Kobitoli in police station Raidih, district Gumla, there is a dispute about the construction of a Church in the community burial ground of tribal people following *sarna* religion. A

case under section 295 IPC was registered in May 1997 on the complaint in court of one Somra Uraon resident of Kobitoli police station Raidih against forcible and illegal construction of Church in the burial ground, and seven Christian accused were charge sheeted under section 297 IPC. Section 144 Cr.P.C. had earlier been promulgated in respect of the disputed site but the Christians still went on with the construction work, violating the above notification. In August 1998, the Church on the disputed site was demolished. No prayers were being offered in the church as the place had been sealed by the administration. A case was registered against 27-named accused and another over a hundred unknown accused. The 27 named Oraon tribal accused belonging to *Sarana* religion were charge sheeted in the Court under section 147, 427 and 436 IPC

7. Father Christo Das, the Vice Principal of St. Josephs High School situated at Guhiajori in police station Jama, district Dumka was manhandled and paraded naked on 2-9-1997 by a group of tribal students while taking him to Bishop Dudhani. The student of S.P College also joined in the mob. It is said that some anti-social elements also mixed up in the mob. The alleged motive for the offence was an unnatural offence by Father Christo Das against a tribal student Sukul Hansda of 7th class on 30-8-97. Two cases were registered in this regard at police station Jama. In the case of unnatural offence under section 377 IPC, Father Christo Das was arrested. In the case of parading him naked, 9 students were arrested and charge sheeted under section 147, 148, 149, 341, 342, 504, 506, 294, and other sections of IPC. The cases are pending trial in the Court.

8. In October 1997 the headless body of Shri A.T Thomas was found in Adorna forest of village Chichi in police station Katkakamsandi, district Hazaribagh. On the basis of written statement of Edward Maddshwari, S.J a case was registered against 8 to 10 extremists. The police investigation found that MCC extremists abducted Mr. Thomas when he was on his way on a motorcycle from Hazaribagh to a Catholic primary school at Sirka. He was later on killed in Adorna forest. The case is pending trial in the Court against the four accused and the two accused have been shown as dead and the rest of suspects numbering 16 are shown as absconding arrest. According to the investigation, this seems to be a case of killing of a Christian by extremists and is not of the communal nature.

9. In January 1998, Father William Toppo of R.C Mission Bandagaon, in district West Singhbhum was shot at and injured by unidentified anti-social elements. The case is still pending investigation in Bandagaon police station.

10. In March 1998, some unknown persons, hit one Father James Bake of Catholic Mission Church in police station Mandar, district Ranchi on his head. Though one accused was arrested on suspicion but police investigation ended in final report.

11. On 1st August 1999, one tribal died in police firing and 3 tribal people along with 7 policemen received injuries at village Sukarhuttu in Lohardaga district, when tribal villagers attacked police personnel for interfering in a tribal congregation, called for

reconverting a Christian boy. In the village there is only one Christian family, and a tribal girl got pregnant by the Christian boy, who had later on married the girl. Anticipating law and order problem, the police party had objected to the proposed re-conversion. This infuriated the villagers, leading to the clash. On August 2nd, the tribal people took the body of the tribal killed in police firing at the Mission Chowk, Lohardaga, and blocked the traffic. They demanded compensation for the deceased and injured, besides a CBI enquiry into the firing incident.

12. In July 2000, the police found on Tata Nagar-Ranchi road, the dead body of Father Remis Kerketta, the Principal of St. Xavier's High School Bundu in Ranchi. A case was registered under Namkum police station. The police investigation found that the Father was looted of Rs.10, 000/- and shot dead by one Vijay Toppo and his two accomplices. The incident was found to be of criminal nature and was not related to communalism.

13. In December 2000, about 14 - 15 armed criminals committed dacoity in the college Santh Anna Balika Uchvidyalaya, Kurpania, District Bokaro by breaking open the lock of the main gate. It is alleged that the criminals raped the cook Sushila Oriya during the incident, though the medical examination by a Doctor and subsequently by a medical-board did not confirm rape. It is said that the incident of rape was commited not on Sushila but on somebody else and for reasons of avoiding disgrace, her name was concealed. In this case eight accused were arrested. During the years 1993 and 94 also, an incident of decoity and a case of house breaking respectively were committed and in 1997 a case of an attempt to loot took place in the above school. There were protests and processions against the incident and a sense of insecurity prevailed among the local Christians. A section of the Christian community alleged the involvement of RSS and BJP in the incident. S.P Bokaro placed the officer in charge of the police station Gandhinagar under suspension for negligence in the above case.

14. In December 2000, there was a case of damage and desecration of the idol of God Hanuman in village Bano Bokhratoli in police station Bano, district Gumla. In this case one Christian accused was charge sheeted under section 295 IPC.

15. There was tension and resentment among the Christian community against the constuction of the floor (*chabutra)* and planting a flag for the proposed temple just in front of the maingate of the Church in village Jurdamin police station Karra in district Ranchi.

There was resentment in Gua Sai in district West Singhbhum over the allotment of land for a Church by Gua Mines Management, as there already existed three Churches in this small town.

Tensions over cases of conversions and re-conversions:

Norman Lewis in his book "A Goddess in the Stone" has described the strenuous competition between the between the Lutherans, the Jesuits and the Muslims for the souls of the poor people of district Palamu. The Christian Missionaries offered them medicines and there were instances when a few villagers manage to benefit from all the three religions and even secretly visited the Hindu temple to keep the goddess Durga favourably disposed towards them.[3]

During the 1990s, there has been lot of activity both on the part of Christian missionaries towards conversions and on the part of the missionaries following Hindu and *Sarana* religions towards re-conversions. There have been resentment and reactions in the *Sarana Samaj* against conversions to Christianity. Most of the conversions and re-conversions have taken place in Munda and Oraon Adivasi tribals. This has also been noticed in some cases that in regard to re-conversions, as for example to *Sarana* religion, the Hindu missionaries do not come into picture directly but motivate and bring into forefront the followers of the *Sarana Samaj* against the activities of conversions by Christian missionaries. According to records made available to me by police, most of the conversions between 1989 and 1999 were out of voluntary choice (*swecha se),* there were some cases when conversions took place by way of deception or for better education or due to pressure from relations or in-laws or under the influence of *Changhai Sabhas.* But the police records may not be reflecting the truth as the police records seemed to be based on thoroughly incomplete data.

1) In a meeting in Torpa, district Ranch of BJP, Bajrang Dal, Ram Sewa Samsthan, Vidhyarthi Parishad and of other Hindu organizations on 31st May 1994, it was highlighted that the Seventh Day Adventist Church had launched a programme (crusade) of mass conversions of tribal people to Christianity. The leaders of the Hindu organizations stressed the need for opening up branches of Bajrang Dal in the villages to counteract the conversions and spread of Christianity. They also stressed the need for preventing the cases of cow slaughter.

2) In April 1995, Munda Adivasis from many villages in police station Murhu district Ranchi embraced Christianity. Followers of Sarana religion resented this. The Hindu organizations like RSS also came into contact with the local tribals following Sarana religion. In August 1996, Shri Hari Vanvasi Kalyan Kendra organized a three-day training camp in Khunti. It was emphasized by Shri Shivdatt Sharma and others in the camp that the Christian missionaries are successful in converting tribals to Christianity as they have enough money and funds and thus can induce them to change their religion. But the members of and all those connected with the Vanvasi Kalyan Kendra should go into interior villages and devote themselves towards free education and medical facilities for tribal people to stop conversions to Christianity.

3) In August 1998, one Vikram Tudu of village Maheshpur in police station Gurabanda, district East Singhbhum (Jamshedpur), went along with his brother-in-law Bhado Hembram, a Christian to a pastor of Maheshpur Church for admission of his child to

the school. Pastor Samuel asked Vikram Tudu to undergo Baptism and despite his unwillingness, he was baptized at the instance and encouragement of his brother-in-law. This was opposed to and protested by the family of Vikram Tudu. His son informed the village *pradhan* about it. It was decided in a tribal meeting that expenses of about Rs.3, 000/- required for his purification according to Hindu rituals, should be paid by the *pracharak* of the Maheshpur Church. On failure to pay the fine, the Santhal tribal people stopped the Christians from going to church. The matter was reported to police by pastor Samuel. 30 people from each side were bound under section 107 CrPC to keep peace. Vikram Tudu was later on re-converted to Hinduism mainly due to pressure from his family members.

4) In the same month of August 1998, Kunju Karmakar (*Lohar*) of village Maheshpur embraced Christianity along with his wife and four children. Despite pressure from the Hindu Society, they did not reconvert to Hinduism but stopped going to Church.

5) There was resentment and protest among the tribals of *Sarna* religion against a Dutch Missionary active in Bundu region, and a Belgian Missionary in Dolda in police station Adaki and three other foreign missionaries active in the areas of police station Torpa and against some local missionaries for their alleged activities in conversions in district Ranchi.

6) In November 1998, some Ho tribal people embraced Christianity in different villages in the jurisdiction of police station Gua, district Pashchimi Singhbhum. It is said that they embraced Christianity after having been cured of their ailments by the medicines given by pastors. These converts were ostracized and boycotted from participating in social activities of the respective villages from the community as per a meeting of the Ho Tribal people of the area.

7) In a village Sneharpart in the area of Mahuatand sub-division in district Palamu, there was a *Yagna* for three days by followers of Sarna Samaj under the leadership of their Chief Saligram Gadaik. They claimed that 600 converted Christians have been brought back to *Sarana* religion. On the other hand, the Christian missionaries asserted that the alleged reconverted tribals never belonged to Christianity.

8) There were re-conversions in January 1999 by VHP District President in a temple in Ambatoli in police station Dumri, district Gumla.

9) In January 1999, in villages falling in the jurisdiction of police station Adaki, district Ranchi, a few families of converted tribals were reconverted. The tribal people belonging to *Sarana* religion in some of the villages in police station Adaki opposed the burials of converted Christians in the community graveyards belonging to *Sarana Samaj*.

10) In March 1999, a meeting was held under the leadership of Borosh Chand Tudu in Ghatshila, in district Jamshedpur against the conversions to Christianity of the tribal followers of *Sarana* religion and a committee was constituted for stopping the

conversions. It was also decided that camps would be organized at different places for this purpose.

11) In November 2000, in village Konmal Tori Toli in police station Thethaitangar in district Gumla, under the inspiration and leadership of *Shri Shri 108* Japram Das Prapannaji Maharaj, Shri. Lakshminarayana Das and Shri. Umakant Prapannaji Maharaj and Shri. Sheetal Prasad, 104 *Harijans* were reconverted to Hinduism. The *Harijans* had become Christians in 1981. The re-conversion ceremony took place on the day of *Kartik Purnima* The reconverted Hindus were presented with *Sari, Dhoti,* and trousers /shirts. In March 2001 also 75 people were reconverted to Hinduism in the same village. No resentment or reaction among the Christian community was noticed among the Christian community.

12) In January 2001, there was reaction and resentment among a section of the Hindu society and among Hindu organizations against conversions in village Moko Manjhi Tola in police station Baliapur in district Dhanbad.It was feltnecessary that some security should be provided at the Church in Sindri.

13) There were re-conversions in early 2001, in village Vedhmara, police station Harla, District Bokaro as a result of the efforts of Hindu organizations like VHP, and RSS, to bring back to Hinduism from Christianity, all the people who had embraced Christianity after the treatment of their diseases.

14) On 1st April 2001, the sub-division Simdega was carved out of district Gumla and was made a separate and independent district. On 6th April 2001, RSS *Sar Sanchalak* Shri K.C Sudershanji visited Simdega. Along with religious *gurus* of Ram Rekha Dham Simdega and M.P Shri Dilip Singh Judeo, he addressed a meeting of 15,000 Hindus. He stressed that all the religions are different paths for reaching God and therefore, he criticized the Christian priests who attack the Hindu and other religions for the purpose of propagating Christianity and for proselytization to their religion. Shri. Dilip Singh Judeo said that in the future, about 4 lakhs converted tribals would be reconverted.

Shri Lakra, IG Zone Ranchi, 74 Branch resident of District Lohadaga. He is an Oraon Christian in the fourth generation after conversion. He has been a student of St. Xavier, Ranchi. He told that the contentious issues between Hindu and Christians or between non-converted tribals and Christians are the issues of conversions, and cow slaughter. There are Christians in the Khunti, Sub-division of Ranchi mostly Mundas and Kharias and in Dumka Dstrict Commissionerate, mostly Santhals and in district West Singabhum mostly Ho Mundas and in district Gumla and Lohardaga, mostly Oraons and in district Shimdega, mostly Kharias and Oraons. The missions did not have much success among Ho Mundas and Santhals because of their resistance to Christianity. Of the total population of Christians, about 50 to 60% are Roman Catholics, about 30% GEL Protestants and about 15 to 20% belong to CNI. He was SP Gumla from July 86 to November 1990. During his period as SP Gumla, a Croto at Basia was blown up and damaged. The Oraons were earlier in the habit of taking beef especially during marriage or Christian celebrations, because it was cheaper than

mutton or chicken. Kharias don't take beef. During his period as SP Gumla, in the year 1986, there were several cases of rioting and arsons by Christians following rumours of poisoning of wells by Hindus. All this started after publication of an article to this effect by some Father in a Christian Magazine "Nishkalank". Every Christian during those days used to suspect a Hindu. He and the District Magistrate got the water of wells under question chemically examined but results were negative. In the vitiated atmosphere of mutual distrust, suspicions and fear, about 3 or 4 Hindus were murdered by Christian mobs. This subsided within a few months after peace-committee meetings of religious heads of both sides. Action against the father who wrote the article is still pending in the High Court. There was tension during early 70's because Mr.Kartik, an Oraon M.P. and he State Minister in Center, made statements that Christians should not be given the benefits meant for Schedule Tribes under the Constitution like reservations in Government Services. In the Sarna festival, the flower of Sakua tree is worshipped and distributed among people. House-to-house collection of *chanda* (contributions) is made. Mundas and Santhals do not celebrate "Sarna". Non-tribals i.e. Sadans, who are from other places and have settled in Chota Nagpur, also celebrate "Sarna". The Catholics also celebrate "Sarna" by way of special mass in the Church followed by a tribal dance and songs, while the followers of Sarna Religion worship a big stone and sacrifice chicken as an offering to nature.

He said that the Oraons will go for anything which is better than what they are having, whether education or material and financial benefits and are more adaptable. Along with other reasons, this also accounts for the fact of relatively more conversions to Christianity among them as compared to other tribal people. The non-converted tribals, sometimes develop jealousy and grudge against the Christians who are now more advanced because of higher standards of education and other benefits. This too leads to social tensions between converted and non-converted tribals. There are many Oraons in the interior areas of Chota Nagpur, who are cut-off from civilization. Naxalite leaders have poisoned their minds. The districts of Chatra, Palamu, Garva, Gumla, Lohardaga, Giridih and Hazaribagh are affected with Naxalite activities. The Naxalites assassinated Ajay Kumar Singh, S. P. of Lohardaga in the year 2000. In 1995, three Fathers were murdered over a love affair between a Father and a tribal girl.

Shri. Niraj Sinha, SSP, Ranchi told that the Oraons speak *kuruk,* a Dravidian language. Most of the other tribals of Chota Nagpur speak Austro-Asiatic languages. Recently Sarhul/Sarna festival was celebrated in Chota Nagpur. The Sarhul symbolizes the blossoming of Sal-trees. The tribal symbols and rituals had existed in the tribal customs for quite long, but Birsa Munda made the Sarna ritual, a festival in a similar fashion as Balgangadhar Tilak had started the Ganesh festival in Maharashtra. Christian Missionaries are also adopting tribal symbols and integrating them into the Christian belief-system. Some Hindu rituals have also been adopted in Churches of some tribal areas like, offering of flower, Sindhur (Vermillion), *Akshat. S*ometimes, on the walls and rocks, we find the lines *"Ishu –Hi-Om-Hai" (Ishu is Om).*

Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, A.D.G. is an IPS Officer of 72 Batch, and is resident of District Palamu. He was SSP district Ranchi during the period when there were several incidents of rioting by Christians following rumours of poisoning of wells in district Gumla. In district

Ranchi also, there were lot of such rumours and tensions during the period. He was SP, Chaibasa between 1977-80. He used to receive complaints as SP, Chaibasa about discrimination against non-converted tribals in the Christian schools during the time of admissions. There is a dispute in Police Station Namkum over land, purchased for school, but used later on, for Church. In Police Station Angara, district Ranchi a particular piece of land adjacent to Sarhul festival site, was sold to a Father. The construction on this disputed land has also been stayed. There have been cultural and religious invasions by Christian Missionaries. Only about 10% Oraons have been converted to Christianity. Some tribal people used to take beef. Now they have stopped doing so, because of coming into contact with Hindus and due to education amongst them, and because of hatred against Muslims who took away their lands after 1964. Tana Bhagat was a teetotaler and vegetarian. The Tana Bhagat/Jathra Bhagat movement was in favour of prohibition and against meat eating. It started at Bishnupur in Gumla and had a following among the Oraons. Birsa Munda has most of the following among the Munda and Ho tribes. The Oraons are of Dravidian origin and have good height. Height, being the sole criterion (other criteria are just qualifying) for recruitment to Constables, many Oraons got into Police Service as Constables because of their relatively better height than other tribal people in the region. When, he was SP district Sahebgunj in 1982, one SDM auctioned a pond to some Sahu for fishing. Earlier tribal people of the four or five surrounding villages used to fish there as a right of communal ownership over the pond. Among tribals, things are generally held in common. One Father was killed in the riot over the dispute regarding the above fishing pond as he had taken up the cause of the tribal people, though most of them did not belong to Christianity.

Shri. Pranay Dutt, Organization Secretary, Vanvasi Kalyan Kendra, and Maharang Uraon – Vanavasi Kalyan Kendra, Ranchi told me that there are about 50 High schools in 1969. VHP/Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram started schools and other welfare activities among the tribal people to counter-act the influence and conversion activities of Christian Missionaries. When Hindus organization entered in the field, the Christian missionaries started incorporating tribal rituals like Sarna symbols into Christianity and Church programmes. Before that they used to attack these tribal rituals and customs. VHP has been complaining that Christian Missionaries try to influence the tribals to sale their lands for building Churches. This sort of transfer of land should be stopped under the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act, 1908. The tribals can sale his land to a tribal and that to after the permission of concerning Deputy Commissioner. They have been opposing *Changai* (Healing) Sabha, organized by missionaries as these are stage-managed and used for conversions to Christianity. *Bajrangdal* keeps watch on the educational institutions run by Christian Missionaries and highlights the irregularities if the funds are diverted from education to conversion activities.

Notes:

1. The Niyogi Committee Report
2. An article on Father Herman Rasschaert, S.J. (1922-1964) by Fr.J.Van Troy, S.J. in the book, 'To Chota Nagpur with Love and Service'- Edited by Peter Tete, S.J.- Ranchi Jesuit Society 1991.)
3. Lewis Norman – 'A Goddess in the Stones', Rupa Paperback.

Chapter - 2

Case Study North-East

In the North-East, the percentage of Christians to the total population of the States of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh is about 87%, 86%, 64%, 34% and 10% respectively.

The growth of Christianity in the seven states of the North –East since Independence has been as follows:

State		1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Assam		5.5	6.4	4.5		3.3	
Manipur		11.8	19.5	26	29.7	34.1	
Tripura		0.8	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.7	
Nagaland		46	53	66.8	80.2	87.5	
Sikkim		0.2	1.7		2.2	3.3	
Arunachal Pradesh				0.79	4.3	10.3	
Meghalaya				47	52.6	64.6	
Mizoram				86.1	83.8	85.7	

Table : 02

No Census was held in Assam in 1981 due to bad law and order situation. Mizoram was a district of Assam before the 1981 census. Similarly, Meghalaya was also a part of Assam before the 1971 census. The separation of these two districts from Assam explains the fall in the percentage of Christian population in the state of Assam after the census of 1961. It is evident from the above table that except in the state of Assam after 1961, the Christian population in all the eight states of North -East including Sikkim has shown gradual increase. In some states like Nagaland and Meghalaya, the growth of Christian population after Independence has been phenomenal.

The total population of the Christians according to the 1991 Census in the seven states of the Northeast was 43,01,895. The Christian population in these seven states is 13.6% while the Hindu population is 61%. These figures look surprising because in three states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya, the percentage of Christian population is 87.5, 85.7 and 64.6 respectively. The overall Hindu dominance in the total population is because of high density of population in the Assam Valley where Hindus are concentrated. The rest of the hill states of Northeast are sparsely populated. It shows that there might not be Christian predominance as regards overall population, but the Christians are in possession of much larger areas than their population figures in the Northeast suggest.

The Christian population has grown from 11.8% in 1951 to 34.1% in 1991 in Manipur; and from 35% (1961) to 64% (1991), in Meghalaya; from 46% (1951) to 87.5% (1991) in Nagaland; from 0.79% (1971 Census figures) to about 10% (1991) in Arunachal Pradesh; and from 0.8% (1951) to 1.68% (1991), in Tripura. It shows that in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Nagaland, there has been a tremendous increase in the Christian population even after the Independence in 1947.

Sujata Miri in her book "Communalism in Assam" holds the proselytizing activities of different religions responsible for the religious exclusivism in the North-East. She writes, " Expect for members of the Ao tribe, large number of Nagas did not choose to become Christians until the third and fourth decades of the 20th Century. By 1951 there were a total of 6,59,065 Christians in North-East India, representing 7.8 per cent of the total Christian population of India.---. Until Independence, Roman Catholics had been permitted to work only in Meghalaya and the Assam plains, and to a certain extent in Tripura. --Though they give the "so-called" message of God but the monetary aids are also connected with this. Specially it is happening with Christianity.--- Mass conversion is always with Financial Aid, that is why it is taking place so often these days.--At present three aggressive proselytizing agencies that of the Vaishnavites, Christians and Muslims are working on the local population. Though Islam and Christianity started making headway in Assam by 1851, the increase in the number of their followers is more substantial in later years, especially after the breakup of Assam into smaller states.The states of Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram today claim almost 80 to 90 percent of conversion to Christianity. Even in the much- reduced Assam, their strength is far from negligible. Nowgong had only 593 Christians in 1901. Their number grew in subsequent years due to conversion of local people particularly the tea-garden labourers and other indigenous tribes through efforts of Christian missionaries, showing an increase of 72.4 per cent.-- Our informant's report on Karbi Anglong and Manipur is self-explanatory. 'The interior villages were dominated earlier by Hindus. Christian missionaries penetrated into these places and converted them, just like in the villages of Manipur. While the urban people remained rigid in their ways, the villagers in both areas with the help of Christian missionaries and English education have become 'smarter'. As a consequence there are now only bad feelings between the towns folk and the rural population.'----All this has resulted in the birth of the dreaded disease called religious communalism in the region. I think the unending process of proselityzation unleashed by all kinds of agencies in the North-East is responsible for religious exclusivism amongst the various sections of the people. Youngsters are being schooled in the philosophy of communalism freely, totally unconcerned with the Indian Constitution and its ideology. – Also the faith of all else in the neighbouring areas must be condemned as inferior in some sense or another.--Just as the Vaishavites in Assam are severing all links with the Sakta tradition, the Meiteis of Manipur who have been Hindus for a fair length of time are demanding severance of all their traditional cultural links with Hinduism. They are now for a revival of the traditional tribal faith of their ancestors of more than five centuries ago. Many Hindu festivals are no longer performed and "in 1979 a former minister presided over the burning of Hindu scriptures at a site where over two and a half centuries earlier, the Brahmins had burnt tribal scriptures.-- It is as if the people, on their own were incapable o

reflection, dialogue and intellectual deliberation and hence fell hook, line and sinker to any outside agency professing a religion."

MANIPUR

There are eight districts in Manipur. The capital city Imphal is in the valley. In the five hill districts of Manipur i.e., Senapati, Taminglong, Chudchandrapur, Chandel and Ukhrul, the Christian population is from 83% to 98%, while in the three valley districts of Imphal, Bishnupur and Thoubal, the Hindu population is from about 80% to 88%. This shows a clear Hindu-Christian divide between the valley and the hill regions. The Manipur valley in the center of the State is mostly inhabited by Meities, the Vaishnavite Hindus.

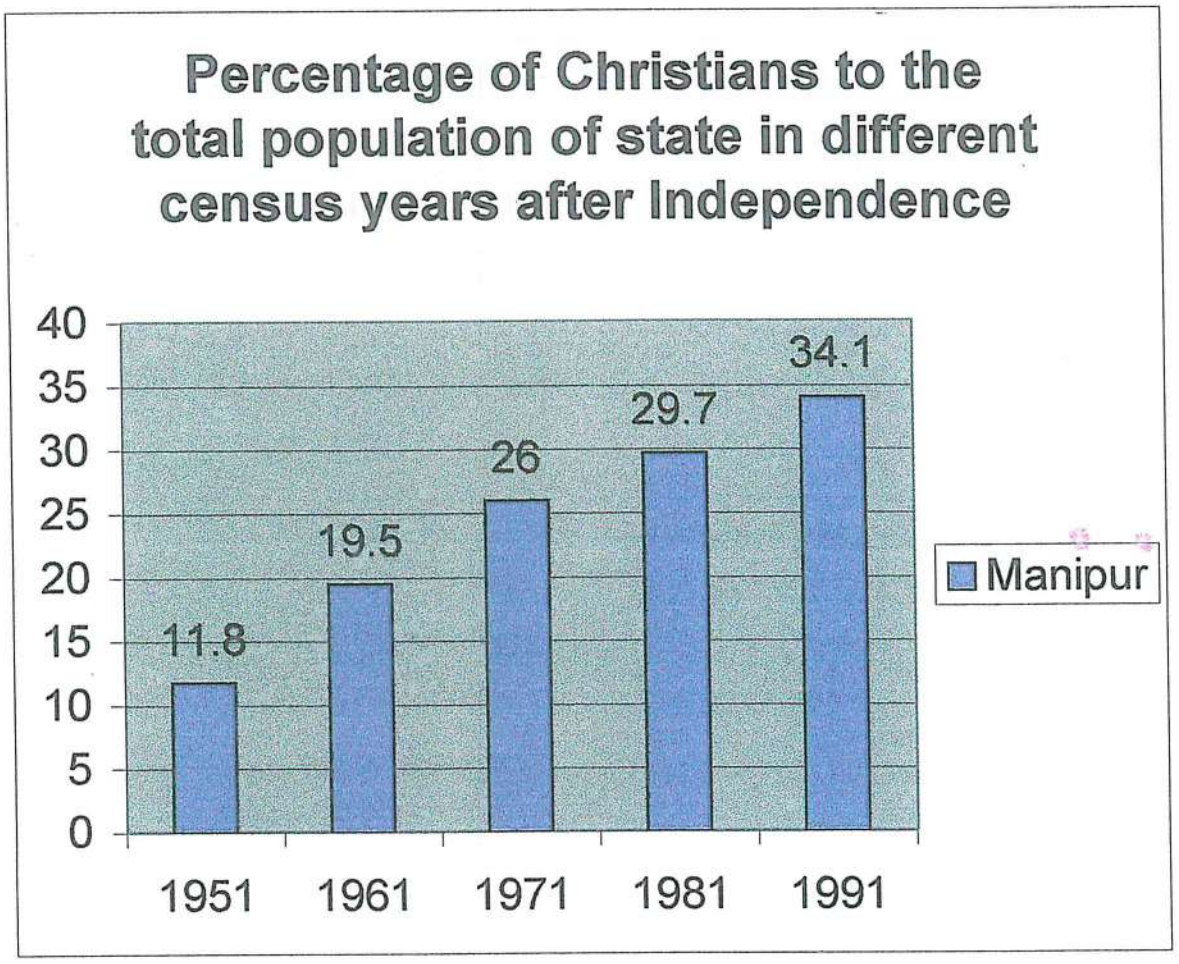
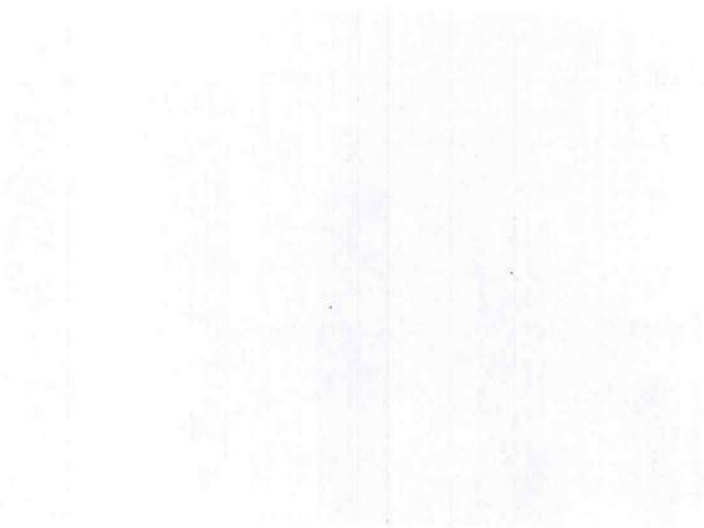


Figure : 05

The Christian population in Manipur in 1961 was only 19.5%, which rose to 26% in 1971 and 29.7% in 1981 and further rose to 34.1% in 1991. This indicates that even after Independence, there have been lots of conversions in the hill districts of Manipur.



Praful Bidwai reported in the Deccan Chronicle after the recent accord of ceasefire between the Centre and NSCN (IM), "Manipur's boundaries were altered in 1952 through the Nehru-U Nu accord, ceding territory to Burma. And now, there is a danger that Article 3 of the Constitution of India will be used to take away more territory from Manipur.-----"Save the integrity of Manipur, Meitei fears of identity loss, have been seized upon by separatist groups like the UNLF. ---Compounding this alienation is monumental corruption and administrative collapse in Manipur. Says a November 2000 report by a Home Ministry joint secretary: 'The writ of the underground seems to be more effective than that of the administration----Only 18 out of the State's 57 police stations are functional. Of Manipur's 368 personnel in the special (intelligence) branch, only 11 gather intelligence. The rest are assigned bodyguard or "security" duty'."

Shri K.P.S. Gill, former DGP Punjab reported that the conflict in Manipur claimed 246 lives as against 101 in Nagaland during the year 2000.

Dr. N. Basanta is a resident of Manipur. He has written a book on Manipur titled "Socio-economic Change in Manipur". He told me that there is no tension between Hindus and Christians. In the State, Hindus are around 60%, Christians 30% and Muslims 10%. He said that the British ruled by divide and rule policy and thus the hill people and the valley people were against each other. The British Government tried to establish some Missions in the Manipur valley but seeing the hostility of Hindus, they made it a policy as never to interfere with the Hindu religion of the valley.

Father Joseph of Catholic Church, Imphal told that he is a resident of Kerala. He told that Baptists /Anglicans objected to their (Catholics) coming to this part of India, but he and other Catholics told them that, since they are Indian citizens, they can move freely within India. Indian Constitution is secular in nature and as we are not foreigners, we can come to this part and preach and do something as regards education/medicine etc.

According to Secretary, Kuki Christian Church, Rev. D. Lunkem there was destruction of churches in Phaknunj and Yumnam in the district Imphal (East). He spoke about the use of force in the election and violations of human rights. He also spoke of attacks on Kuki villages/houses/churches by Naga insurgents. Protest rallies were held in the district headquarters after killing of Christian Missionaries and attack on churches elsewhere in India.

Mr. Khel Chandra Singh, Padam Shri and his son told that the local Hindus were orthodox who did not take food from the daughter married to a Christian or Missionary. During the period of Political Agency around 1890s, Sanatumbi from the royal family married Major Maxwell, the Political Agent. Her wish for cremation was not fulfilled and her house was destroyed. A Christian Missionary Walkinson entered from the Mizoram side, while Pettigrew started his Missionary work from Ukhrul side and converted a large number of tribals residing in the hills. Puran Singh, a Scheduled Caste was the first convert. The Hindu King was allowed to administer in the valley. No worship is offered in the Temple, which was desecrated by Thangal General.

Mr. Karnajit, SP, Special Branch told that whatever was said by Khel Chandra Singh is not wholly true. All what he told might have happened more because of Hindu caste system (like in a situation when a Mateiyi girl marries a Tribal boy who is considered to be a Shudra) than because of any Hindu-Christian tension. There has been and there is no such tension, according to him.

I.G. Law and Order Mr. Romen Kumar told that it is not Hindu vs. Christian as was said by some other officers of Manipur Police. He further told that Father or Principal of Don Bosco was killed not by Hindus but by some underground outfit as he refused to give money to the terrorists. Here in Manipur, it might be Nagas vs. Kukis but it is not Hindus vs. Christians.

I.G. Operations Mr. Baral, resident of Cuttack, Orissa told that you can make out a valley man (a Hindu) and a Hillman (a Christian) when you talk to them and meet them, though there seems to be no difference between them and they all look alike. There is some difference in the dialect and accent as they speak and their features.

On the other hand Mr. Thangthuam (1979 batch), I.G. (Admn.) told me that these differences are just superficial and not substantial and he said that Hindus are fairer in complexion because they generally live in Imphal town or valley while tribals (Christians) live in the hills and are more exposed to sun. Tensions here are not of the nature of Hindu vs. Christian. It is in the form of ethnic identity like Naga vs. Kuki or Kuki vs. Zomi. The Burmese people on the border are poorer and more illiterate. In 1993 there were some incidents between Maiteis and Muslims.

Mr. Sandeep Salukya told that when Manipuri Hindus (Maiteis) go to Delhi and other places they are addressed as Thapas etc., meaning thereby that they are a different class from the Hindus of the mainland. They want dignity and respect from fellow Hindus of the mainland and they wish to come into the Indian mainstream but this is so difficult for them. Their names too some times cause problems and therefore that part of their surnames which Indians from the mainland cannot pronounce, they write only as an initial.. They have started following the Maiteis religion, which is ancestor- worship.

Mr. Gaur, D.I.G. told that terrorists swallow half of the money received from the Centre. Manipur Rifle and even some other para-military organizations like Assam Rifles to some extent are in peaceful co-existence with the underground outfits, which are looting the weapons of Manipur Police and Manipur Rifles.

Mr. Gwete, JD, SIB, Shillong told that the insurgency in the Northeast is because of lot of Government money/aid/funds from the Centre is being pumped into these States.
Mr. Mishra, DIG told that " penetrate the valley" is the programme of the Christian Missionaries and so far the Christian Missionaries have not been successful in the Manipur Valley inhabited by the Meities who follow the Vaishnavism religion.

Mr. V.P. Kapur was I.G.P and D.G.P of Manipur for over three years. He wrote recently in a Newspaper: "The extension of ceasefire to Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur ----was bound to be perceived by the Meiteis as a first step towards creation of a Greater Nagaland------and is

a highly emotive issue.--Unlike Nagaland and Mizoram, Manipur is inhabited by three distinct groups of people with different cultural, social and religious backgrounds. It is unfortunate that these differences have sharpened because of political instability and insurgency.------Meiteis, most of whom are Vaishnavite Hindus, constitute an overwhelming majority in the state and inhabit the valley. The Nagas are overwhelmingly Christian and inhabit the surrounding hills in the west, north and east. The Kukis are also Christian, but quite distinct from the Nagas, and reside primarily in the southern hills.--The Central government has been meeting over 90 per cent of the state budget, but ----------these funds have been cornered by insurgent groups, corrupt politicians, businessmen and officers------ There has been a proliferation of educational institutions but there are hardly any avenues of employment for the youth and benefits of Central grants have never percolated down to the poor sections of society. Consequently, there is a general feeling of alienation, particularly amongst the youth who are easy prey for insurgents and unscrupulous politicians and take to violence at the slightest provocation.------all sections of Meiteis are dead opposed to alienation of any part of their state and its merger with Greater Nagaland.------- Meities are virile and sturdy people proud of their culture and extremely obsessive about preserving their distinct identity. It is not clear what were the compelling reasons for extending the ceasefire to Naga-inhabited areas of Manipur ----- that is, almost up to Imphal town.------ it is crucial to understand the psychology of the Meiteis, ----It should be understood that the situation cannot be normalized by merely deploying more security forces. The tendency to show distrust of the local people, including members of the police, administration and even political parties, should be avoided."

Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland – Isak Muivah [NSCN(IM)] and Kuki National Army (KNA) and some Meitei insurgent groups are active in the State.

NAGALAND

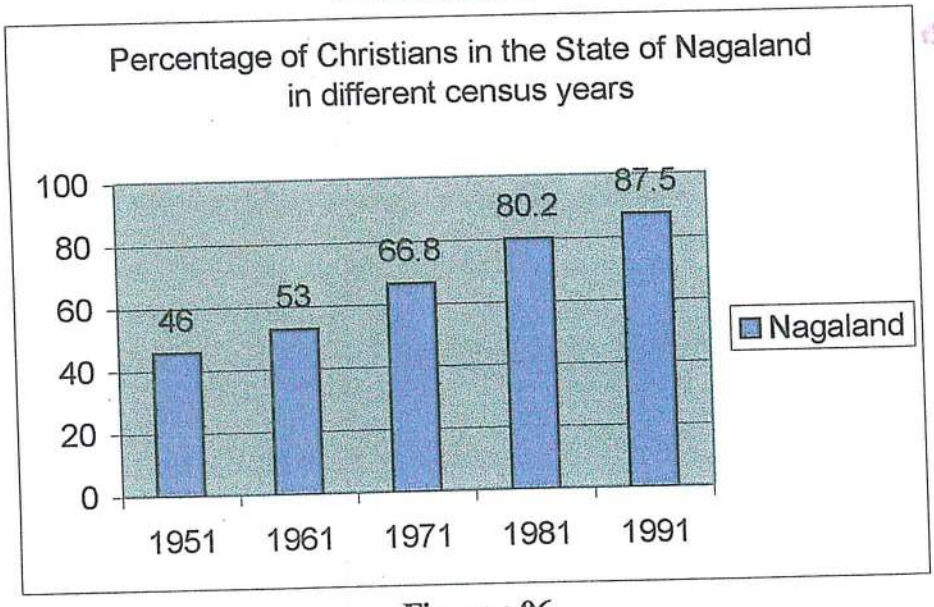


Figure : 06

The above bar graph shows that even after Independence the population of Christians in Nagaland has been shown tremendous increase from 46% in 1951 to 87.5% in 1991.

NSCN Manifesto :- The Preface of the Manifesto of NSCN (National Socialist Council Of Nagaland) was written by Isak Chishi Swu, its Executive Chairman on 31st January 1980. The relevant provisions of 'the Manifesto', which made reference to 'Hinduism' and 'Christianity', are as follows: -

"The spread of Hinduism and the queer noises have reached our homeland. Although, as a doctrine Hinduism is not a recruiting force, it is not to be easily dismissed, since it is backed by a Hindu Governmet. The forces of Hinduism, viz., the numberless Indian troops, the retail and wholesale dealers, the teachers and the instructors, the intelligentsia, the prophets of non-violence, the gamblers and the snake-charmers, Hindi songs and Hindi films, the rasogula makers and the Gita are all arrayed for the mission of supplanting the Christian God, the eternal God of the Universe. The challenge is serious, there is no hiding; no pretension.

The preachers of the Gospel, the holy men of God and the demagogues, are you prepared to resist these surging waves of the Hindu world upon our country? This danger flows from India and the vulnerability of the Chruch leaders and the pliable demagogues has added to the problem. To join the Indian Union as they insisted, is to allow ourselves to be drowned and perish in these waves of dead doctrine. Whereas, to defend Nagaland's Independent Existence as we have been doing with our lives and our all, is to assure ourselves safety from the doom of Hinduism.-- One is urged to ask, if Jesus, the Christ, is not sufficient to save the Nagas and the world and how the question of taking help from the Hindu goddess has ever arisen. The keeping of a substantial area of Nagaland and the Naga people therein under the so-called Arunachal Pradesh exclusively for the influence of Ram Krishna Mission over the innocent is a long-range design to wreck the Nagas among themselves on different religious faiths and thus perpetuate their occupation of Nagaland. --We stand for the faith in God and the salvation of mankind in Jesus, the Christ, alone, that is ''NAGALAND FOR CHRIST.'' However, the individual freedom of religion shall be safeguarded and the imposition of this faith on others is strictly forbidden."

The NSCN(IM) was formed on 30-04-1988. In fact after the split, the NSCN-IM (Isac-Muivah) emerged stronger with the slogan ``Nagaland for Christ'' which gained appeal and attraction to the young Nagas as most of them were Christians. Coupled with it was the traditional idea of having a ``greater Nagaland'' or 'Nagalim' consisting of Naga inhabited areas in the North Eastern region and some portions of Myanmar. [1]

N. Padmanabhan writes in his study 'Role of Police in Combating Insurgency-Militancy Low Intensity Conflicts in the North-East,' 'Machinations of Missionaries: If the foetus of insurgency was planted in the womb of Nagaland, it was fathered by the British and Midwifery was provided by the Missionaries at its delivery. Certain Christian missionaries had provided the intellectual and political direction to the movement. –Missionaries taught the Nagas to look to the West and not to India for inspiration and seeds of separation were sowed more by the missionaries. These missionaries had indeed "devoted their entire lives at tremendous personal sacrifice to service among the tribal people. It should not cause surprise therefore if the tribal people are found, even today, to look to the missionaries for advice and guidance. The missionaries have through generations of dedicated service earned their

confidence.—the hill tribes (not merely Nagas) were influenced by the foreign missionaries who created a bias against the plains men (synonymous with the Hindus) with his gods and goddesses, idolatrous worship and taboos. The bias did come about as a matter of policy, it was unavoidable. The church introduced the Roman script for local language and got introduced English as the State language. But yet one would agree with Van Furer – Haimendorf the famous anthropologist. He state that "It is a pity that the American Baptist Mission had little sympathy with the aims of the Govt. and even less appreciation for the valuable elements of Naga culture. Many of its aspects conflicts in no way with some of the old feasts and ceremonies – certainly at the agricultural festival – could have been adopted to the new faith – given a new meaning and retained by the Christian Council. Where the Ao prays to a supreme deity who sends him happiness and misfortune and watches over the doings of men an appropriate Christian prayer might have been substituted and there seems to be no reason why at the first sowing or at harvest the Ao Christian should not pray for the prosperity of his crops. No one will question the good faith and admirable enthusiasm of the missionaries. They were doing great work in the medical field and have made thousand of Naga children literate. But may be that with a little more understanding and sympathy for Naga culture they might have brought more happiness to their flock and avoided many of the moe unfortunate results of a sudden clash of culture.''

MIZORAM:

R.S. Negi of Group Centre, SSB, Chamma, Tehri Garhwal, Uttaranchal told that unknown persons murdered a Mizo driver in Silchar in 1995. As a reaction to this, a *bandh* was organized and the Mizos destroyed all the Hindu shops and they were forced to leave Mizoram. In 1997 a Mizo was killed by a non-Mizo (Reiang). In retaliation, the Mizos destroyed the houses of Reiang community and they were forced to leave Mizoram.

ASSAM

There are 23 districts in Assam .The Hindu-Christian divide in the State is not so much prominent mainly because of fact that the Christians has a microscopic strength (3'34%) compared to the Hindus (67'58%). The Christians are mainly concentrated in tribal areas of Sonitpur (85427), Darrang (81952), Kokrajhar (78586), Karbi-Anglong (82709), Goalpara (52745), Golaghat (518197), N.C. Hills (36911) etc. (As per 1991 census records).

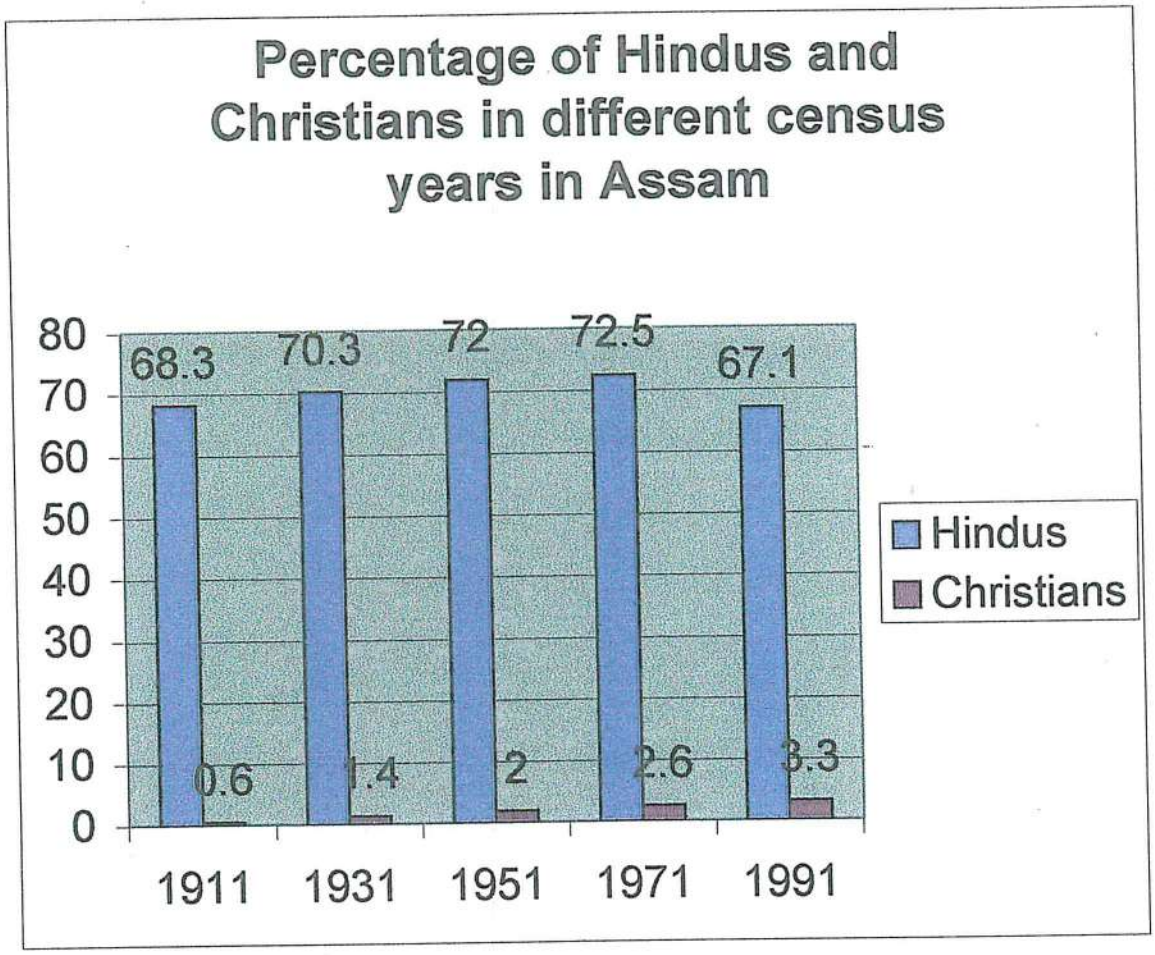


Figure : 07

The above figure shows that the Hindu population gradually increased from 68.3% in 1911 to 72.5% in 1971 and then registed a decline of more than 5% in two decades since then and ending up with 67.1% in 1991. On the other hand the Christian population in the Assam state has steadily increased from .6% in 1911 to 3.3% in 1991.

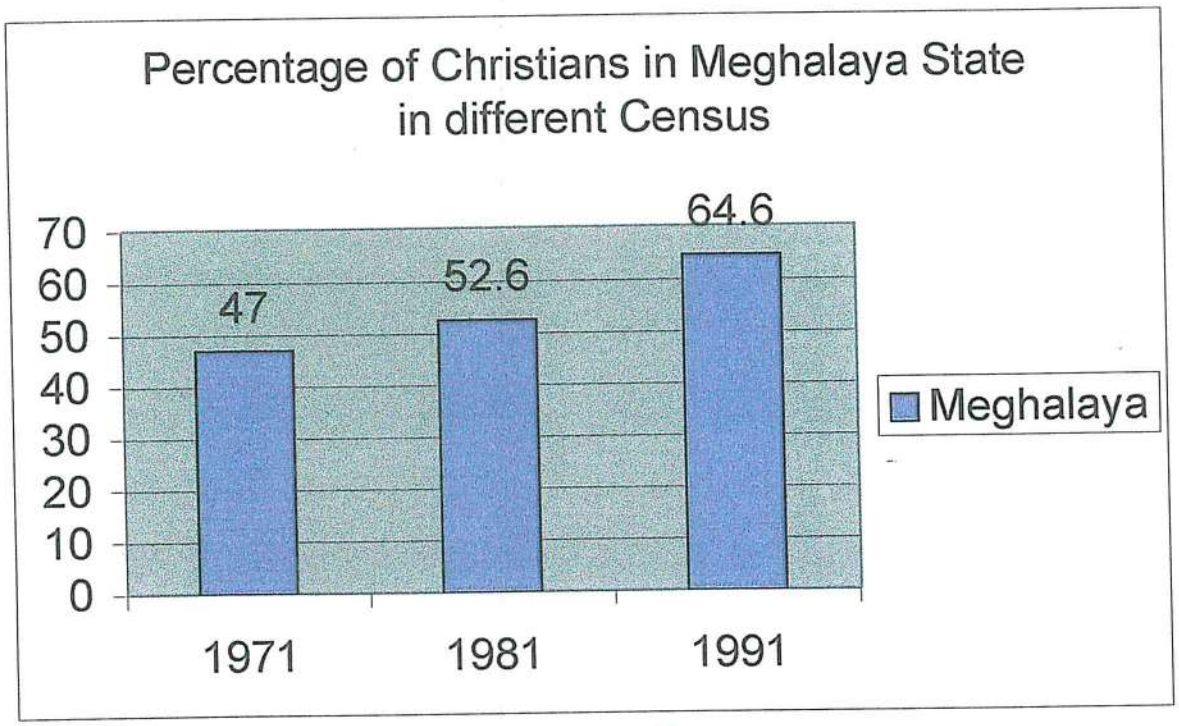


Figure : 07

The above figure shows that in Meghalaya, the Christian population has shown increase from 47% in 1971 to 64.6% in 1991.

Sujata Miri in her book "Communalism in Assam" writes about the history of Assam and its people and about the Catholic attitude of the Ahom rulers and the cultural assimilation of the tribal people to Shanker Dev's Vaishanavism in the past:

"Assam, in the North-East, which contains a rich diversity of peoples who unfortunately have become more exclusive in modern times.--- The Austro-Asiatics, Negrotos, Dravidians, Alpines (Brahmins, Kalitas), Sino-Tibetans and Aryans are said to have penetrated into Assam through different routes and each has contributed in its own way towards its civilization.-----When the land of Assam as Pragiyotisha or Kamrupa came within the pale of Pauranik geography, particularly in the age of the Mahabharat, it figures as land of the Kiratas, and the Pragiyotisha King Bhagadatta of Mahabharat fame is believed to have enlisted the *Cinas* and the *Kiratas* for the army he led to the battlefields of Kuruksetra. The Kiratas were Mongoloid people, particularly Bodas. ---The hill- men living exclusively in the hills were living in comparative isolation from the other non-tribal communities in the plains. The Ahom rulers' Catholic attitude towards Caste and creed, policy of intermarriage, recruitment of hill- men in the army and civil offices, grant of estates to the hill chiefs and other commercial concessions to tribal chiefs in the plains further strengthened the bond of friendship. Further, due to Sankardev's Vaishnavite influence there was greater cultural assimilation between hill men and the dwellers of the places. A good number of Dafalas, Miris, Singphos, Nagas, Mikirs, Kacharis, Manipuris, Garos, etc., were admitted into the Assamese society. ---Actually most of the plain tribals of Assam were seen as either animistic or as Hinduised.

PROPORTION TO FOLLOWERS OF HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY TO TOTAL POPULATION IN ASSAM AND IT'S DISTRICT 1911-1971*

State/District	Name of Religious Communities	1991	1971	1961	1951	1931	1911
Assam	Christians	3.3	2.6	2.4	2.00	1.4	0.6
	Hindus	67.1	72.51	71.3	72.0	70.3	68.3
Darrang	Christians	6.3	5.0	4.6	4.0	2.7	0.5
	Hindus	60.5	59.7	57.9	59.4	57.9	58.9
Karbi Anglong	Christians	12.5	8.0	7.5	3.9	-	-
	Hindus	84.8	90.3	81.6	67.4	-	-
North Cachar	Christians	24.5	21.9	19.4	15.3	6.0	0.2
	Hindus	72.9	77.0	79.5	76.3	77.6	55.2
Goalpar	Christians	7.9	3.6	3.3	2.8	2.1	0.9
	Hindus	39.9	53.9	50.9	51.5	43.7	58.7

Table : 03

*Source: The figures of 1911 to 1971 are form the book "Communalism in Assam – A Civilizational Approach" By Sujata Miri and the figures of 1991 are from Census of India Series – 1, Part IV-B (ii) Religion (Table C-9).

The proportion of Christians is highest in North-Cachar Hills (21.87) followed by Karbi Anglong (7.09), Darang (5.06), Goalpara (3.59), and Dibrugarh(3.51).

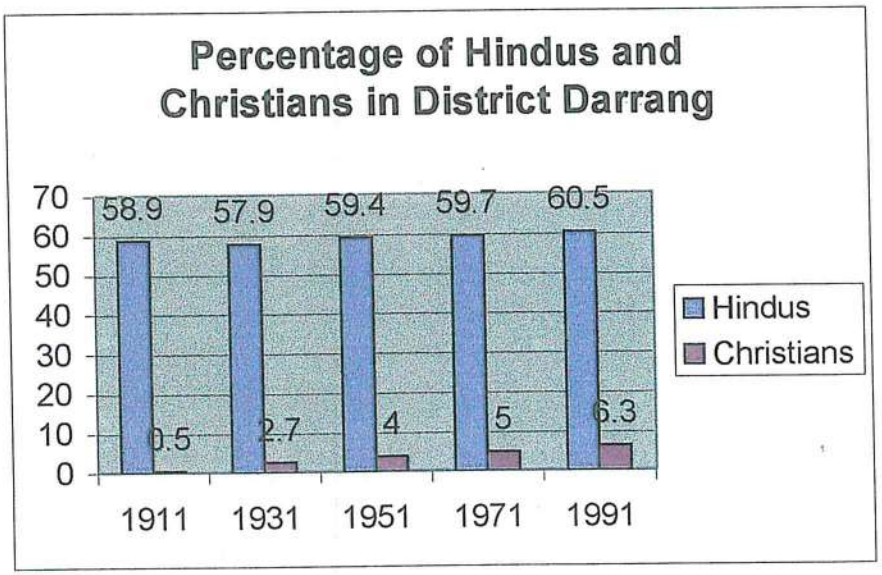


Figure : 08

The above bar graph shows that the percentage of both Hindus and Christians have shown increase from 1911 to 1991, though in case of Hindus the growth is almost imperceptible,

while in case of Christians the growth has been quite tremendous from 0.5% in 1911 to 6.3% in 1991. This further indicates tha the growth of Christianity has been at the expense of tribal religions.

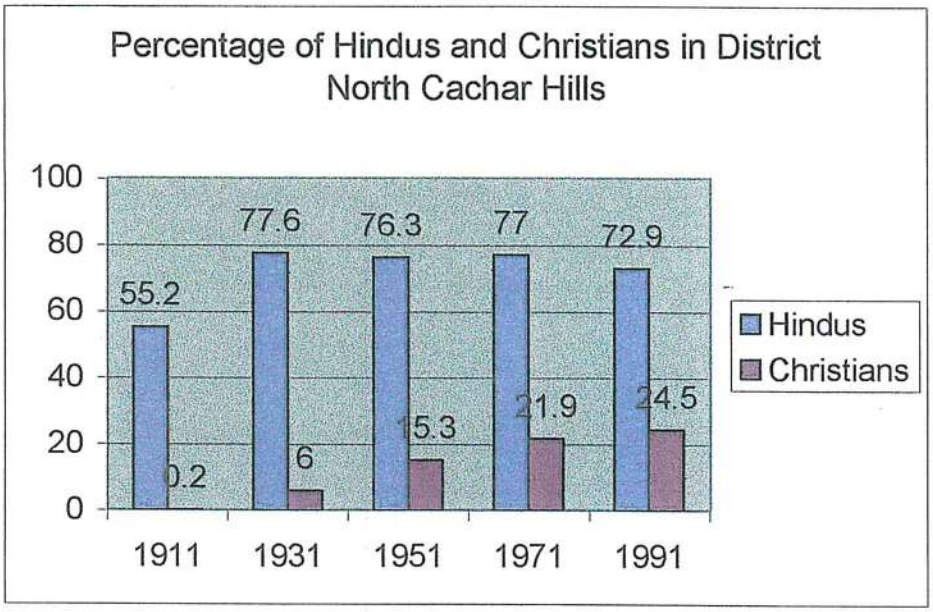


Figure : 09

The above bar graph shows that while the growth of Hinduism in North Cachar Hills has run a zigzag course, the Christianity has shown steep increase from 0.2% in 1911 to 24.5% in 1991.

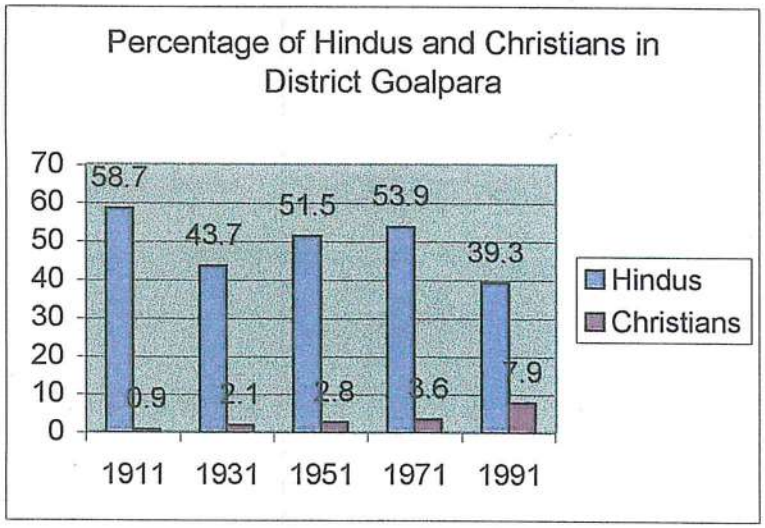
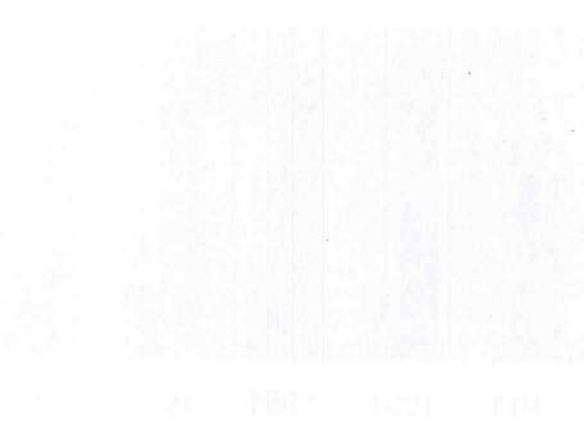


Figure : 10

The above bar graph shows that the growth of Hinduism in Golpara has also run a zigzag course, while the Christianity has again shown steep increase from 0.9% in 1911 to 7.9% in 1991



Attempts at evangelization of the Northeast by the Christian Missionaries started during British period, has so far remained confined to the tribal people living in the Hills or plains, though the process of conversion is still going on. It is said that during the last five years between 1994 and 1999, about 18000 tribal people have been converted into Christianity in Assam.

However, an attempt to create a division among the tribal people was noticed in 1986 when at the instance of Christian Missionaries, an organization 'North East Young Bodo-Christian Association' was formed in Darrang district to fight for the causes of the Bodo tribes. They later on formed National Democratic Front for Bodoland (N.D.F.B). The efforts to segregate the Bodos from the mainstream of the Assamese community perhaps started with the inception of this organization and the formation of National Democratic Front of Bodoland, the most powerful Bodo militant group. Unlike other Bodo Militant organizations, the NDFB wants to create a separate independent Bodo country. On the other hand leaders/members of ABSU as well as Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) are mostly Hindus and do not support the idea of separate independent country and they have been demanding for creation of a separate state for the Bodos. The ideological differences between the two groups have led to the fratricidal killings in the Bodoland areas involving NDFB and BLT cadres. The involvement of a foreign Christian Missionary in late 1980's during trouble-torn days of agitation for separate Bodoland State also came to notice in Kokrajhar district. Ultimately he was served with the notice to quit the area. Some people among the Bodo tribes still follow animistic religions and also worship "*Bathow*" and Shiva etc.

Apart from the serious situation in Darrang and Kokrajhar districts of the Bodoland area, the signs of discord have also been noticed on a few occasions between Sangh Parivar leaders and the Christian Missionary organizations operating in Karbi-Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts inhabited by Dimasa and other tribes. The Sangh Parivar leaders objected to the holding of mass congregation at Diphu in 1998 by the Christian Missionaries, terming that as a ploy to convert the Hindus. In both the districts, the Sangh Parivar has been trying to increase their influence for quite some time and has been able to set up frontal bases in a few tribal dominated areas. It will, therefore, have wider impact among the members of the two communities. However, no division on Hindu-Christian communal lines has been noticed so far.

The incident of killing of an Australian Missionary in Orissa and other incidents in other parts of India during 1999 did not create any significant impact in the State. All this did not vitiate the harmony between the two communities, though some stray incidents of attacks on Churches were reported in Karbi-Anglong, Kokrajhar and Cachar districts. The Christians and the Missionaries in the state however, reacted against killing of the Australian Missionary Mr. Staines and his two sons in Orissa and attacks on Churches in different parts of the country, by organizing processions or demonstrations at the district headquarters. They however blamed the local media for giving over- emphasis to those incidents. There has been no further development over the issue and the relations between the two communities have so far remained cordial.

Over the script National Democratic Fund and Bodoland has a demand for Roman script, as its top leaders are Christians. Bodo Liberation Tigers is for the Devnagari script while no underground Organizations are for local Assamese script.

Up to 1996 Sr.Augustina was hacked to death. Sr. Lily was shot dead by Bodo Militants at Joseph's convent at Bansbari in lower Assam.
The following 3 sporadic incidents in 1999 and one incident in 2000 were reported from Morigaon, Kokrajhar and Karbi- Anglong districts involving the members of Hindu and Christian communities.

1. There was a personal dispute between the two brothers namely Khung Rongpi, a Hindu and Jiten Rongpi, a convert to Christianity over the share of parental property. Khung Rongpi was not willing to share his parental property with his brother Jiten Rongpi as he had refused to be reconverted to Hinduism. As a result of personal conflict, on 20-2-99, at around 2215 hrs, Khung Rongpi threw a flame beau (used as a torch light) on family Church with thatched roofing, which was located in front of his house at village Hemari Tedron Gaon Phonglokpet under Howraghat PS (Karbi Anglong district). The Church caught fire and was burnt to ashes. Police arrested Khung Rongpi and the case has been charge sheeted in April 1999.

2. In March 1999, at about 7 pm, some unknown Bodo miscreants set on fire a few Adivasi houses. As a result of this case of arson, an abandoned Church situated at Ramdeo Adivasi village under P.S Gossaigaon, district Kokrajhar was also burnt down.

3. On 5-5-99 some unknown miscreants assaulted 3 Christian members of Asian Cultural Study Centre, Hyderabad, namely Anupam Toppo (Jharkhand State), Sanjoy Pantati (Jorhat district) and Raju Kandulana (Sibsagar district) while they were selling Christian religious books near Silsang High School in the jurisdiction of police station Jagiroad in district Morigaon. All the above three persons received simple injuries as a result of the assault. Police arrested 6 persons and the case has been charge sheeted in June 1999.Another stray incident involving members of Hindu and Christian communities were reported from Cachar district. In January 2000,three Christians kidnapped one Swapna Chasa, a Hindu girl from her house in P.S. Lakhipur area of district Cachar and subsequently killed her. In retaliation, some Hindus attacked the Christians and burnt down 6 houses belonging to Christians. Police arrested 16 persons of both the communities in both the above cases.

O.L.Snaitang in his book "Christianity & Social change in North-East" writes that Christianity spreaded in Maghalaya after lot of resistance as it being a threat to local or ethnic identity, customs, religions, etc., But then boys were attracted towards it because dancing etc., and the women showed inclination to embrace Christianity and it being a matriarchal society, men followed.

In the Northeast, there are three valleys, namely -1 Brahamaputhra Valley, 2 Manipur-Imphal Valley, and 3 BarakValley. The rest of the areas are hilly and mountainous. In the book "Hill Politics in North-East India", Mr.S.K.Dubey says that broadly speaking in the Northeast it is Hill areas vs. plain or valley areas. It is hill people vs valley or plain people in the Northeast.

Quite often the problem may be intra-tribal or inter-tribal, though some times it might appear as Hindu vs. Christians because majority of the population of one tribe belongs to one religion and of the other tribe to the other religion. In Assam various religious community groups respect and tolerate each other.

Mr.Virendra Prasad Rao I.G. C.I.D., of 1974-IPS batch from Bihar, told that the Assamese are themselves responsible for alienating the tribals, for example, Bodos and hill-tribes after Independence. Both fought together for freedom, and tribals too regarded themselves as Assamese and non-tribals also regarded them as such. But it was only later on, when valley people of Assam (generally Bengali and Assamese Hindus) neglected their development and took the chunk of Government money by way of corruption and other means and they started calling and treating them after 1947 as tribals. Leaders of most of the underground outfits are Christians. It is being complained by some Hindus that Christian organizations or Missionaries are encouraging anti-national activities. The leaders of such underground outfits may be Christian just because of the fact that Christian members are more educated than non-Christian members. This is a matter of separate study if the Christian missionaries etc., operating in India or from outside India have any hand in fomenting insurgency and anti-nationalism against India in North East. He said that in Assam you might have Christians or Hindus or Muslims and tribals in the same family. When asked if there exist any Hindu Christian tensions in Maghalaya, he said that there had been some incidents against Hindu-Bengalis or people from the plains or Marwaris, but these are not of the nature of Hindus vs Christians. These should be seen more in the light of tribals vs non-tribals or hill vs plain people or rather as between original inhabitants of the state and those who settled there during the British period. Shillong has been the capital of Northeast for quite a long and many officers since pre- Independence days have opted to settle there. Thus the people from outside Meghalaya, inhabit most of the heart of the Shillong, and the tribals are generally on the fringe of the town. There had been sometimes demands from people of Meghalaya for vacating this part of the Shillong by Hindus. Similarly there were such demands in Aizawl and Imphal. He said one political leader of Karbi Anglong, a Karbi himself told him confidentially that he was adamant on his demand of separate homeland for Karbis, just because according to him Assamese or plain people will devour them. Assam has seen linguistic agitation against Bengali language. Bengalis came with the British for purposes of administration, being better versed in English than the Assamese and the local tribal people.

The General Secretary of all the Baptist Churches in North India in Pan Bazar Guwahati is a Zomi from Mizoram. He told that Christianity brought social change in the Northeast and has civilized the people. There used to be headhunting in Mizoram around 1845.

Erich Fromm in his book "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness" writes that lack of destructiveness marks the tribal societies and the headhunting prevalent among certain tribal people had ritualistic meanings. He concludes that civilized societies are more destructive than primitive ones.[2]

To say that the tribal societies of the North-East were more violent during 19th Century or before when head-hunting was in vogue than they are at present is not true. We see more violence these days in the North-East in the form of insurgent attacks. The underground

outfits impose taxes and kill people when they refuse to do so. Does it not show they have been converted with out conviction and the Christian Missionaries (esp. Baptists) have been more interested in increasing their numbers rather than making them true Christians?

Mr.Ramachandran, I.G., Special Branch told that the problem is not Hindu vs. Christian or Hindu vs. Muslim as it may be elsewhere. It may be against immigration or for autonomy by some tribes, though it may look like between Hindu -Christian or Hindu -Muslim. Each tribe and ethnic identity has been assimilated to the Assamese culture and people are tolerant and respect each other.

Mr. K.Sarmah, D.I.G, Special Branch told that there is resentment as to why Hindu members of underground outfits join the Xmas celebrations of Christians, while Christian members, though only 10 to 15% per cent, do not celebrate Hindu festivals. Some underground organizations are Christian dominated and some are Hindu dominated. And this may lead to tensions as amongst them.

Mr. Gwete, J.D., S.I.B., Gowahati told me on 3-3-2000 that there was a threat from an underground outfit that Christian should not join Hindus festivals. About Arunachal Pradesh, he said that native Christians etc., have joined in the race for converting the animists like Naga Christians. He said that when a boy born to Christian parents or a Christian father is baptized, it is sometimes complained that he has been converted, though he was already a Christian by birth and baptism is just a ceremony.

Insurgency is the main problem in the Northeast. It is generally not Hindu vs. Christian. It might be hill vs. valley or rather Meteis living in valley versus the tribes living in the hills or it may be political or one tribe against another or one clan against another. It may be political but generally it is not communal. And again it may be Baptist Anglican or Protestant or Presbyterian vs. Catholic or rather between Churches of America and England that came to this part during British period and Churches that came here after Independence like Catholics who were not allowed by British Government to come to Northeast or were asked and forced to withdraw from this region during the 1st and 2nd World Wars. The problem here is generally not Hindu versus Christian but it might be underground vs. those who object to paying taxes imposed by them. Quite often the problem may be intra tribal or inter-tribal, though sometimes it might appear as Hindu Vs Christian because majority of the population of one particular tribe belongs to one religion and of the other tribe to other religion. The problem here is insurgency and there is no other major problem for police. There seems to be no divide among the people, as Assam especially in the valley has been to some extent a melting pot for civilizations, cultures and races, but some underground militant organizations especially which are headed by Christians are trying to create a divide.

Arunachal Pradesh

Arunachal Pradesh at the time of India's Independence was an Agency known as NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency). Mr. Verrier Elwin was the advisor of NEFA to the Government of India on tribal matters from 1953 until his death in 1964. He was of the

opinion that no Missionaries of any religion should be permitted to break up tribal life and hence the non-tribals and outsiders were required to take licenses and permits. But the inner line by which the frontier was made a restricted area only to be entered by authorized persons was established since the later half of the 19th century. Verrier Elwin is very relevant for the study, as he traversed many boundaries, from a Christian Missionary to a Gandhian, to a supporter of the cause of the Indian Independence, an anthropologist to the state of Orissa and ultimately a protagonist of the cause of the tribal culture and tribal people. He lived with them all across the country. Verier Elwin in his radical identification with Gandhi and Indian nationalism broke away from Anglican establishment in 1934. According to him, the Missionaries were destroying their (of the tribal people) art, their dances, their weaving and their whole culture.

About the tribal policies of Nehru and Verrier Elwin in Arunachal Pradesh, Bipan Chandra, Mridula Mukherjee and Aditya Mukherjee write in 'India After Independence 1947 - 2000'; "Nehru's and Verrier Elwin's policies were implemented best of all in the North-East Frontier Agency or NEFA which was created in 1948 our of the border areas of Assam. As a British anthropologist who spent nearly all his life studying the tribal people and their condition wrote in 1967. 'A measure of isolation combined with a sympathetic and imaginative policy of a progressive administration has here created a situation unparalleled in other parts of India.[3]

In the westernmost part of Arunachal Pradesh, bordering Bhutan, the Buddhists are the largest religious group in Tawang and West Kameng, with Hindus as the largest minority group. In the districts of East Kameng, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, West Siang, East Siang situated in the Central part of Arunachal Pradesh, the followers of "Other religions and persuasions" constitute the majority with Hindus as the largest minority group and the Christians as the second largest minority group, the only exception is Upper Subansiri where Buddhists are the second largest minority and the Christians as the third largest minority group. In the districts of Dibang valley, Lohit and Changlang districts, the Hindus form the majority group while followers of "other religions and persuasions' are the largest minority group in Dibang valley and the Buddhists in the Lohit and Changlang. In the eastern most districts of Tirap, the followers of "other religions and persuasions are in majority, while Hindus are the largest minority group with Christians as the second largest minority group. This shows that in none of the 11 districts of Arunachal Pradesh, the Christians are not in majority and they are not even the largest minority group.

Hindus form 37% of the total population of Arunachal Pradesh while, followers of "Other religions and persuasions", Buddhists and Christians are 36.2%, 12.9% and 10.3% respectively. The largest concentration of the Christians is in the districts of Lower Subansiri, Tirap and Changlang, where they form 21.8%, 18.1% and 11% respectively of the total population of each district.

According to the 1991 Census of India (Paper 1 of 1995 – Religion), the Christian population rose from 27,306 (4.3% to the total population of the State) in 1981 to 89,013 (10.3% to the total population of the State) in 1991 and thus recorded a decadal percentage increase of 226. On the other hand, the Hindu population rose from 1,84,732 (29.2%) in 1981 to 320,212

(37%) in 1991 and thus recording a decadal percentage increase of 73.[4] This shows that the Christian population increased almost three times as regards the decadal growth rate percentage for both the communities. The Buddhists remained almost static around 13% of the total population of the State in both the census years of 1981 and 1991.

Among the different districts of Arunachal Pradesh Lower Subansiri is most predominantly Christian having 38.3% Christians of the total population of the Christians in the state. More than half (55.6%) of the total number of Christians in Arunachal Pradesh is in just two districts of Lower Subansiri and Tirap. The five districts of Lower Subansiri, Tirap, Changlang, East Siang and West Siang contained 85.6% of the total Christian population of the state.[7] The rest of the five districts namely Lohit, Dewang Valley, East Kameng, Upper Subansiri, West Kameng and Tawang contain only 14.4% of the total Christian population of the state.[7] In the districts of Tawang, and West Kameng (both being predominantly Buddhist) and also Upper Subansiri (having mostly followers of "other religions and persuasions" i.e., generally worshippers of Donipolo/Sidony Polo or Sun- Moon religion), the population of the Christians is almost negligible.[7] **1991 Census.**

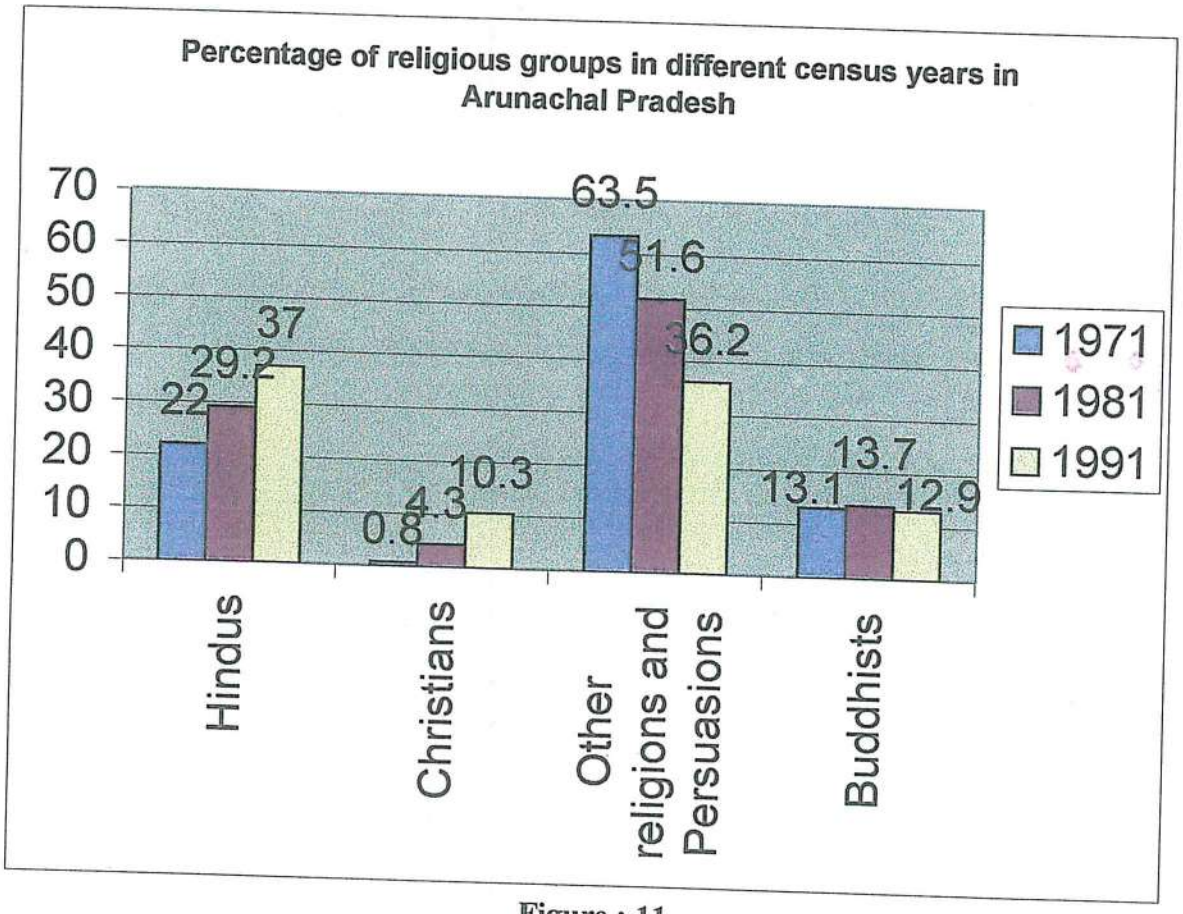


Figure : 11

The above bar graph shows that the population of both Hindus and Christians has been steadly increasing since 1971, while the population of the followers of 'other religions and persuasions' has been witnessing gradual and steep decline. The Buddhist population mostly

concentrated in the Tawang District bordering Bhutan has remained almost stable around 13% of the total population of the state.

Most of the tribal population of Arunachal Pradesh has been followers of Doni Polo (Sun-Moon religion). In 1971, the followers of "other religions and persuasions" (mostly followers of Doni Polo) were 63.5% of the total population of the State which came down to 51.6% in 1981 and 36.2% in 1991 while the population of Christians and Hindus rose from 0.79% and 22% in 1971 to 10.3% and 37% in 1991.[5]

The Christian population has increased in Lower Subansiri due to its proximity to North Bank of Brahmaputra in Assam. The Mission Stations in the North Bank of Assam have helped the expansion of Christianity in the area of Lower Subansiri district. The Christianity has also increased in Tirap and Changlang due to proximity to Nagaland, which is predominantly Christian.
Ramesh Maharaj of Ramkrishna Mission Hospital told that these areas were first an Agency, then U/T, finally State of Arunachal Pradesh. Mr. Verrier. I. Elwin was Adviser to Nehru. Nehru allowed Christian Missionaries in Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Assam, etc. But Nehru agreed with Elwin that tribal culture in NEFA should not be allowed to be destroyed. Hence it remained only an Agency, but the aftermath of the 1962 aggression by China opened up these regions to the rest of India. Roads were constructed; development works were taken up by the administration. There are Buddhists around Tawang. They are of the Mahayana School. Positive minded people like Ramkrishna Mission Workers want to bring the tribal people into the main stream. Christian Officers should not be posted in Arunachal Pradesh, because they contribute in converting tribals to Christianity, as they believe in spreading the gospel. A Hindu does not do this. Christians killed a Swamy of Vivekanand Mission. Nehru allowed only Ramkrishna Mission and similar organizations. He was convinced that Ramkrishna Mission will not destroy their culture but after 1962 with other things Christian Schools also came up and Christian Missionaries started asserting as to why they cannot open their Schools, while the State Government gave encouragement to Ramkrishna Mission activities. And then the Christian Missionaries and Schools on the North Bank in Assam sent their students of adjacent Arunachal Pradesh areas to propagate Christianity there. The border areas of Tirap and Changlang near Nagaland, were Christianized because of proximity to Nagaland. They could make in-roads into these districts from the Nagland side. Many Mishings were also converted in areas around Itanagar. These Missionaries were being funded from abroad but Hindus can't do that, as India is not as rich as America. America has a conspiracy to weaken India and does not want that India should become a powerful nation and dominate South Asia. So they are doing every thing to create a future Christian country comprising of the whole of Northeast & tribal areas of Bihar, Orissa and M.P. During Mr. Neelam's period as Home Minister in the Apang (Chief Minister) Government, lots of tribals were converted into Christianity. We can match them in education and health but not in money.

Mr. Neelam Taran, former Minister in the Apang Ministry told that the Christians were persecuted between 1969 and 1975 and Churches were burnt and a Freedom of Religion Act was passed. There was lot of opposition to the Act. Mr. OSS Raja was first Chief Commissioner and then Lt. Governor and was a devotee of Shri Sai Baba. Now there is no

tension. Because of healing powers of Jesus Christ, the tribals got converted to Christianity when they were cured of their ailments. He insisted that the Christian prayers could cure without the help of medicines.

Father Joseph of Don Bosco School, Itanagar told that all the Fathers in the School were from Kerala. He said that Baptists write names of tribes before the denominations. He said that Neelam Taran is a Baptist. Bishop Tejpur told that the Baptists are more aggressive.
Mr. Lechi Legi Hon'ble Minister, Power Arunachal Pradesh told that he had fled as a boy from his village in Zero. Now he is prosperous and has a garage. He is a Hindu and worships Sun and Moon. He said that there is no tension between Hindus and Christians. There will be no tension unless people are instigated/provoked and that too by the outsiders, because tribals will never instigate.

Jagat Guru Shankaracharya of Puri peeth Swami Adhokshajanand Tirth Ji Mahraj visited Itanagar on 28th February 2000. There was varied reaction and response to his visit to Itanagar as might be seen from news articles reported in 28th and 29th February 2000 issues of Arunachal Times.

Arunachal Times on 28-2-2000:

"AAPSU president Nabam Jollow and general secretary Goge Sora, in an appeal today said. The dumping of Hindu idols, particularly, those of Shivas in the hills and vales of Arunachal Pradesh is a part of a larger plan to grab the land of tribals and their political future. As a part of the same plan, the Hindus are trying to assimilate the tribal faith and make it a Hindu brand. These self-styled patriots think that to be patriotic every Indian has to be a Hindu. They wrongly believe that others-Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, non-Hindu tribals are anti-nationals and potential traitors. Thus they cast a high shadow over the secular character of Indian polity. With the black listed and potentially disruptive concepts of cultural nationalism, these Hindu activists are and will be responsible for alarming increase of non-tribal control over the tribals of the state. ---"These activists are making way for future conversions of tribals into full-fledged Hinduism through various overt and covert methods---In fact, the idols and *lingas* of Shiva which they dumped in the land of tribals might be used as evidence for asserting that their ancestors lived in Arunachal long before the tribals came here. Thus, these recently dumped statues and temples constructed on some of them may be used against the tribals in the event of any major conflict of interests. Those of us who are constructing temples for these idols are undermining the interests of our future generations. ---Let us ensure peace in the state by putting the outsiders in their proper place, the appeal added."

The Arunachal Times 29-02-2000:
"The All Arunachal Pradesh NGOs Co-ordination Committee (AAPNGOCC), in a release, has welcomed the visit of his Holiness Jagat Guru Sankaracharya of Puri Peeth, Swami Adhokshajanand Tirthji Maharaj, who arrived here this afternoon of 29-2-2000 on a 16-day tour to this Himalayan state.---His visit is totally a goodwill gesture for the tribal people of this state. ---Reacting to the appeal of some sections to the people of the state to denounce his holiness visit, the Committee described it most unfortunate and against the tribal custom. '

The tribal tradition does not permit our conscience to denounce any honoured guest as the state is known for its hospitality', the release said.----Moreover, terming the visit of his Holiness, a religious head, as a hidden agenda of the so called Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sanstha (RSS) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) is totally uncalled for as it is beyond any logic and is an attempt to politicize the issue, the release said.--- "Unity in diversity is the real strength of India. Therefore, we being true patriots should show the country that we are not only sentinels of the frontiers but also the vanguard of nation's culture.--The people should not only be alert but should not be swayed away by such wrong propaganda, the release said, and appealed to all sections of people to take part in the discourses proposed to be delivered by his Holiness."

In 1978 Freedom of Religion Act was passed.

Mother Teresa requested the Prime Minister of India Mr. Morarji Desai not to pass the All-India Anti Conversion Bill as introduced by Shri O.P Tyagi, Member of Parliament and wrote "I wish to inform you that I have been trying to get into Arunachal Pradesh for sometimes now, but so far I have not succeeded and yet the Ramakrishna Mission members are entering freely. We are in 87 places in India. Why are we not with our poor in Arunachal?".

Non-Christians in Arunachal Pradesh destroyed many church buildings from 1974 onwards as protest against conversions. Many attempts for construction of Church buildings were foiled and thwarted. This shows that there has been a lot of resistance by the non-Christian people to Christianity and to the construction of Churches. The details of Churches that were demolished are as follows:

1. December 1976: Along (District West Siang,),
2. June 1980: Longkua/Kanubari/Tirap (a group of Wangchoos demolished a Church)
3. January 1982: Kanubari/Tirap
4. January 1982: Kanubari/Tirap
5. April 1982: Muttowa Village/Tirap
6. Sept 1990: Vekuliang/Sunpura/Dibang Valley
7. July 1991: Longkhaw/Longding/Tirap (for reason of violating the village customs and rituals)
8. September 1991: Zedua/Longding/Tirap
9. September 1992: Ligu Village/Daporijo/Upper Subansiri
10. Jan-1993: Daribill/Balijan/Papumpare
11. June-1993: Bam/Basar/W.Siang
12. June-1993: Lailinang/Lohit (One OB type Baptist Church of Mishmis was burnt by non-Christians).
13. April-1994: Bhikuliang/Tezu/Lohit (by Non-Christian Mishmis as a protest against conversions.
14. June-1994 Loiliang/Tezu/Lohit
15. Jan-1995: Margingla/Khanun/East Kameng
16. Sept 1996: Bordom/Changlang over a dispute between the two communities about the construction of Church.

Most of the destroyed Churches belonged to the Baptist Church
Some unknown miscreants for example, at serial no. 10 and 11, committed some of the above cases.

Some cases of Church demolition and burning etc., took place because of political reasons. For example, in Jan-1995 at Margingla/Khanun/East Kameng some supporters of Kameng Dolo, then a Minister, set fire to a Catholic Church before elections as his rival candidate was mobilizing Christian voters. In another case at Nginu/Wakka/Tirap in March 1995, non-Christians set a Baptist Church on fire because the Christians did not cast their votes in favour of Wancha Wangsa.

In June 1993, non-Christians in Vekuliang/Tezu in district Lohit demolished a Baptist Church and three houses of Christians. In July 1993, one Subra Ao and his family along with two other Christians were forced to leave the village Lailiang in district Lohit and their houses were demolished.

Earlier in 1974, a group of students of local school in Doimukh/Papumpare burnt down many Baptist churches housed in OB Type huts, assaulted local converted people and drove some missionaries out. In July 1980 a clash between Christians and non-Christians at Nokfan, Kanubari Circle, Tirap District resulted in injuries to two persons and destruction of a church. In May 1998 some non-Christian Mishmi tribal people assaulted Christian tribal and burnt copies of Bible.

There were some cases of disputes and friction between Christians and non-Christians over land ownership, for example: 1. In May 1998 near Pasighat AirField, East Siang District: The Adi Baptist Union expressed resentment over the eviction order against a Church constructed near Pasighat AirField without land allotment from Deputy Commissioner. 2. In July 1998 at Bunting Village Tirap district, a dispute arose when the chief of the village allotted a separate land for the settlement of Christians by opening a new village, New Bunting. 3. In Dec 1999 at Gori West Siang, there was a dispute over occupation of land by Baptist Mission allegedly without paying compensation.

In June 1998 at Iduli Village in district Dibang Valley the non-Christian relatives of the husband of a deceased Christian lady, drove away the Christians who had gathered to perform last rites according to the Christian customs.

In June 1998 at Laptung village in Tirap district, there was an inter-denominational conflict between the Catholics and the Baptists, when the Catholic Christians threatened the followers of the Baptist sect to leave the village. The Baptist Christians settled by opening a new village called New Laptung

In March 1999, Christians attacked a village priest in village Likabali in district West Siang while he was performing a local *Puja.*

TRIPURA

The tribal population constitutes about 31% of the total population of Tripura. The Tripuris, Reangs, Jamatias, Chakmas, Halams, Mogs, Noatias and Kukis are the main tribes inhabiting Tripura.

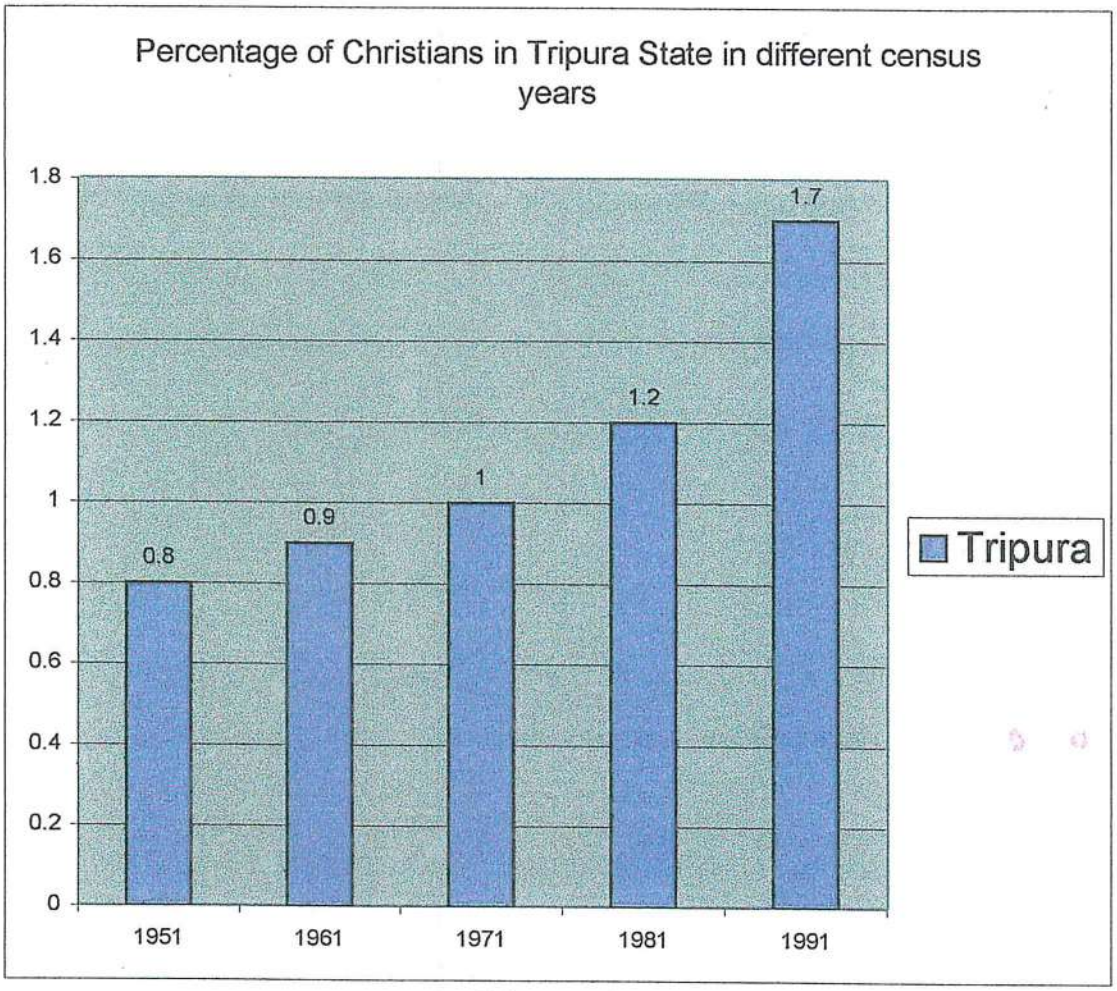


Figure : 12

The population of Christians in 1951 was 0.8% to the total population of the Tripura state and over the 40 years it has more than doubled and was 1.7% in 1991.

In 1967, the educated 'Boroks' formed the Tripura Upajathi Juba Sabha (TUJS) and it became the mouthpiece of the youth. Two of the most important demands of TUJS were, restoration of tribal lands to tribals and introduction of local language ``Kok Borok'' in Roman script as the State language.[6]

In February 1999 eight non-tribals were massacred at a place called Kanchanmala bazar area in West district. In retaliation non-tribals burnt 250 houses of tribals and burnt alive a tribal government employee.

In August 1999 four RSS leaders were kidnapped. Though NLFT disclaimed responsibility, RSS accused Christian Baptists for the abduction with the support of NLFT in Dhalai district. In the same month six people including 4 CPM activists were kidnapped from South district, Udaipur.

In September, 1999 Samir Deb Barma, the Panchayat Secretary belonging to CPM, was also gunned down inside his house in West district.

T.B. Roy 1994 batch, Manipur and Tripura cadre told that in Tripura, the activities of Christian Missionary are pitted against the over-enthusiastic Hindutva activities. Pro-Christian or pro-missionary activists are encouraging insurgency in Tripura, while Pro-Hindu/ Bengalese are encouraging the anti-tribal or Pro-Bengali activities. In Tripura, two extremists groups NLFT (National Liberation Front of Tripura) and ATTF (All Tripura Tiger Force) are active. The NLFT is a pro-Christian outfit. The NLFT had issued a dictate for total Christianization of the tribal community. On the other hand, 'Jamatiya Hoda' is a pro-Hindu organization and refuse to pay subscriptions, shelter etc., to the NLFT extremists. In January 2001, twenty-one 'Hoda' volunteers were kidnapped by NLFT in the jurisdiction of police station Killa in South Tripura district. In February 2001, an extremist was killed in an encounter with the police and subsequently after a few days, police rescued all the victims.

NLFT got support from public more out of fear than any other single reason and kidnapping for ransome has become a lucrative business for the U.G. outfits.[7]

Five foreign missions entered Tripura during 5 years period immediately before and after 1947 (1) New Zealand Baptist Mission, Agartala (2) New Zealand Baptist Mission Bhangmung in the Jampuri hills (3) Roman Catholic Mission at Mariamnagar, Agartala (4) New Zealand Baptist Mission at Dhuma Chhara under Kailasaher sub-division and (5) American Baptist Mission at Dharmanagar. The name of the New Zealand Baptist Mission was later changed into Tripura Baptist Christian Union (TBCU). Presently the following Christian organizations are working in Tripura:- (1) Tripura Baptist Christian Union (2) Zeraw Baptist Mission of Mizoram (3) Roman Catholic Church (4) United Protestant Church of North East India and (5) Evangelical Free Church of India. The TBCU was affiliated to the North East India Christian Council (NEICC) with its headquarter at Shillong. The NEICC was again affiliated to Dr. Billy Graham's World Baptist Alliance. Barring the Roman Catholic Church, the Tribal Christian Missionaries of Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram ran the remaining four Missions.

N. Padmanabhan writes in his study 'Role of Police in Combating Insurgency-Militancy-Low Intensity Conflicts in the North-East' about the Christian Missions in Tripura, 'They all had profound socio-political influence on the tribals due to their welfare activities particularly in the field of education and medical treatment. Side by side, the Christian missionaries offered socio-religious and political lessons to the young converts who were subsequently promoted to the rank of 'Pastor' as the pathfinder to the tribal societies. In fact the pastors were not only

the spiritual advisors but also the socio-political leaders of the tribal society and it was at their instance, the tribal extremists raised the demand for Roman script in place of Bengali script which was popular among the tribals of Tripura for a long lime. The fact also remained that the Christian missions were mainly responsible for militant activities in the entire North East India where also the tribals were making all out efforts to establish their own political authority.[8]

The Dinesh Committee, which had visited Tripura during July 1980, found that the Tripura Baptist Christian Union (TBCU) received subscriptions from abroad, and had political links with the tribal extremists. A pamphlet entitled, "The Church grows through peoples movement" circulated in 1980 and gave the impression that there was a close relation between tribal political movement and conversion. The pamphlet stated "If large members are to come to Christ viz. Peoples movement the Tripura Baptist Christian Union must be aided by other churches and missions". Dr. Rieweh Cunville who was the author and also the Director of the Bible Society of India stated in strong terms for the pumping into Tripura of material supplies -jeeps, public address system, tracts and printing materials to be used by the workers in their thirst for Christ among the Tripuris.

It was thus clear that Christianity was gradullay but surely making inroads into the tribal hearts of Tripura introducing a new kind of leadership based on political and religious maneuvers. The aggressive style of functioning of terrorist B.K. Hrankhal and his intimate contact with the Church brought him in direct conflict with the devout Hindu Tripuris and Jamatia leadership who had earlier dominated the TUJS and consequently Hrangkhal was sacked from the TUJS. With that he got a free hand and moved on his own as an insurgent with the backing of the church.

N. Padmanabhan further writes in his study, 'Blaming Church for what they had done was also uncalled for. The Church had hit the nail on the head to drive home the message of Christian love thereby touched the inner most sensitive tendrils of the human heart. Man earnestly wished for human love and care and they were badly in need for the Tripuris. The Christians gave just that and gave them in abundance. It was only natural that the Tripuris heard the one who extended all the love and care with the conviction that Christian Godly love would do no harm to them. On the other hand the Govt. of India and the Govt. of Tripura, the political leaders and the local "Mahajans' 'Money Lenders' had lured them to the traps of debt and perpetual -misery and servitude, taught them methods of political chicanery and corruption, made them terrorists to fight for themselves, fed them bullets and gave them false hopes in repeat without a hope for fulfillment. Tripuris required love, the more pure and simple the more it was adored and respected. Christian missionaries touched only two aspects of life (I) Education. This improved Tripuris more than any other measure of the Govt. of India/Tripura. (2) Medical care and attention which moved simple minds of Tripuris. Where govt. doctors and officials dreaded to dare the Christian fathers and sisters ventured walking hilly terrains without a murmur with the message of the gospel as an unguent for the soul. They had no inhibitions and no self-interest to be achieved which the govt. officials had. It did not appear that the Tripuri insurgents would go the govt. of India's way whatever might be the palliatives. Any amount would be too little, too late and may not match the Christian love, pure and simple. The solution to Tripura 's problem was to have been searched in the Gospels of the Christ.'

The Role of Language and Script in Shaping a Separate Nationality:

Kunal Ghosh thinks that in two areas of the North-East, i.e. in Tripura and in the BAC (Bodo Autonomous Council) area within Assam, a mixture of religion and politics has produced an explosive situation. In the case of Tripura and the BAC area, there is a concerted attempt to make religion (Christianity in this case) and linguistics come together to shape nationality. About the role of language and script in shaping a different nationality in these two regions, Kunal Ghosh writes: "Baptist missionaries have converted a large number of tribal people of Tripura to Christianity since the turn of the century. Since 1967 the Church has been demanding that the tribal language Kokbarak should be written in the Roman Script, in place of the Bengali script although the language has many words in common with Bengali and has been traditionally and more conveniently written in the Bengali script. This demand of Roman script for Kokbarak language was fulfilled when the Congress – Tripura Upjati Yuva Samithi adopted the Roman script in the late 1980s. The TUJS and Tripura National Volunteers (TNV) are said to be predominantly Christian outfits. Left Front leaders such as Dasarath Deb and Ranjit Debbarma declared that the "use of Roman script in Kokbarak as communal politics. Subsequently the Left Front Government in 1993 re-introduced the Bengali script for Kokbarak. The reason why the Baptist Church has been demanding for the introduction of Roman script for Kokbarak language is because they want to severe all the links of the Tripura tribal people with the Bengali culture. This would, in future, foster a separate and distinct sectarian (in the present case, Baptist Christian) identity amongst them and ultimately campaign for a separate homeland outside the Indian Union. Similarly since the 1970s, the Baptist Church has been demanding for the introduction of Roman script in place of the Assamese script for Bodo language. But Mrs. Indira Gandhi introduced the Devanagri script in 1980 and the Bodo Autonomous Council, came into being in February 1993. By the mid-1970s Christian missionaries of mainly the Baptist denomination had succeeded in converting a large fraction of Bodos to Christianity. At present about 30 per cent of the Bodos are Christians. The Church portrayed this also as a symbol of Assamese domination. The feeling of grievance and isolation among the tribal Bodos because of lack of development in their area and because of their exploitation and domination by culturally and educationally more advanced people belonging to middle class of Assam has contributed to their alienation from Assamese culture and this has been exploited by the Church. The Bodos reassert their tribal identity and are now for a separate State. Kunal Ghosh writes: " The Church succeeded in spreading the idea that separateness from the Assamese language can be asserted only if they switched over to a different script. The Church has also popularized the name "Bodoland", instead of "Bodobhum" or "Bodokhand". The Church settled for Devnagri for the time being. One of its purposes is well served- the bond of sharing a common script with the Assamese and Bengali was severed. The shift to the Roman script will gradually lead to a culture shift. More and more English words will enter the vocabulary and Sanskritic words will be eased out. The Bodo people will rethink their culture and many consider themselves a cultural discontinuity wedged in between the Assamese culture in the East and the Bengali culture in the West. Cultural separateness is likely to lead to political separatism."[9]

The Christian Organizations want to have complete control over the Northeast region so that when opportunity comes, they might advance towards Tibet China & other parts of South East Asia. They tried to expand into the Mongoloid tribes of South East Asia and China through the abortive Shan Mission in the 19th Century. They might have failed once but they may succeed in future and thus from the Christianity point of view, for expansion into Mangolian Tribes etc., Northeast is crucial and from Indian point of view, the Northeast being a border region or state is quite strategically situated.

Notes:

1. Page No. 208 role of police in combating insurgency-militancy-low intensity conflicts in the North-East by N. Padmanabhan, SVP National Police Academy 2000; Hyderabad – 500 052.
2. Fromm Erich – 'The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness', Penguin Books, 1973.
3. Chandra Bipan, Mridula Mukherjee, Aditya Mukherjee – 'India After Independence', Penguin Books, 2000.
4. 1991 Census
5. 1971 Census
6. 'Role of Police in Combating Insurgency-Militancy-Low Intensity Conflicts in the North-East' study report by N. Padmanabhan, P.130)
7. 'Role of Police in Combating Insurgency-Militancy-Low Intensity Conflicts in the North-East' study report by N. Padmanabhan P.147-48.
8. 'Role of Police in Combating Insurgency-Militancy-Low Intensity Conflicts in the North-East' study report by N. Padmanabhan P.165 Christianity and Insurgency.
9. Mainstream Magzine, Kunal Ghosh.

Chapter – 3

Case Study: Karnataka

PROPORTION OF POPULATION BY MAJOR RELIGIONS OF KARTNATAKA AT SELECTED CENSUS YEARS

Religions	1911	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
Hindus	88.60	87.70	87.03	87.26	86.46	85.77	85.45
Muslims	8.64	9.36	10.05	9.87	10.63	11.21	11.64
Christians	1.31	1.63	2.16	2.07	2.09	2.08	1.91

Table : 04

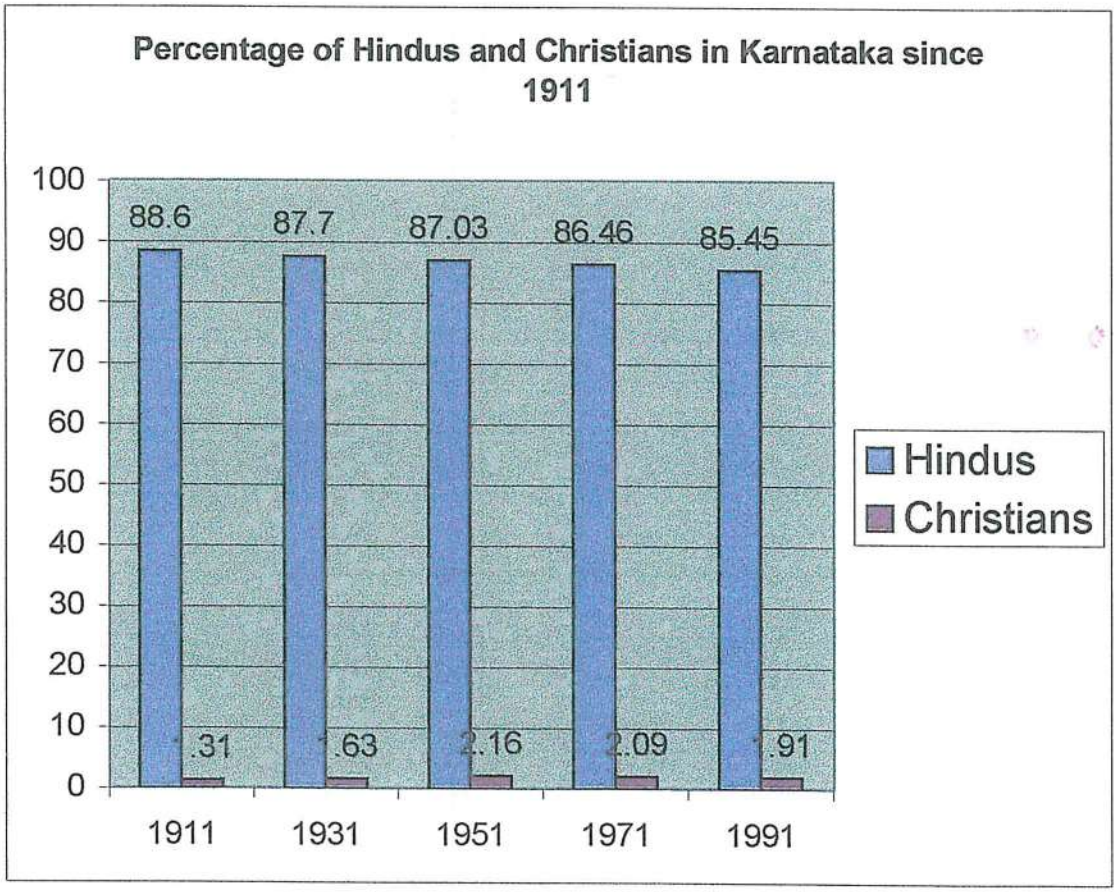


Figure : 13

The table that in 80 years from 1911 to 1991 the Hindu population has decreased by 3%, the Muslim population has increased by 3% and the Christian population has increased by 0.6%. The Christian population was at its maximum (2.16% to the total population of the state) at the time of Independence & then went down & was stable for 20 years between 1961 & 1981 & came further down to the lowest percentage of 1.91% after Independence in 1991. Thus despite a few conversions here & there in the State of Karnataka, the Christian population has come down perhaps for reasons of better literacy ratio leading to family planning among the community.

In Karnataka there are 859,478 Christians and they recorded 11.12% increase from 1981 – 91 while the Hindus recorded a growth rate of 20.66% and the total population of the state grew by 21.12% during the above period.[1] This shows that Christian population is declining in the state.

In Dakshin Kannada (8.15%) and Bangalore (5.68%) districts of Karnataka, the Christian population is between 6 to 9% to the total population of the district. In the districts of Uttar Kannada (3.61%), Kodagu (3.34%), Bidar (3.15%), and Chikmagalur (2.54%), the proportion of the Christian population to the total population of the district is between 2 to 4%. In the districts of Kolar (1.56%), Mysore (1.48%) and Shimoga (1.27%), the Christian population is between 1 to 2% of the total population of the district. In rest of the districts, the Christian population is below 1% to the total population of the district. Certain urban areas like Kolar Goldfields urban area (17%), Mangalore City (14.1%), Hubli-Dharwad (3.6%), and Mysore 2.64% have a relatively higher percentage of Christian population than in the rural areas of the respective districts.[2]

In Bidar district most of the Christians are in Bidar Taluk of which 65% live in rural areas and the rest in urban areas.

In Dakshin Kannada district, the greatest concentration of Christians is in Mangalore urban areas. In Dharwad District, most of the Christians are in Hubli Dharwad Municipal Corporation. In Kolar District, most of the Christians are in the Kolar Gold Fields urban agglomeration. In Mysore district about 1/4th Christians are in the Kollegai Taluk and about half of them are in Mysore town. In Uttar Kannada District about 1/4th Christians are in the rural areas of Honavar Taluk.

During the last two years following incidents took place in Karnataka State.

1) In November 1998 some miscreants disrupted the prayers in a Church in Surathkal P.S in Dakshin Kannada (Mangalore) district. In this connection 15 persons were arrested and the case has been charge-sheeted.

2) The Police are investigating another case registered at Tumkur Town Police Station in connection with assault on two Christian priests in April 2000 at Sira Gate in Tumkur Town.

3) In May 2000 some unknown persons manhandled the Jeep Driver and damaged the portrait of Dr. A.R Paul of Good News Festival Organization at Nrupathunga Hills, Hubli in Dharwad District. About this incident a case is under investigation at Vidyanagar Police Station.

4) A case of desecration in the night of a pillar containing icons of Mother Mary and Infant Jesus by unknown persons was registered in June 2000 in P.S Thumkur.

The following cases relate to tensions following conversions of Hindu to Christianity:

1) In November 1999, some students of St. Joseph College, Bangalore were assaulted in Mysoorammanadoddi village in Anekal Police Station limits in Bangalore, for their alleged conversion activities. In this connection a case was registered u/s 153(a), 341, 394 and other sections of IPC. Nine persons were arrested the case is charge-sheeted.

2) In the jurisdiction of Police Station Saraswathipuram in Mysore City, some Hindus, who were enraged by the conversion of a Hindu named Ganesha to Christianity, assaulted him in November 1999. In this connection a case was registered and nine persons were arrested and the case has been charge-sheeted.

3) In December 1999 Bajrangdal Workers assaulted two Christians for their alleged involvement in conversion activities. The case is under investigation by Balehonnur Police Station of district Chikmangalur.

4) In February 2000 in Nideban village of Bhalki Taluk of Bidar district, one Father Miranda of Sacred Heart Church, Bidar, converted seven Midagas to Christianity allegedly by allurements of money, land and other benefits. The Hindu Jagarana Vedika, expressed its strong protests against such activities.

5) In April 2000, a case u/s 295 and other sections of IPC was registered in Police Station in Udupi Taluk against Ramesh Ajri and 4 others for roughing up a Christian priest while he was propagating Christianity by distributing Bible copies.

6) In April 2000 within the jurisdiction of Police Station Belthangadi in Dakshin Kannada (Mangalore) district, some Hindus assaulted one Harijan who was going to a local Church and threatened him not to go to Church. In this case, four persons were arrested and the case has been charge-sheeted.

7) In May 2000 in the jurisdiction of Police Station Anekal, District Mangalore, two accused persons attacked a Christian named Selva Kumar for his alleged involvement in conversion activities. In this connection both the accused persons were arrested and the case has been charge-sheeted.

8) In June 2000 Bajrangdal activists assaulted one Kolloli Hanumanthappa (a Hindu) who was working in a local Church. A case was registered in Police Station Soundathi, District Belgaum and seven persons were arrested. The case has been charge-sheeted.

Bomb Blast Cases – Karnataka: June, July 2000

In Karnataka, two cases of bomb blasts took place in Wadi, district Gulbarga on 8-6-2000 morning within an interval of 3 hrs. In the first bomb blast, the St. Ann's Catholic Church was damaged with cracks in the walls and breaking of glass panes. In another blast at Wadi near the site of the first blast, a press reporter and a Church committee member sustained injuries. Four accused were arrested in this case. On 8-7-2000 another bomb blasted between 3:50 am to 4:00 am in St. John Lutheran Church on Gadag Road at Hubli. Seven accused were arrested in this case. Two cases of bomb blast took place in Bangalore on 9th July 2000. The first one was in a car resulting in a spot death of two passengers and serious injuries to the driver cum owner Mr.S.M.Ibraham. Within 45 minutes of the above blast another bomb exploded in St. Peter & Paul Church J.J Nagar Bangalore. The above cases of bomb blasts were registered in different police stations of respective districts under sections 3 & 5 of Explosive Substance Act 1908, Sec.9 (a) Explosive Act 1984, & Sec. 153(a) IPC etc. The injured driver S.M Ibrahim gave important clues that helped the police to make break through in the bomb blast cases of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa. The COD, (Corps of Detectives) of Karnataka Police, is investigating these cases. During the investigation, the hand of followers of Deendar Anjuman Sect was found in the above bomb blast cases.

Brief History of Deendar Anjuman Sect:

The followers of Hazrat Deendar Chanbasweshwar Anjuman Muslim Sect are committed to Islamisation of India through ostensibly preaching equality of all religions.

Maulana Syed Siddiq Hussain alias Siddiq Deendar Chanbasweshwar Saheb Qibla was born on 4th Ramazan 1303 Hijri (1886 AD) at Balampet Gulbarga District. At the age of 40 years, he claimed to have had revelation that he was the only Chanbasweshwar. He established an institution, Deendar Anjuman – Jagat Guru Ashram at Asif Nagar, Hyderabad in 1924. To propagate his mission, he called for an International Religious Conference inviting heads of various religions & schools of thought, to establish world peace and unite entire humanity. Since then this conference is being organized every year at Deendar Anjuman Asif Nagar, Hyderabad.

This sect claims to preach five eclectic principles including the oneness of God.

Sri K.M Munshi in his book "The End of An Era – Hyderabad Memories" has written as below about the Sect.

"The Deendars, however, remained active proselytizers, though, by January 1948, their influence had become limited.-- The head of this religious sect posed as the avatar of Channa Basaveshwar, the ancient founder of the Lingayat sect of the Hindus and claimed to have the same divine marks on his body as that saint. His followers wore the green turban of Muslim divines, the saffron robe of Hindu sadhus and beard in the style of the Sikhs. When the situation in a village grew tense, they led the Muslims against the Hindus. When they set out to loot the possessions of the Hindus, they dressed as Razakars. Siddiq began to pursue his

proselytizing activities vigorously. He also declared a jehad (a religious war) against the shrines of the Hindus and issued a public appeal for one lakh volunteers and a loan of Rs.5,00,000 for the purpose. The Hindus, in 1932, submitted a petition to the Nizam to check his activities."

Present activities:

After the death of Siddiq Deendar Channabasaveshwar, Guru of Deendar Anjuman, in 1992 his Sons Zia Ul Hasan and others have settled in Mardhan of Pakistan. Now Zia Ul Hasan is the present Guru of Deendar Anjuman. Zia Ul Hasan has seven sons and six daughters all residing in Pakistan. However, he married seventh daughter to Abdul Jaleel Choudhari of Hyderabad one of the accused in the bomb blast cases. The confession of the arrested accused during interrogation in the bomb blast cases have revealed that several persons have visited Pakistan and received training in arms and explosives including manufacture of bombs. Zia Ul Hassan attended Annual Urs at Deendar Anjuman Ashram at Asifnagar, Hyderabad in 1999. It is reported that the present conspiracy was hatched during the above Urs. During a closed-door meeting with sect members, he professed a militant version of orthodox Islam. He apparently also spoke of the burgeoning power of the Taliban and other Muslim organizations and stressed the need for his community to become powerful in India.[5] It was a provocative speech where S.M. Ibrahim, Siddiqui and Zakir responsible for the blasts in July 2000 in Bangalore, were present. His message was to create confusion and commotion, that's why they even planted gelatin sticks outside a mosque in Guntur and a temple in Hyderabad, He urged the followers to aim at making India an Islamic country. Khaleeq Uz Zama of Nuzwid, near Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh was made the coordinator for these activities. He also stated that Hindus and Christians harassed the Muslims and thus he called up on his followers to sow the seeds of distrust between Hindus and Christians. Therefore, they conspired to plant bombs at religious places in South India and spreading hatred amongst religious groups by disturbing pamphlets hurting the religious feelings of each other. The State Home Minister of Karnataka Shri Mallikarjun Kharge was reported as saying, "The sole intention seems to have been to create panic among the Christians. They believed that if Christians 'revolt' against Hindus, it'd be advantageous for the other minorities".[3]

Notes:

1. 1991 Census
2. 1991 Census
3. Outlook Express, July 31, 2000.

Chapter – 4

Tamilnadu

According to the 1991 Census, the total population of the Christians in the state was 5.7%. The Christian population in 1961 was 5.2%, which rose to 5.7% in 1971 and further to 5.8% in 1981 and then came down to 5.7% in 1991. The percentage of the Christians to the total population of the district in the districts given below, gives an idea about the areas of the Christian population of the state.

In Tamilnadu, the Christian population is concentrated mostly in its southern most districts of Kanyakumari (where the Christian population is 42.3% to the total population of the district), Trinelveli (9%), Chidambaranar (Tuticorin) (16.2%), and Ramanathapuram (14.2%). In other parts of Tamilnadu also, there is sizable Christian population, for example, in Kamrajhar (4%), Madurai (5%). Tanjavur (7.5%), Tiruchirapalli (4.8%), Nilgiri (11%), Madras (6.4%), Chengalpattu – MGR (4.5%), South Arcot (3.4%), Coimbatore (3.7%), Dindigul-Anna (7.5%). The Christians are least concentrated in the Northwestern region of the state with the Christian population being less than 2.5% of the total population of the district. The Christian population to the total population of the district in these five districts is: North Arcot Ambedkar 2.3%, Dharmpuri 1.1%, Thiruvannamalai Sambuvarayar 2.5%, Salem 1.1%, Periyar 1.8%.[1]

St. Thomas, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ is said to have been martyred in Chennai.

Details of the cases of Damage / Burning of Christian places of worship in Tamilnadu between 1998 and 2000:

There were 20 reported cases of damage to or burning of Christian places of worship during the period from February 1998 to August 2000.
There was one case in February 1998 and the rest of the cases were between October 1998 and August 2000. The February 1998 case relates to Iyyam-palayam in police station Kavandapadi, district Erode. In this case, local Hindus turned unruly and set fire to a Bethany Fellowship Pentecostal Church to prevent the conduct of church services. The value of the damage to the church was about Rs.5 Lakhs. In this case 13 accused were arrested and charge-sheeted but the case ended in acquittal.

Out of the 19 cases between October 98 and August 2000, 5 cases were found to be of accidental fire to the amount of about Rs.5 Lakhs. In 3 of these 5 accidental fire cases, the churches had thatched roofs.

Three cases (two with thatched sheds) were registered u/s 285 I.P.C and the damage was to the tune of about Rs.1.20 Lakhs. In these 3 cases, 4 accused were arrested. One case relating

to village Reddiar-patti, P.S Munneerpallam, district Tirunelveli ended in conviction to the accused with fine of Rs.900/-.

In the rest of 11 cases registered u/s 436 I.P.C, the value of the damage to the churches / prayer halls was more than Rs.5 lakhs. Of these 11 churches/prayer halls, 9 had thatched sheds. Out of these 11 cases of arson on Christian places of worship, two were settled amicably between Hindus and Christians and in one case of Suchindram, Kanyakumari, Hindus agreed to construct a permanent structure where the thatched prayer hall of CSI existed. Five cases were registered against unknown accused and are still pending investigation. About the remaining 4 cases of arson, 6 accused were arrested and 3 surrendered in court.

The incidents of clashes between Christian Nadars and Hindu Nadars in Tamilnadu:

Though there were cordial relations between Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars till the early 1980s, and the marriages between Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars were quite common but after the Kanyakumari riots of 1982, some incidents of tensions among them have been reported.

There were several clashes and confrontations in 1985 and 1986, between the villagers of Sundaranachiapuram and Krishnapuram in P.S Seithur, district Kanyakumari. The Christian Nadars of the village of Sundaranachiapuram and Hindu Nadars of Krishnapuram village constantly fought against each other. All this started over the continuing liaison of a Christian leader Thangaraj with his separated Hindu Nadar wife. In all three cases against Christian Nadars, and five cases against Hindu Nadars were registered.

As a sequel to strained feelings between Christian Nadars and Hindu Nadars, someone hurled a stone in July 1986 on a Hindu Nadar in Yacob Puram in Tirnelveli West. As a reaction to this, some Hindu Nadars pelted stones on a school run by Christians, causing damage to its tiled roof.

In October 96 One Hindu Nadar along with a mob of 50 attacked Christians and killed one Amritham, a Christian Nadar and his two brothers for not casting vote in his favour in Panchayat election.

There were three group clashes in first week of January 97 between Hindu Nadars of Pulluvallai and Christian Nadars of Karankadu over village boundary disputes.

In 1957 there were caste tensions between Thevars on the one side and Nadars and the Harijans on the other side due to election rivalry. During the above caste clashes one Emmanuel Sekaran a Harijan leader made some remarks against the Thevar leader and was subsequently attacked by Thevars. He was murdered in September 1957.

Notes:

1. Census, 1991.

Chapter – 5

Pondicherry

According to the book "Minority Identities and the Nation-State" edited by D.L.Sheth and Gurupreet Mahajan, there is a dispute as regards the site of a Cathedral in Pondicherry. According to them: "The Hindu Munnani community in Pondicherry, a former French colony, launched an agitation in March 1994 to construct a Shiva temple at the site of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral. This Church was constructed in 1748 by French authorities. The Munnani people believe that this church was built by destroying a temple. However, historical facts as recorded in a published dairy maintained by a Hindu official who served the French Governor of the time tell a different story. The Munnani claim was based on a private dairy maintained by Anand Ranga Pillai, who was interpreter to the Governor. Pillai's diary has been published in twelve volumes. Its editor, H. Dodwell, has described Pillai as 'a prejudiced witness'. However, no official documents of that period are available to corroborate Pillai's version of events, as all of them have disappeared".[1]

Notes:

1. "Minority Identities and the Nation-State" edited by D.L.Sheth and Gurupreet Mahajan, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999- Page 262 –Minorities and Human Rights : A Comparative Perspective of International and Domestic Law, by Abdulrahim P. Vijapur.

Chapter – 6

Case Study: Kanyakumari

District Kanyakumari is in the southern-most part of India and makes boundary with Tiruvananthapuram district of Kerala in the north. According to the 1991 census the Hindu population in the district was 53.5% and the Christian population 42.3% to the total population of the district. In the Vilambkode and Kalkulam *talluks* of the district Kanyakumari the ratio of Hindu and Christians is almost 50:50, while in the talluks Tovla and Agasthiswaram the propotion of Hindu and Christian population is about 70:30. The Christians are mostly among the fishermen and Nadar communities. Almost 100% members of the fisherman community belong to the Christianity. The Roman Catholic fishermen are generally concentrated along the coastal line of the district. Most of the conversions of fishermen to Christianity took place during the 16th century when they had approached the Portuguese authorities for protection. The protection from the Portuguese authorities to fishermen was granted only after they had embraced the Christian religion. Most of the fishermen belong to the Paravar, and Arasar communities. The Christian Paravars are the third largest group in the district after Nadars and Vellalas.The Nadars are very enterprising people. They were earlier untouchable toddytappers, developed into a mercantile community and claimed Kshatriya status[1]. There are both Hindus and Christians and among the Nadar community but majority of them are Hindus. Large–scale conversions to Christianity took place among the Nadars in the 19th Century. There are both Hindu Nadars Christian Nadars in district Kanyakumari. In most of the incidents of Hindu -Christian communal nature in the district, the rival groups have belonged to Hindu Nadars on the one hand and the Roman Catholic Fishermen on the other hand. Among the Christians in the district, the Roman Catholics constitute the major group. There are also followers of the Church of South India and of the Salvation Army. There are many religious places of Hindus in the district, most important of them being the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in Kanyakumari. It is believed that the small stretch of land, Kanniyakumari district, is guarded by Parasakti in different names in the four corners of the district-as Goddess Kumari Amman (Bhagavathyamman) in Kanniyakumari, as Meenakshi in Aralvoimizhi, as Bhagavathi in Mandaikadu and as Mehali in Kollankode

In 1534, Pope Paul-III established the diocese of Goa. The cruel persecution by Muslims drove the Fishermen of the Paravars community around Tuticorin to go to Portuguese in Cochin for protection, which was granted on condition that they would get converted to Christianity. Consequently the Vikar-General of Goa baptized 35 leaders of the Paravar community in 1535. The Arasars (Fernando Christians) too are believed to have approached the Portuguese for fear of Muslim persecution and in a similar fashion some of them were converted to Christianity. Thus, the Arasars (Fernando Christians) and Paravars and Mukkubars were all converted to Christianity. St. Francis Xavier baptized more than 10,000 Paravars in 1554 along the coast of Travancore from Thuthur to Pallam. It is said that St. Francis Xavier forced the invading Army's against the Maharaja of Travancore to retreat.

Communal incidents between Hindus and Christians during March 1982: There were large-scale Hindu – Christian riots during the first fortnight of March 1982 in Kanyakumari. Such kind of Hindu-Christian violence has never been witnessed anywhere else or at any other time in India. The breakdown of law and order in Kanyakumari from 1st March to 16th March, 1982 left ten Christians and ----Hindus dead in communal violence. The communal flare-up started during the Bhagavati Amma festival on March 1st 1982 when Christians resented the ritualistic bath by the Hindus on the coastal area of their village and police opened fire on a mob of violent Christians who had allegedly molested the Hindu women taking their religious dip in the sea. The police firing resulted in death of six Christians. Mandaikadu village and the fishermen hamlet of Mandaikadu Puthoor are adjacent villages separated only by AVM Channel, which runs almost parallel to the coast. The residents of Mandaikadu Puthoor village are Christians.

The Mandaikadu incident on 1st March 1982 provided an ignition point for the explosive law and order problem in Kanyakumari district as the tensions between the two communities already existed and the atmosphere was highly surcharged. There was lot of sabre-rattling by both Hindus and Christian groups in the form of religious conventions, processions, and route marches. The marriages between Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars were quite common till the 1982 incidents. But later on such marriages became less frequent.

The background of Mandaikadu Incident of 1st March 1982:

The problem of Hindu Christian confrontation started from 1963 when a memorial was planned to be erected in memory of Swami Vivekananda on a rock in the sea near Kanyakumari. There was lot of opposition among the local Christians living along the coast and claiming that all this interfered with their fishing rights in the area. However, the Vivekananda Rock Memorial was constructed, after permission from Tamilnadu government. In 1975, the Christian fishermen objected to the ferry service run by the Vivekananda Kendra to the rock memorial. The piece of land used by the Kendra was a subject matter of long dispute. In 1981, the Tamilnadu government took over the ferry service. Before that the Christian convention in 1980 at Agastheeswaram had resulted in distrust and suspicion among the Hindus that their religion was being attacked and in return they had also organized a convention criticizing Christianity.

In November 1980, the members of a Christian procession when objected to by the people in the Narayan Swamy Temple pelted stones resulting in injury to one Hindu. The Hindus in retaliation damaged some articles in the Church and the house of the Parish priest. A RSS route march between Mangalam to Kulashekaram though initially banned but later permitted was organized in October 1981. In December 81, there was tension between Hindus and Christian Nadars over a Christian procession in the jurisdiction of police station Eraniel. Some Hindus disturbed a procession of Christians of Madathathuvalai near Pettukulam. This led to lot of incidents of attacks and counter-attacks between the Hindus and Christians. The Hindus in Kulasekaram disturbed a United Christian Conference procession taken out on 25th December 1981 because they felt that it disturbed the *Mandala puja* at the Ayyappan Temple. This led to wide repercussions resulting in Hindus and Christians attacking each other.

In February 1982, a Hindu solidarity conference at Nagarcoil, the headquarters of district Kanyakumari, after a massive procession and highly inflammatory and provocative speeches whipped up communal feelings to a high pitch. The Newspapers circulating in that area gave a wide publicity to the conference.

The communal incidents in Kanyakumari in March 1982

A total of 484 cases were registered about clashes between the Hindus and Christians during the period from 1st March to 25th March 1982. Of these 484 cases, 130 related to rioting with looting and, 109 cases of rioting with mischief and destruction of properties, 61 cases of rioting with arson, 44 cases of rioting with hurt, 10 cases of man-missing and kidnapping, 2 cases of murder and 2 cases of police firing. The normal life in the villages affected by the riots was paralyzed and telephone wires had been cut, power supply disrupted, trenches had been dug on the roads at several places. Essential commodities were not moving to the coastal villages mostly inhabited by the Christians. The communal clashes that took place were not just stray incidents. There were attacks and counter attacks. A crowd of 200 people after dispersal from the condolence of the six Christians killed in the police firing, asked a Hindu boy to wipe out the caste- mark on his forehead. At Marthandam there was use of country bombs during the riots. Many coconut thopes of both the communities were also damaged. Hindus prevented people from coming to purchase fish in coastal Christian villages. Christians were prevented from taking fish for sale in villages outside their area. The Christian fishermen were also prevented from going out of their areas to purchase grocery and other necessary routine articles. Some Muslims shops were either set on fire or destroyed or damaged by Hindus because Muslims sympathized with the Christian and expressed condolence over the Christians killed in police firing. There was trespass and mischief on Christian burial ground at some places. In view of the tension, section 30 (2), Police Act was promulgated throughout the district for a period of 15 days from the midnight of 10.3.82. On 12th March the Christians in Rajakamangalamthurai, Periakaduthurai, Azhikal, Pillaithope were attacked by Hindus from villages surrounding the above Christian villages. In retaliation, the Christian fishermen of the above villages attacked the Hindus in Therku Valliavilai, Vadakku Valliavilai, Kumarandi Tharuvai etc. On the same day, about 200 fishermen from Rajakkamangalmthurai raided Dharmapuram village belonging to Hindu Nadars and ransacked the village Eathamozhy, Palkinathanvilai and Kalveeriyanvilai and set fire to thatched houses. The Collector and Dy. Inspector General of Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control. The Collector of Kanyakumari district Promulgated prohibitory order u/s 144 Cr.P.C to be effective for 15 days from 12th March in Agastheeswaram and Kalkulam Taluks. Two days later on 14th March 1982, in Pallamthurai, the Hindu mob went on a rampage, arson and looting of the entire village.

On 15the March 1982, about 1000 Nadars of Muhilankudiyiruppu and Samathanapuram of Augusteeswaram Taluk, attacked the fishermen of Kovalam with armed weapons and killed two Christians. On 14 and 15.3.82, the Chief Minister of Tamilnadu visited the riot-torn areas and convened a peace committee meeting at Nagerocil.

In the night of 15/16th March 1982, a large Christian mob had gathered at Mela Manakudy and was bent upon burning the neighboring Hindu villages. The police party consisting of S.P and A.S.P. and other 21 policemen noticed a long fishing net fully spread out on the road to trap the police and a mob of fishermen, burning fire torches. Shri. Param Vir Singh, the Superintendent of Police, ordered police firing to disperse the riotous and violent mob. Two Christians were died in the police firing and one sustained injury.

On 16.3.82, 6 Hindus of Kerala State were arrested at Mylode in Nagercoil-Trivandrum Road for transporting explosives in a vehicle. On 17.3.82 a Christian set fire to a temple at Paravur Thadivilai.

On the Christian side, six people died in police firing at Mandaikadu, two in the police firing at Mel Manalgudi and two in the Kovalam firing by Hindus. On the other hand, Christians stabbed one Hindu Nadar to death and there were ten cases of kidnapping and man-missing of Hindus by Christians. It is presumed that the R.C fishermen drowned these ten Hindus in the sea. During the riots, five Churches, two cemeteries, six Christian institutions and six Hindu temples were damaged and destructed.

One of the most important factors that caused the incident of Mandaikadu on 1st March 1982 was the use of loudspeakers by both the communities at their religious places. The Christian shrine is only a few hundred meters away from the Mandaikadu temple of Bhagwati Amma.

An illuminated shrine situated on the path leading to the beach had started playing records, though loud speakers.

On the other hand the use of 22 loudspeakers by the temple during the Mandaikadu festival was found to be excessive to the existing needs by Venugopal Commission. The loud speakers around the temple were said to have made offensive remarks against Christianity. After Mandaikadu Police firing, the entire atmosphere in Kanyakumari district became surcharged with suspicion, anger and mutual-hatred and the entire reasoning faculty was lost.

The Venugopal Commission report suggested various measure for the maintenance of peace and harmony in the district (Recommendations and Observations of the Commission are attached in the Annexures).

The Venugopal Commission inquired into the incidents of communal nature in Kanyakumari in March 1982 and under the head "POLICE ADMINISTRATION" as to how the police could help in preventing communal clashes and riots and how they can control and effectively contain them, the Commission made the following recommendations:

1) A mobile, specially trained, para-military force should be set up to identify the situations, which lead to the flaring up of communal violence and nip them at the bud.

2) As active public co-operation is required for police administration to deal firmly with communal riots, and experienced officers with an image of impartiality and fair play should be posted to sensitive areas, prone to communal violence.

3) Special Investigation Squads manned by officers of high ability and caliber should be set up for investigating crimes reported in the course of communal riots.

4) Prejudicial publication in the form of posters, notices and pamphlets, "circulated, should be dealt with effectively by launching prosecutions under the Criminal and Election Laws (Amendment) Act, 1969(Act No.35 of 1969) and Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, (Act No.31 of 1972).

5) Suitable and qualified fishermen from the coastal areas should be recruited into the regular police force. The police administration will then have the support of the local fishermen community and they can take vigorous action to impose law enforcement and decrease the potential for disorder.

6) Police must establish intelligence system to provide them with reliable information that may help to prevent the outbreak of communal clashes. They should have an agency to collect, evaluate and dispel rumours that may lead to communal clash.

Communal Incidents between Hindus and Christians from 1982 to 1991:

Though there were many serious Hindu-Christian riots in March 1982, there was hardly any incident or tension between the two communities from April 1982 to April 1984.
In November 82 in the jurisdiction of Police Station Thuckalay, some Christians objected to the singing of folk songs in a Bajana by the Hindus. In reaction, the Hindus stoned the houses of Christians. In May 1984, about 60 RSS volunteers armed with deadly weapons assaulted C.P.M cadres at Thettivillai in police station Arumapai due to communal animosity resulting in the death of a person named Babu. The CPM cadres also retaliated by attacking the RSS men. In another incident in May 1984, one fishermen succumbed to injuries received during a clash at Leepuram between the Hindu Nadars and the Christian fishermen over a trivial matter of assault on two Nadars by fishermen following a heated argument between them. One person died in May 1985 at Palkinathanvilal in Police Station Rajakkamangalam following a dispute between R.C fishermen of village Keshavanputhenthurai and Hindu Nadars of the neibhouring villages over a trivial dispute during a Kabadi match. During this riot there were cases of damage to houses and looting of shops. There was a communal riot between Christians of village Vallavilal and Hindus of near by villages in August 1985 involving assaults, counter-assaults and looting between the two communities. This started over a trivial quarrel at Kollencode. Fishermen abducted one Balakrishnan Nair from his house during the riot. Police opened fire on a riotous mob and two Christians, Antonipichai and Mariadsen of Neerodithurai, died in the police firing.

Seven Hindus killed two Christians, namely, Robinson, and Glitus at Kalimalai in Police Station Arumanai in January 1986 over a dispute about a place of worship.

During the period between February 1986 and August 1990, the situation in the district Kanyakumari was relatively peaceful on the Hindu-Christian front.

In March 1990, there was a case of loot and damage to property by a mob following a trivial matter of wordy altercation between R.C fishermen and Nadars. In April 1990, in the jurisdiction of Police Station Nithiravilai, there was a tension over taking a religious cycle procession near a Church. In September 1990 a riotous mob of six RSS men killed one Christian in village Pulimoottukadai, in Police Station Arumanai, following a religious rivalry.

In September 1991 five Hindus killed a Pentecost pastor in village Ittakkaveli in Police Station Thiruvattar due to religious animosity. Later on during the same month, two R.C fishermen of Colachal assaulted a bus driver. One of the assailants, Mr. Justin was handed over to the police by the staff of the bus. Subsequently, a riotous mob of fishermen of Colachal indulged in violence by looting shops of the Hindu and Muslim communities and attacked the police party. Police opened fire resulting in the death of two fishermen. The trouble started when the fishermen including the Fathers and Sisters had decided to picket the buses, since they were not coming up to Colachel beach. The Christian leaders were instructed that the bus services would be resumed up to Colachel beach from 29.9.91. But despite this, they took out procession. Some Muslims refused to close the shops. All this resulted in communal clashes leading to police firing.
In September 1993, in the jurisdiction of Police Station Kollencode, R.C Fishermen attacked Hindu Arayars over a trivial matter of soaking of coconut husk by Arayars in AVM Channel. One Christian died in police firing.

In October 1993, in the jurisdiction of Police Station Eraniel, there were a series of assaults and cross-assaults by Christian Nadars of Madathattuvilai and Hindu Krishnavagai community of Villukury, on individuals as a sort of retaliation in turns by members of both the religious communities. This animosity and hatred led to murder of one Christian Nadar.

In May1997, in Police Station Kanyakumari, four fishermen of Chinnamuttom village in a drunken state of mind clashed with Nadars and manhandled them. There was a church bell ringing. In the ensuing fight between the Hindu Nadars and Christian Fishermen, a fisher woman died of bomb blast, while a fisher-boy died of being run over by a lorry.

There was a group clash in December 1998, in village Vazhukkamparai, in Police Station Anjurman over a trivial matter as to who would erect a religious board (flagmant etc.) in the *Panchayat* land. The police fired two rounds to disperse the mob hurting one each of both the communities. The Christian died in the firing, while the Hindu injured in firing survived.

In September 1999 a case of arson took place in the Melakrishnanputhoor Church. A case was registered in police station Suchindrum. Another incident of arson was reported in a Malankarai Syrian Catholic Church near Kuzhithurai in October 1999 regarding which a case was registered at police station Kaliyakkavilai. The investigation of these two cases has been transferred to CBCID.

Amit Verma, who belongs to 1978 batch of IPS, told that fishermen in Kanyakumari are Roman Catholics and they create lot of problems. The Christian Nadars are generally Protestants and are mostly in the urban areas and they are relatively well off, and are also

engaged in business activity. In 1956, there was a riot in Ramnathpuram District and one Christian was killed. It was not a communal incident and was an inter-caste incident. There are fishermen all along the coast of district Kanyakumari and even up to Tuticorin on the Eastern Ghats. During the periods of riots, there is almost a sort of segregation of Christians and Hindus by administration. The food and other essential supplies are arranged by the administration to the encircled Christians. If during the times of riots, the administration does not do so, the Christians will be forced to live on fish as Hindus surround them on all sides. The Christians and the Hindus are not allowed to mix-up with each other so as to avoid their confrontations and clashes. In Kanyakumari district, the Christians population is almost equal to Hindus. In the same Nadar family, there may be both Hindus and Christians and they live harmoniously.

D.I.G Mr. Rajendran of 1983-IPS Batch, who had been earlier S.P Intelligence, told that we in Tamilnadu generally have law and order and communal problems only in the border districts.

Mr. Walter Dewaram has retired as DGP in Tamilnadu. He told that he is a Nadar Christian He told that the Christian Priests show intolerance towards Hinduism and Priests and Missionaries sometimes addressed them as "The Hindu sinners". These R.C fishermen could be made to believe in anything. They prevented the Hindu pilgrims to go to the beach during the Mandaikadu festival in March 1982, and the whole trouble started because of this. Portuguese, especially by St. Xavier, converted the fishermen to Christianity. The R.C fishermen are all along the coast from a place near Trivendrum up to Tuticorin both on the West and East Coast. All the Roman Catholic fishermen are generally concentrated within or even less than a kilometer in this coastal line of Kerala and East Coast. Up to 1983, we had both Hindus & Christians in the same family of Nadars, sometimes —one brother a Hindu and the other a Christian or the husband a Hindu and the wife a Christian or vice versa. And they used to go to the religious places of both the communities. But after the Hindu-Christian riots of 1982, the situation has changed in Kanyakumari. Nadars had to keep themselves 15 steps away from Nairs and 30 steps away from Brahmins during the British period. Their women were not allowed to wear any clothes above waist to cover their breasts and all these reasons too accounted for their conversions to Christianity. The R.S.S men from Kerala came and started their campaign against the dominance of Christians in Schools etc. The role of loudspeakers was very pernicious during the Kanyakumari riots of March 1982. The Maharaja of Travancore State allowed the Missionaries to do social work in his areas especially in the field of education etc.

Param Vir Singh told that the State of Kerala has a history of RSS versus CPM incidents or killings. But Kanyakumari district was free of any communal tensions till the 1970s. There was an unprecedented growth of Hindu Munnani in Kanyakumari before the 1982 riots. There was a row between Hindus and Christians over Vivekananda Memorial. He told during the first fortnight of March, matters were under nobody's control. Nobody was taking charge of the situation and it was free for all during the period till he again took over as S.P. Kanyakumari in March 1982. Though meetings of both RSS and CPM and Christian leaders were held to resolve matters, their differences and the problems only grew more intense. He had earlier done one term as S.P. Kanyakumari.

In the firing at Mandaikadu on 1st March 1982, six Christians were killed and twenty injured. It was as a reaction of the above firing that large-scale rioting took place between two communities for almost two weeks. On 14th March, he took over S.P. Kanyakumari. After joining as S.P, he went to the people and the families of the victims and sympathized with them. He went to Mandaikadu where firing took place only with a Dy.S.P or an Inspector and talked to them about the incident of firing. People started coming to them and the widows of the fishermen killed in firing, fell on his feet. Though after his taking over as S.P., there was a firing on Christians, normalcy was soon restored. Two Christians from amongst a mob, who were bent upon setting adjacent Hindu village on fire, died in the police firing. He said that police firing can control riots and police firing can also trigger off riots. The RSS perhaps started its activities in Tamilnadu including Kanyakumari after Meenakshipuram-conversions. A Hindu Nadar was the Chief of Hindu Munnani in Kanyakumari. There were cases of attempts on part of R.C fishermen dragging Hindus, policemen or officers into the sea etc. for drowning them. It is interesting to see how the Pastors are seen wearing white clothes and coming to meet offices of the rank of S.P or DIG or IG with problems of fishermen. The R.C fishermen are very hostile if you are unsympathetic towards them but if you give them a paternal and hearty treatment, they become very docile. The AVM Channel quite often, makes a boundary between the Hindu and Christian populations. Fisherman at many places destroyed the bridges over the Channel so that police might not be able to enter their areas. There runs a road along the coastal line. On the eastern side of the road towards the coast, the Christian population is concentrated up to a distance of a few kms from the coast. Hindus generally inhabit the other side of the road.

Mr. G. Jagnatham, the then Secretary of Tamilnadu Unit of Citizens for Democracy (an organization founded by Jai Prakash Narayan) deposed before the Venugopal Commission that the traders and land owners are from both the faith of Hindu and Christianity and look down upon fishermen. He further deposed that the RSS is very strong in the *taluks* of Agastheswaram and Kalkulam and that there was a pamplet in circulation which pointed out that if we see the development of events in during the last 20 years of the Christian Missionary activity, there is a great threat to the integrity of the country instigated and organized by the some members of the Church, financed and directed by foreign interests. There was tention at Monday Market which is about 15 K.M. from Nagar Koil after the planting of a cross on a small traffic island during the United Christian conversion and as reaction to this in January, 1982 a Ganesh idol suddenly appeared on the same spot. He further deposed before the Commission that every year it was common practice for Christians, Muslims as well as Hindus entrepreneurs to put up temporary shops in the vicinity of Mandaikkadu Temple but in the year 1982 shops were given to powerful Hindu landlords who saw to it that Muslim or Christian bidders were kept at bay. Muslims being a negeligible minority did not react but Christians retaliated by installation of loudspeakers broadcasting Christian devotional songs from the near by shrine during the time of the festival.

I.G, Law and Order, Madurai Mr. Sharma told that even the pastors are involved in the *BANDOBAST* during the festival or other law and order arrangements in district Kanyakumari.

Nanchal Kumaran, IG EOW, Chennai told that Maharaja of Travancore when attacked by Vijayanagaram ruler received the help of the Portuguese and in return allowed them to build Churches in Nagarcoil and other places. In the field of education Kanyakumari district is most literate. For some time after Independence, most of the teachers in Tamilnadu were from Kanyakumari district.

The Manakudithurai village has a tall and gigantic Church. The Father of the Church and a Brother who belongs to the village and undergoing training in some Catholic seminary belong to the R.C. Fishermen community of the district. Both the Father and the Brother who had come to the village to attend a marriage told that their religion teaches them to forgive and therefore they generally do not retaliate. When incidents of attacks or murders of Christian Fathers in other parts of India, come to their knowledge through newspapers they also become agitated and protest. One Priest, who was killed in Bihar, belonged to district Kanyakumari and was a Nadar. The priests in the North are generally from the South so that when they are persecuted there, it creates tensions in the South. Tamilian filmi songs are generally played during the Christian marriage parties.

There are many huge and massive Churches about 100 feet or more in height. Some of them were quite old but were renovated only about 30 years back.

Mr. G.K Vanniab Perumal, S.P Kanyakumari during the year 2000 told that the priests are involved in *BANDOBUST* and are given hand-held sets etc. He told that like the Christian Missionaries in the Northeast, the priests wield lot of power in Kanyakumari district and how in the past, one S.P of Kanyakumari Mr.Thapar arrested some priests because they tried to incite the Christians under their jurisdiction. He told that a ban on the use of loudspeakers is imposed during certain times. There were many quarrels even between the fishermen themselves and the police had to open fire in some such cases. One recent case of such tensions between fishermen in Kanyakumari district was in the town Kanyakumari, where the local fishermen objected to fishing in Kanyakumari by fisermen of other villages beyond a limit of about 3 km. In the coastal areas inhabited by fishermen, generally the schools are only up to the high schools level. They are violent, rough and, if they don't fight with people around them, they fight among themselves.

The kind of life they lead explain a lot about their boisterous/rebellious nature. Some of the fishermen worship some of the Mountains visible from their village and also from distances far away in the seas. These Mountains sometimes help them to return to their villages when they are fishing in the seas far off from their villages and are caught up unwarily in storms.

G.U.G Sastry, A.D., S.V.P, National Police Academy, has worked in Colachal sub-division of Kanyakumari District in Tamil Nadu as ASP. According to him, the district Kanyakumari as a whole is communally sensitive from the point of view of Hindu-Christian tensions. Colachal subdivision had coastal jurisdiction in eight out of the ten police stations. Most of the Christians reside in the coastal areas and the Hindus in the main land and there is only one road dividing the two areas in many places. Even though there were lot of inter-marriages between the two communities and the good harmony prevailed between them till

about the 1980s, because of the expansionist tendencies of the Christian organizations and a firm opposition to the same by the Hindu religious organizations, tensions have developed between the two communities since then. There were severe riots between the two communities during the early years of the 1980s. The main issues, which resulted in tension were (i) the inciting speeches given by religious leaders, (ii) construction of Churches/Christian prayer halls, (iii) conversions. The Hindu religious organizations functioning in Kerala across the border were also instrumental in increasing the problem. Serious clashes occurred between the two communities at the time of organizing a festival at the Mandaikadu temple. The Hindu fundamentalist elements deliberately used to give provocative speeches against Christian religion and religious leaders. Huge cone type of speakers were used to be put up in the beach area, near the temple where the Christians live and the speeches were broadcast loudly through those speakers using public address system. This infuriated the Christian community. Some mischievous elements in the Christian community used to tease Hindu girls, who went to the sea to take bath. Such instances flared up the passions of both the communities and ultimately severe riots occurred. The fishermen are an aggressive community, who can get suddenly aggressive, if provoked. There are usually many clashes between different fishermen communities in that part of Tamil Nadu and adjoining areas of Kerala over fishing and other village disputes. Even though the Christian fishermen respect the local priests and abide by their worlds, such respect is limited many times to the priests of their village only or to religious leaders, who are above in the hierarchy. It was found on many occasions that the local priests had only a limited control when a large-scale problem broke out either between two Christian villages or between the Christian and Hindus. There was one particular disputed construction at a place called Vazhathalamppallam, which prolonged over a very long time and also resulted in heightened tensions between the two communities. The disputed structure was originally constructed as a church. Over a period of time, it was used as a prayer hall and clandestinely it was converted as a Church. The Hindus objected to this, and the structure was even damaged by them. There was a prolonged legal battle also over the construction of the structure and because of this, the authorities were unable to take a decisive action in the matter. There was no political interference in controlling the problem. However, the police was seriously handicapped because of lack of adequate resources, particularly manpower. The problem can be mainly controlled by taking an impartial action in all cases, not identifying with any community, taking the help of religious leaders, by appealing to the members of these religions at times of crisis, taking prompt and preventive action whenever required and making arrests of the members involved in clashes.

Shri Vijay Kumar, IPS of 1987 batch, Tamilnadu cadre told that the R.C fishermen along the coastal line of Kanyakumari are deeply religious because their life is tough and has an element of uncertainty. Sometimes they have a good catch of fish and then they go to Thiruvananthapuram, which is not far, and enjoy themselves. Like in the North-East, the Church has tremendous power over people in this region.

M. Balachandran, 1979, IGP (Training.), Tamilnadu told that there were serious Hindu-Christian riots in Kanyakumari after the Mandaikadu problem in Kanyakumari district. The Hindu temple and the Christian shrine are close by and Hindus have to pass through the

vicinity of the shrine to go to the see for a holy dip. It was the use of amplifiers during the period of Hindu festival that led to disturbances and firing.

Shri L.V.A Devkumar, IPS of U.P Cadre is a Nadar. He told that the communal tensions in the Kanyakumari, Tirunalveli, Tutukudi districts are basically of the nature of inter-caste clashes between Nadars on the one hand and Fernando's on the other hand

Dr. Morris told that it is generally not religion, but rather politics and caste, which dominate in social relations in Tamilnadu. Since a period of about twenty-thirty years, there are generally no arranged marriages between Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars. Mandaikadu incident happened because of drunken fishermen teasing Malayalam Hindu women who went to seashore for having a religious dip and because of its inept handling by inexperienced policemen. There are many drunken and rowdy elements among the fishermen though, their women make them or have made them sober. The kind of work they do has made them boisterous and addicted to the habits of drunkenness. They work in rough seas and in turn themselves become rough. The wives of fishermen are more educated than their husbands and tell them that they should not sell their fish at cheap rates. These days there are lots of buyers for fish because of competitiveness in this trade. If it is a problem between a Hindu Nadar and a Christian Pallar, the Christian Nadar will take the side of Hindu Nadar. His brother, also a Christian, is a MLA from Nagarcoil from Moopnar's party. Hindu-Christian communal tensions and retaliations by Christians happen only in Kanyakumari district because the Christians here are in large numbers, while at other place they are in a minority.

Shri Sanjay Kumar, the present S.P. Kanyakumari told that the construction of places of religious worship are being strictly regulated and sometimes there is tension in the district over un-authorized worshiping places and naming of some villages and even small incident may snow ball into major issues. According to a report received from S.P. Kanyakumari, out of a total force of 1710 policemen, there are 361 Roman Catholic Christians and 244 Christians belonging to Church of South India. Thus Christians man over 35% police force, which indicates that Christians are well represented in the police force, though their percentage in the district to the total population of the district is 42.3%. The total area of the district is 1672 sq. km and the ratio of policemen per 100 sq. km. area comes to about 102 policemen per 100 sq. km., which is much higher than the same ratio of 65.8 for the state of Tamilnadu. The ratio of policemen per 10,000 population is 12.35 for the state of Tamilnadu. The population of the district Kanyakumari was a little over 16 lakhs in 1991, which with a 25% decadal growth rate comes to about 20 lakhs in 2001. The ratio of policemen for 10,000 population comes to 8.55, which is quite low as compared to the state figure of 12.35 for civil police and 14.06 for total police. According to the report at present, there are three contentious issues between Hindus and Christians – 1) There is a tension between the two communities over a disputed site under possession of Christians near the Hindu ancient Sri Ambal Hindu temple in village Panavilai in police station Colachal 2) There is resentment among the Hindus over the attempts of Christians to renovate the Infant Jesus Shrine which is in close proximity to the ancient Radhakrishnan temple at Monday Market. The Monday Market is one of the sensitive places, which witnessed the 1982 riots. 3) The Christians of CSI Church near the Sastha temple in the hamlet South Pandaravilai in

Lakshmipuram village wants to name the Church as the CSI Church 'Packiapuram'. The Hindus have opposed it and alleged that the Christians are attempting to change the name of the village. The most communally sensitive police stations of Kanyakumari from the Hindu – Christian point of view are 1) Suchindrum, 2) Ethamozhy, 3) Thuckalay, 4) Thiruvattar, 5) Kulasekharam, 6) Colachel, 7) Manavalakurichy, 8) Mondaicaud, 9) Eraniel, 10) Korungal and 11) Kollencode.

In Kanyakumari though they have been lot of incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians but at the same time, there have been some skirmishes and clashes between Christians and Muslims and between Hindus and Muslims as well. Apart from this, Police had to open fire on many occasions for controlling clashes between different Christian groups in their villages. In September 1995 there was a clash among fishermen i.e. between mechanized boatmen and ordinary boatmen after declaration of the fishing harbour at Colachel in Kanya Kumari. Police had to open fire to control a serious law and order situation.

Notes:

1. UPSC Complete Guide to Indian Historyby' by V.K. Agnitori –Page638.

Chapter – 7

Kerala

Kerala is known for having the Christian population since the ancient times. Most of the Christians are Roman Catholic but the Syrian Christians were the first to embrace Christianity in India and claim to be following the religion since 58 A.D. when St. Thomas, one of the 12 Apstles of Jesus allegedly came to India. The state of Kerala in South India had maximum concentration of Christians accounting for about 20% of the total Christian population of the country. But very few incidents have been reported from this state.

Some of the incidents which came to light are as follows :

About two years back, the Kannur district VHP demanded a complete ban on distribution of the book, Krishthuvinte Divya Sandesam (Holy message of Jesus Christ) being distributed by Christian missionaries in district hospitals and other institutions. They alleged that Christian missionaries were luring weaker sections towards Christianity. RSS/VHP activists have resolved to foil alleged attempts by Pentecostal Mission workers to convert Hindus in Allepey district, by visiting houses and urging people not to allow the mission workers to conduct prayers in their houses.

There was a reaction among the Hindu Organizations to the conversion activities of Missionaries during July and August in Attathode tribal colony in Kottayam, where about 59 tribals were reportedly converted to Christianity at Pota Divine Centre, Chalakkudi. The VHP leaders threatened that they would not allow such activities in future. VHP activists also resolved to foil conversion activities of Pentecostal missionaries in Muthukulam area of Alleppey district. About 20 Pentecostal workers were reportedly noticed frequenting the houses of the weaker sections in the 'Loksham Veedu' colony in Muthukulam area offering to conduct prayers in their houses. The activists of Hindu Organizations keep a vigil in the area to put a check on such activities by Christian Missionaries. A 10-day training camp) was organized for about 30 VHP members in Kozhencherry in August 1999 as part of the VHP's programme to train 10,000 Hindu missionaries by 2000 AD. These trained full-time workers would work to counter the ongoing conversion activities of Christian missionaries.

R.C.Bhanu, I.G. Administratioin, Tiruvanantpuram, capital of Kerala State told that just before his posting as S.P. Kollam, there was tension in Nillekkal in the district over a piece of disputed land. Preventive actions were taken regard to the land and later on a temple was constructed on it.

Verghese, a Constable driver in the SVP National Police Academy, Hyderabad told that he is a Syrian Christian belonging to the Marthomite denomination and is from distict Kottayam in Kerala State. The other important denomination amongst the Syrian or Thomas Christians is Jacobite. He told that incidents or tensions between the Hindus and Christians are very rare in Kerala and about 15 years back there was tension over a disputed land in Nillekkal in district Kollam (earlier known as Quilon) where a Cross stood and both the Hindu and Christian

communities claimed it as belonging to them. The district administration and police were alert and police was deployed on the disputed land and action was taken under existing laws in respect of the disputed land so that no breach of peace could take place.

Chapter – 8

Delhi

In September 1998, a Statue of St. Bernard was hacked and thrown out of the compound of Jesus and Mary College in New Delhi .

On 4th December 1999, about 6,000 Christian protestors marched on Parliament in New Delhi and demanded that the Government intervene with Hindu groups that were allegedly behind the attacks.

Pope's Visit, November 1999

In October 1999 V HP demanded an apology from the Pope for *the inquisition* during the Portuguese rule against forcible conversion of Hindus. Hindu Missionaries allege that in the 15th and 16th centuries in Goa on India's west coast many Hindus were killed and scores of temples demolished. There were Protest marches and a *yatra* from Goa to Delhi against the visit of the Pope by the VHP, the Bajrang Dal and the newly established Sanskriti Raksha Manch (SRM). On October 28, the Madhya Pradesh Government stopped the VHP's Goa to Delhi rally against the Pope from entering the state at Kushalgarh in district Jhabua. VHP leader and former BJP MP B.L Sharma told INDIA TODAY: "Forcible conversions are like rape. We will protest—the Pope will not be spared." The Hindu Missionaries wanted an undertaking from the government that during his visit he will condemn conversion activities of Christian missionaries across the country. Dalmia has said since the attacks against Christian missionaries earlier this year were a result of the Church's continued conversion programmes in the country, the Pope's visit should not be approved without pre-conditions. If Christians do not stop conversions, and the police do not stop Christians, then "violence can be predicted and even justified by insulted citizens," stated columnist M.V. Kamath in The Times of India. " The Pope released the Document of Ecclesia in Asia (Church of Asia) and brought to a close the 1988 Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Asia.

Chapter – 9

Case Study Uttar Pradesh

According to the 1991 Census, the population of Christians in Uttar Pradesh was around two lakhs (1,99,575), out of these 76,344 (38.25%) were in the urban areas, while 1,23,231 (61.75%) were in the rural areas [1]. During the decade 1981-1991, the decadal growth rate of 23% for the Christians was lowest of all the religious communities in U.P.

The urban Christian population is concentrated in the districts of Varanasi, Mirzapur, Gorakhpur, Barabanki, Allahabad, Fatehpur, Jhansi, Hamirpur, Lalitpur, Kanpur Nagra City, Rarukkabad, Lucknow, Unnao, Bareilley, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Mathura, Aligarh, Agra etc.,

The rural Christian population is mostly in the districts of Balia, Ghazipur, Azamgarh, Mau, Deoria, Basti, Maharajganj, Sultanpur, Faizabad, Gonda, Bahraich, Banda, Raibarely, Hardoi, Sitapur, Kheri, Pilibhit, Budaun, Etah etc.

Most of the Christian population in the districts of Azamgarh and Mau is in the rural areas of Tehsil Azamgarh of Azamgarh District and Tehsil Gohna Mohammad in Mau district. In no other district of U.P, there is so much concentration of Christian population in rural areas.

The population of Christians in U.P. was 0.11% in 1881 and the population of Indian Christians was only 0.03% in 1881. The population of Christians rose steeply from 0.21% in 1901 to 0.44% in 1921 and during the corresponding year, while the population of Indian Christians showed a tremendous increase from 0.05% in 1891 to 0.37% in 1921. It is thus apparent that the present population of Christians is about 1/3rd of the maximum it attained in 1921.

The population of Christians was about 0.20% to the total population of the State in 1951, and it came down to 0.14% in 1991 and thus there has been a decline of about 27% in the Christian population over the 40 years. The Hindus composed about 85% to the total population of the State in 1951 and their percentage to the total population of the State came down to 81.74% in 1991 and thus there was a decline of a little less than 4% during the 40 years.

Following incidents of the nature of Hindu-Christian tensions took place in Uttar Pradesh during the last decade:

Gajraula Nuns Rape Case:

Two nuns of St. Mary's Convent School Gajraula district Moradabad were raped in the night of 12/13 July 1990. The Hindu pilgrim center Garhmukteshwar on the river Ganges is only

about 15 km from Gajraula. The school was started in 1981. The three miscreants made their forcible entry by breaking open the window of kitchen of staff house of St. Mary's Convent School compound and two of them raped two nuns Sister Tara and Roselitte. Later on they escaped after looting five watches handbags etc. and cash of Rs.1, 10,000/-. Though, the St.Mary's Convent School is just furlong south of the Delhi – Lucknow National High way in Gajraula but there was hardly any habitation near it in 1990. Dr. M.M Mathur of Primary Health Centre, Gajraula recorded in his medical report about contusions and abrasions on the persons of sisters Tara and Roselitte but as regards the commission of rape he referred them to a gynecologist in Moradabad. Dr. Smt. Meera Singh of Victoria Zanana (Female) Hospital, Moradabad in her report mentioned that there was no sign of rape of the two Sisters. No male member used to sleep in the building. The scene of offence situated about a furlong from Delhi–Lucknow National Highway. The I.O. submitted the Charge sheet in the Court against the accused who were sent to jail *baparda* without the identification parade *(karyavahi shinakath)* of the looted property including watches etc. The I.O. took the two accused (Humayun Kabir Alias Babloo and Jameel) without covering their faces *(baparda)* to the police station after their arrest and recorded in the G.D of the police station that this was not necessary in view of the fact that at the time of their arrest from a place near the St. Mary's School, the complainant and the witnesses i.e. the concerning nuns had reached the spot and had seen the accused and had identified the watches etc. The identification parade of the accused Samarpal and Iqbal was held and none of the witnesses (nuns) identified the accused.

The local police after arresting four accused persons and recovering some looted property charge sheeted the case on 10th August 1990 just within a month of its commission under sections 394, 376, 377, 504, 411 IPC. The Sisters did not identify the accused persons and the property recovered by police in the identification parade. Apart from this, the arrest of four accused persons while only three were named in the FIR raises strong doubt about the conduct of police in the investigation of this case. These lapses and the quick charge sheet may also suggest that the real culprits were not traced out. And just to hush up the matter and avoid the sensation and embarrassment, which the rape of the nuns brought to the government and the police, police worked it out in a fictitious manner. This is to be mentioned here that the most important evidence in this case, was the statement of some eyewitnesses and the recovery by police from the accused. The eyewitnesses were out in the night for the search of their buffaloes and just happened to see the accused persons near the scene of offence. This looks quite unbelievable that some chance witnesses would come forward to give evidence against some criminals when in India generally they don't do so even against ordinary citizens.

In her statement to CBCID, Dr. Meera Singh told that she did the medical examination of Sister Roselitte in a routine manner. The idea that by writing the correct medical examination report, the Christian society would be shocked, never came to her mind. If she had known this, she could have written in the examination report about the commission of rape on Sister Tara.

A Bench of the Supreme Court consisting of Justice M. Fathima Beevi and Justice Kuldip Singh entrusted the investigation to CBI in December 1991.

Smt. Keerti Singh Narula in her statement before CBCID, UP told that she is legal adviser to the St. Mary's Convent School, Gajraula. She told that the case was not rightly worked out because of political influence and she heard that two three ruffians under the protection of local leader Shri. Rama Shankar Kaushik had disappeared from Gajraula and was seen again in Gajraula only after they came to know that the police has arrested four other accused. She pointed out that police did not take the clothes of nuns and bed sheets into their possession and did not take necessary footprints and fingerprints from the spot. In her statement to the CBCID she told that the local police did not investigate the case properly because of political interference. She further told that there seemed to be no motive for Rama Shankar Kaushik to commit or abet in the commission of this crime. But such criminals who had been patronized by him might have committed the offence. She also told that another motive for the crime might be the increasing number of students in the school and the love for Hindi language of some politicians.

The Crime Branch CID, UP and CBI officers told me that the four accused charge-sheeted by police were not involved in the case. The real accused persons are still at large and nothing can be done against them because the case had been charge-sheeted before it was taken up by CBCID, UP or CBI.

The Supreme Court issued a notice to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, on the petition filed by Mr. Cherian an advocate from Kerala. It was stated in the petition that the rape had been planned by the friends and supporters of the Chief Minister Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, who was spearheading the cause of Hindi speaking people of Uttar Pradesh and who had issued an order for the banishing of English from the schools. It was also reported that later on Mulayam Singh Yadav's visit to the convent had done much to reassure the nuns. He promised the convent certain concessions such as a grant for Prem Dhan, the Hindi medium school the nuns were planning to open [2]

There were cases of loot or theft in different Christian missionary schools/Institutions. The details are as follows:

1. A case of dacoity took place in September 1998 in a Christ Jyoti Convent School in Baghpat in Western Uttar Pradesh.The Sisters run the school. The assailants injured the *Chowkidar* and locked him in a room and then entered the rooms where the Sisters live. They assaulted some of them and looted a cash of about Rs.30,000/- and some articles like watches etc., from them. The case was registered under section 395/397 IPC in police station Baghpat. Police found the involvement of accused belonging to Muslim community and Scheduled Caste and arrested them. In the year 1989 also, some miscreants had reportedly broken into the convent school in Baghpat and sexually assaulted some of the inmates.
2. Mission Hospital Manakpur District Chitrakoot. – Dacoity of Cash of Rs/- 5000, Watch, on 21/22-1999,
3. K.G.School Masuri, Ghaziabad – Theft of Rs/- 85000 on 30/31-3-2000, by unknown miscreants. The case was registered u/s 457/380 IPC and later on altered to 395 IPC.
4. Jasco Convent School Servant Quarter Bijnaur – Loot of Watch, Ear Tops, Gold Chain etc. on 15/16-4-2000.

5. Two cases of loot or attempt to loot in Sacred Heart Convent school, Paricha police station Baragaon and in Carmel Vidya Niketan, a training institute of the nuns in village Budha situated in a Christian farm in police station Sipri Bazar respectively were registered in district Jhansi. In the first case of police station Baragaon, a loot of Rs.12,000/-, watches, a locket etc. was committed on the night of 2/3 –5-2000. A case u/s. 382 was registered, later on altered to section 395 IPC. Four accused were arrested. The building in which Sisters live does not belong to Church or their school premises. It is in the premises of a school of NTPC project in Paricha near the residential colony. The accused entered the compound where sisters live and made forcible entry and cut-off the telephone lines. But before that, one of the Sisters had informed a PCO owner Sunil Masey, who informed the police and people of the locality about it. The criminals escaped when they heard people coming for rescuing the nuns. The nun did not identify the locket recovered by police from one accused Suresh Bhera and the accused was released under section 169 Cr.P.C. in August 2000 as no case could be made out against him. The S.O was transferred to Police Lines and an inquiry was done against him for not providing security to Christians in his area.

The other case of attempt to break open the gate of Carmel Vidya Niketan in village Budha situated in a Christian farm was registered in police station Sipri Bazar in district Jhansi. The scene of crime is only 3 to 4 km away from the Jhansi town but there is no habitation in a radius of a few km except a few Christians in the Christian farm. The police investigation has found the involvement of ten accused belonging to Kabutara tribe in this crime. The accused injured the *chowkidar*. The Christians living in the farm nearby came after hearing the shouts by nuns. This forced the criminals to run away from the site. Three of them had been arrested by August 2000. After these two incidents, security and protection of two armed constables each was provided in all the 14 Institutions / Schools, Hostels etc. situated in district Jhansi.

Some three miscreants in a Maruti van tried to abduct a Catholic nun near Loni Road in Sahidabad in district Ghaziabad in July 2000.
A Catholic priest's house was robbed in Tehri-Garhwal, now in Uttaranchal State.

In Feb.1999 seven Hindus (four Nishad, one Kushwaha, one Kurmi, one SC) embraced Christianity as a protest against acquisition of their lands for newly created district headquarters of Chitrakoot by district administration. One of the above seven persons Daddul Kurmi even threatened to commit suicide in front of the District Magistrate's office, in case the proposal for the acquisition of their lands of seven hundred Bighas is not taken back by the administration. Earlier on Jan. 26th 1999, ten persons of village Tejipur in Police Station Karvi in the above district, had embraced Buddhism as a protest for acquisition of their lands. There is a lot of opposition and protest among the affected people against the acquisition of above lands by government. They have threatened that if the government did not consider their grievances sympathetically, some of them would even go for conversion to Islam.

In Udham Singh Nagar district, there was problem over performance of last rites of a deceased Christian woman. The local Hindus and some members of Hindu Jagran Manch opposed the move of the local Christians to cremate the body according to Christian customs. Later on the body was taken to Neuria, Pilibhit. Purushothamlal, President of Mukti Dharma Sudhar Samiti registered a case under section 504 IPC against Chhotelal and Harish Padre. There was one such case in Arunchal Pradesh.

There were reports for attempts at re-conversion of Tribal Christian Tharus by Hindu Jagran Manch, Yuva Vahini under the leadership of its convener Raju Bhandari in Udham Singh Nagar.

A case of land dispute was reported from Sampoorna Nagar towns of district Kheri. The purchase of disputed land by a Christian Missionary was set aside by SDM, as this was a land under ceiling. The case is pending in district court. It is said that a Christian missionary, CT Binni is active in conversions and construction of Churches in villages on Nepal border of PS Hazara, District Pilibhit and of PS Sampoorna Nagar, District Kheri. Local people have complained that the conversions to Christianity are being done by inducements of money. Sardar Jaswant Singh and Gurcharan Singh purchased new tractors, which is said to be beyond their capacity. There is protest amongst the local Sikhs as priest CT Binni along with the Pallia (in district Kheri) priest Mr. Sumanth and a foreign missionary has converted 17 Sikhs to Christianity in Tartar Gunj and *Tila* no: 4 and was active in construction of Church in village Taternagar. Priest C.T.Binni is said to be active in helping in construction of Churches and conversions in bordering Nepal villages. In village Moti Basti in district Kanchan Pur of Nepal an English school is under construction with active financial help of Mr. Binni. It is complained that Tharu tribal people living in bordering Nepal villages are being converted on large scale to Christianity.

Agra

Following cases of the nature of Hindu Christian tensions were reported during the last two years from Agra:

1) A *Changai Sabha* (Christian healing programme) was organized under the leadership of Father K.C Thomas in Cathedral House, St. Peter's College Compound, Vazirpura Road, Agra from 7th October to 10th October 1999. The programme of *Changai Sabha* was opposed to by local unit of Bajrang Dal alleging that people are duped into following the religion by deceitful claims of healing and curing them of their ailments. A *Dharna* was organized by local Bajrang Dal activists from 7th October 1999, in front of a temple near the prayer center of *Changai Sabha* in the St. Peter's College Compound. During the period of *Dharna* on 9th October, an effigy of the organizer of the *Changai Sabha*, Mr. Mathew Naikam Parmel was burnt as a sign of protest of the above programme. Bajrang Dal workers also forcibly distributed a pamphlet in Hindi among the members of the Changai Sabha, which was resented to by the Christians. The substance of the above pamphlet is reproduced below in English translation- "*Changai* programme is a deception – Oppose the anti-national *Changai* programme -----in the name of *Changai* programme, the blind starts seeing, the lepers are cured, the deaf starts hearing, and the dead come to

life again etc., - such deceitful claims should be opposed openly – a learned Christian said 'we have misused people and used money for making people accept our religion' – Page 28 Christianity in Changing India-Clifford Menshart –we do not oppose religious preaching-Bajrang Dal, Uttar Pradesh- Mehra offset press, Agra". On 10th October 1999 morning, the site of *Dharna* was shifted to the crossing outside the gate of the St. Peter's College and an attempt to disrupt the *Changai Sabha* programme was allegedly made by the Bajrang Dal/ VHP workers by shouting slogans. They also tried to enter the College Compound. In the mean time, the Bjrang Dal workers beat a local Congress worker Pinky Shohar when he made some objectionable remarks. The local police arrested Pinky Shohar for disturbing the peace and dispersed the Bajrang Dal workers from the site of *Dharna*. Four cases were registered at police station Hariparvat, in regard to this issue. The first case was registered by Shri Mahesh Baghel, the District President of BJP under sections 153A / 295A IPC against the Christian organizers of *Changai Sabha*. Another case under section 323/504/506 IPC was registered against Pinky Shohar and Father Mathew. On the complaint of Pinky Shohar, a case under section 147/323/504/506 IPC was registered against former M.P of BJP, Shri. Bhagwan Shankar Rawat, Shri. Mahesh Bhagel and others. A fourth case under section 160 IPC was registered against Pinky Shohar. The police investigation of the first case, registered by Shri Mahesh Bhagel could not make out the commission of any offence against the organizers of the *Changai Sabha* and ended in a final report in November 1999.

2) A complaint u/s 298/504/506/34/109 IPC was registered by the father of Sarita against the staff of St. Jones College. It was alleged that she was not allowed to appear in her practical exams and was harassed with the motive of pressurizing her to change her religion to Christianity. The Hindu organizations demanded the arrest of the accused. The school authorities clarified that she was detained from appearing in the exams because she had performed miserably in her previous exams and because she had not deposited the fees and there were other serious matters against her which in her interest has not been disclosed. Shri Harinarayan Chaturvedi, the former State General Secretary, U.P. criticized the attempts by the Hindu organizations of creating disharmony between the communities.

3) Ms. Snehlata Arora worked as a teacher in the St. Paul's' High School (Hindi Medium) Agra from 1987 to 1992. She made lot of allegations against the staff of the school for not reemploying her. The District Magistrate, Agra got the matter inquired into by *Basic Shiksha Adhikari* who did not substantiate the charges made by her against the staff. On 31st March 2000 she again complained to the D.M that when she was coming to meet him, Fr. Mirinda, Fr. Verghese and Fr. Rafi and some of their associates abused and threatened her and tore away her clothes. Inspector in-charge of police station Hariparvat, Agra, acting on the above complaint put Fr. Rafi and Fr. Verghese in police lockup for about 3 hrs. A case against them u/s 354/323/504/506 IPC was registered on the complaint lodged by Snehalata Arora. They were released from the police lockup at about 6:00 pm, as Commissioner of Agra Division Ms. Neeta Choudhary was to do the inspection of the police station from 6:00 pm onwards. They were told to present themselves again at the police station at 8:30 pm. The secret police enquiries revealed

that the above action of arresting two Fathers by Inspector Shiromani Pandey was done vindictively because her elder daughter studying in St. Patrick Junior College had failed in class XI. However, an inquiry done against Inspector Ram Shiromani Pandey by Circle Officer, Hariparvat of Agra of the rank of Dy. S.P. could not prove his guilt. Ram Shiromani Pandey was attached by SSP in his office and the case was transferred to SIS. It is said that some members of Hindu organizations/ politicians got him reinstated as in charge police station, Hariparvat. It is also said that one of the reasons for the transfer of DIG and Commissioner was the issue of reversion of Inspector Ram Shiromani Pandey.

4) Walter r/o Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) along with 14 other Christians reached village Nagla Ajita in police station Jagdishpura, district Agra by bus and started distributing Christian literature amongst people near a Hindu temple and also propagated Christianity which was objected to by local members of Hindu community. It is said that some Hindus also instigated other members of the community by alleging that some Christians entered inside the Hindu temple wearing shoes. This caused strong resentment among the Hindus of village Nagla Ajita. They snatched away Christian literature from them and set it on fire. It was also alleged that the Christians had abused and attacked the Hindu religion and culture. A case u/s153A/295/504 IPC was registered against Walter and 14 other Christians. A cross case u/s 147/323/427/255 IPC was registered against Hindus by Walter. After preliminary enquiries, members of Christian community were released on personal bonds after their arrest. Similarly, 8 out of 10 Hindu accused were arrested and released on bail. In view of the above incidents of attacks on missionaries/Christian priests and nuns in Mathura and Agra, Police/Intelligence machinery of Uttar Pradesh was directed to remain alert, vigilant and provide adequate security whenever required. A section of Christianity alleged the involvement of Bajrang Dal activists in the incident but the secret inquiries did not establish their hand in the above incident.

Five cases in Mathura

i) The incident of the Sacred Heard Higher Secondary School Motigunj, Mathura on 6-4-2000 was over the increase of fees and failure of some students. In this case, there was a *Dharna and* shouting *by* guardians of some students who demanded the revoking of the order for increase in fees and for decreasing the pass percentage from 40 to 33 percent. The Bajrang Dal and *Vidhyarti Parishad* activists had told the principal to change the syllabus in conformity with the Indian culture. The authorities of the above school got no case registered in this regard. The Principal and other staff alleged that this matter had been brewing up since 31st March and even on 3rd April there was an attempt of forcible entrance and shouting of slogans etc. The Principal told that she escaped the manhandling by the mob consisting of the guardians etc. by running away and hiding herself behind the children in a class. The district and police administration had been informed about the developments and had been requested for security but still the incident of 6th April took place in the presence of a *Tehsildar* and a Sub Inspector and constables. The senior police and revenue officers arrived immediately on hearing about the incident.

ii) In St. Dominic High School in the Cantonment area, the principal of the school was manhandled by Vijai Sharma and four five others on 10th April 2000, when he refused to admit his ward in the school. The I. O. of police station Sadar Bazar charge sheeted the case against Vijai Sharma and another accused in April 2000. These two cases suggest that both the incidents took place because of pressure tactics for forcing the school authorities for passing the students or for admissions to Christian missionary schools etc.

iii) In St. Theresa Kosikala on 10/11-4-2000, about 10 unknown accused looted and injured the manager K.K.Thomas. A case u/s 395/397 was registered at police station Kosi. The case was transferred to CB, CID. The two *chowkidars* of the school were tied up by the assailants at a distance of about 50 – 60 yards from the rectory. The accused first went to the Convent where Sisters reside and ransacked it. The cook was beaten up. Father K.K. Thomas woke up on hearing the noise and tried to resist the assailants. He was severely beaten up and is said to have been left there as dead by the accused.

iv) Murder of Brother George: Some unknown accused killed Brother George in the night of 7th June 2000 in Assisi Ashram in Nevada, Mathura on the national highway connecting Delhi and Agra. He was hit on the head by the iron rods, which were found near the scene of offence. When attacked, he was sleeping in the open outside the hostel. A boy was locked into a room before the assailants decamped with the looted property.

v) Death of Vijai Ekka took place in police custody. Cook Vijai Ekka was the complainant of the above case of murder of Brother George. He was called at the police station for inquiries about the above murder. It is said that he was kept in the police station for a few days before his death and was shifted to Police Lines in the morning of 17th June 2000 by suspended Sub Inspector Sharma and constable Upadhyaya in the vehicle of Christian missionaries. In the Police Lines, he was kept in the recreation room. On that day, there was lot of movement of police force and PAC etc., because of the Gram Panchayat Elections. In the afternoon at about 5 or 6 p.m. he was found dead in one of the lavatories at a distance of less than 100 mtr from the recreation room. According to the report of the officials of the Police Lines and Sub Inspector Sharma, the door of the toilet was locked from inside and they had to break it open and upon entering they found that Cook Vijai Ekka had strangulated himself. A case under section 302/342 IPC was registered at police station Sadar Bazar, Mathura. The CB, CID has taken up the investigation of the case and has found Sub Inspector Sharma, Constable Upadhyaya and some officials of the Police Lines responsible for the incident. Perhaps the truth as to how he died will remain shrouded in mystery. According to the medical report, he died of asphyxia.

Within a short period of about three months, between March 2000and June 2000, there were three incidents in Agra and five incidents in Mathura. Of these eight incidents, the scenes of incidents in four cases were in different Christian schools and seven of them were related in some way or the other with the Christian schools.

The 23rd June 2000, Late City edition of the 'Times of India', New Delhi published an alleged interview by Shri Siddarth Vardarajan, (the Times of India, News Service) of Dharmendra Sharma, the Bajrang Dal's *Sah-sahayojak* for the Braj region and Shri. Rajesh

Chowdhary, the District Convener of Bajrang Dal in Mathura. The reporting of the alleged interview caused strong reaction among the Christian community all over the country. Following is the text of the controversial interview;

'Bajrang Dal wants Christians out'-------By Siddarth Varadarajan—The Times of India News Service-------"Dharmendra Sharma, the Bajrang Dal's sah-sahayojak for the Braj region, declared that his organization was ready to fight wherever church institutions were active "*Maar-peet tho kya, hum sab kuchch karne ke liye taiyar hain (*we are prepared to use violence. There is no limit)". When this reporter suggested such talk lent credence to the theory of a possible Bajrang Dal link to the murder of Brother George, he replied "So what? We feel that every time there is a crime like this, the Bajrang Dal's name should be taken. Hindus will respect us more and the Christians will fear us."

"When people blame us", said Rajesh Choudhary, district convener of the Bajrang Dal in Mathura, "it helps spread the word that we have extreme views and that we use violence. This strengthens our movement". He claimed "Christians" were involved in the murder of Brother George" ----What is the point of us targeting one or two? Our aim is to drive them all away; he said "Jis samay hum bhagana shuru karenge, yeh nahin bach payenge (The day we start chasing them away, they won't be able to save themselves). Even the administration won't be able to help them". Sharma, on his part, freely recounted incidents where he and his associates have attacked Christian preachers around Agra for trying to convert Dalits. --------Both leaders lamented the fact that the Sangh Parivar had not reacted earlier to the dangers posed by the Christians. But at a national convention of the Bajrang Dal in Brindavan in March this year, the matter was discussed and a decision taken to launch a campaign against church institutions, Sharma revealed. However, he dismissed as mere coincidence the fact that their has been a spate of anti-Christian violence around Brindavan ever since.[3]

Another Dal activist narrated how Hindus in Orissa worship Staines' killer Dara Singh as a hero[4].

Rajesh Chaudhary, Advocate, district convener Bajrang Dal, Mathura was reported to have said that he never gave such interview and the English Newspapers published from Delhi have been writing regularly against the Nationalist Organizations without verifying and inquiring into the facts.

In June 2000, The National Human Rights Commission issued notices to the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories and the Union Ministry of Home to file a report in two weeks on the steps taken to stop the several attacks on the members of Christian community and institutions in the recent past. It has also demanded a plan of action to meet the threat. Justice Masood of Allahabad High Court was appointed by the Uttar Pradesh Government to look to inquire into the recent attacks on Christians and their institutions.[5]

Father Ignatitious D'Souza told that these days, people pressurize them with threat of fundamentalist action for admission to the schools run by Christian Missionaries. He is from

Mangalore. He teaches in St. Francis School and looks after the matters regarding attacks on Christians in Lucknow Catholic Diocese.

Shri. Napalchiyal, an IAS Officer told that during the British period, the parents withdrew their children from the missionary-run English medium schools/ hostels in Pithoragarh and Almora Districts, when they heard that some hostel-mates/students were converted to Christianity. There were only a few conversions in the U.P hills, now a separate state Uttaranchal, but many of the converted hill people either got reconverted or left for some other place.

Shri. Abraham Kurien, ADG, Crime, UP, Lucknow told that the Christianity came to India in 58 AD in Travancore when St,. Thomas visited Kerala shores, and constructed 7 churches. He told that conversions by Missionaries should stop as it leads to social disharmony and this is one line of thought among some Christians. He said that there have been hardly any conversions during the last 20 years. There are at present conflicts between Catholics and Protestants or between one group of Protestant and another group of Protestant etc. Foreign money may also be playing a part in conversions. He told that the Catholics are disciplined because they have only one religious head, the Pope. He further told that the Catholics have a great tradition of serving people. Poverty, charity and chastity are their vows, while the Protestants Priests can marry. About the Nevada incident in Mathura relating to Brother George's murder, he made some important points in his report to DGP, which was sent to Government. The manner and ransacking at the spot of George's murder which they visited, indicated that there was vehemence and purposefulness in killing him, while the ransacking the rooms for money and property was done in a casual manner. He gave instructions to district police officer/IO etc., for forensic examination of the things/articles at the scene of offence and for correct and early detection of the case.

Shri. R.R Bhatnagar, DIG, Agra Range told that Brother George murder was purely a criminal act. The accused did not touch the place of prayer. If they had been from some fundamentalist Hindu Organization, they would have disturbed the place of prayer. He further said that the Christian Missionaries make their schools, training and charitable institutions at isolated and vulnerable places, which makes them easy targets for criminals. There are about 100 such institutions in his range comprising of districts of Agra, Aligarh, Mathura, and Etah. In these institutions about 200 policemen are deployed. In the case of cook Ekka's death in police custody, he felt that there is a strong possibility of his committing suicide. And this looks improbable that they would have taken him to Police Lines recreation hall for third degree methods when this could have been done in the police station itself. He said that it was the day of elections of Gram Panchayats in Mathura and there was movement of force and some reserve force was also kept at the Police Lines. He further said that this is doubtful that Ekka, complainant and witness of Brother George's murder, really watched anything at the time of attack on Brother George because the scene of offence is just near the National Highway and it is possible that Ekka heard nothing and just kept on sleeping when the incident took place.

The Vicar General, Chancellor and a Father at St. Peters, Agra expressed their sense of insecurity and told that they have the impression that none of the cases of attacks on

Christians would be worked out. They told that according to the Hindu religion, the individual merges with the Brahma while in Christianity the individual retains his/her identity but is blessed with the bliss of God. I asked about their views regarding cases of conversions to Christianity with the help of medicines. They were of the view that this is generally not so and that even when this happens in rare cases, this should not be considered objectionable or bad because it leads him or her to God. They said that so many Officers and Commissions have come but they all have indicted us. They have done so for their own interest so that they are not transferred or they do not suffer at the hands of Government. Shri. Shameem, Chairman of Minorities Commission said that these are purely criminal acts and the Christian Missionaries have given them communal tinge. John Joseph, a member of the Minorities Commission did not say anything. While National Human Rights Commission is an independent body, the Minorities Commission is not so. They made a reference to Shiromani Pandey, Inspector/SO case and said that Bajrang Dal/VHP made it a prestige issue to get A.K Jain, DIG and Neeta Choudhary, Commissioner transferred. And they got Shiromani Pandey posted back to the police station though, because of pressure from NHRC or Election Commission he was ultimately transferred from there. They told about the vindictiveness by Inspector Ram Shiromani Pandey of falsely implicating Brothers or Fathers. I told them this is a very strange sort of vindictiveness by Shiromani Pandey by falsely implicating Fathers or Brothers of some schools of Agra when his daughter failed in some other Christian Missionary school. Generally we do not see this sort of general vindictiveness as opposed to particular or specific vindictiveness.

The following charts show the number of Christians during the Census of last 120 years in gra and Mathura. [6]

Agra

Year	1881	1891	1901	1911	1931	1971	1981	1991
Population	4997	4758	5522	7229	8905	5473	6903	6192

Table : 05

Mathura

Year	1881	1891	1901	1911	1931	1971	1981	1991
Population	338	846	2262	5992	5675	1014	1141	1397

Table : 06

The population of Christians in Agra is 6,192 and about 95% population is concentrated in urban areas.

The Christian population in Mathura district less than a thousand till 1891 and a little over 2000 in 1901. It rose to the maximum of about 6,000 between 1911 and 1931 and then fell down to only about a thousand since Independence (or since 1971). Out of a total of 1397 Christians in Mathura in 1991, about 73% live in urban areas.

The above figures shows that the Christian religion has never found favour with the people of the region and despite the presence of Missionaries and Church in Agra for about more than four hundred years i.e. since Akbar's time, the number of the Christians have never exceeded 9,000. Similarly, the number of Christians in Mathura has never exceeded 6,000 during the last 120 years.

There has always been opposition to Missionary activities in the region of Agra and Mathura. During the 19th and early 20th Century of the British period, Peshawar, Multan and Agra were regarded the worst mission stations by Christian Missionaries. The first two Peshawar and Multan were in the Muslim majority areas. Even quite recently in October 2001 sixteen Christians were massacred in a Church near Multan. Out of these three worst Mission stations, only Agra was in the Hindu dominated areas. A Missionary of 19th Century wrote about Agra that there was no point in preaching where the mission was unpopular and such was the case with Agra. Mathura has been the land and birthplace of Lord Krishna and has been the center of one of the highest devotionalism movements in the world. Agra was Capital of India during Akbar's time for some time but was later shifted to Delhi. It was also the seat of Lt. Governorship from 1835 to 1858 of United Provinces but was later on shifted to Allahabad. Mathura is only is about 50 km from Agra. The Mission Station of Mathura, though quite close to already-existing Agra Mission was started in the 19th Century because Mathura has been one of the most important religious centers of India and demonstrates the confrontational strategy of the Christian Missionaries during the 19th Century. During the 1857 rebellion, James Leighton of the Church Missionary Society and his family had been housed in the Fort at Agra, in 'a narrow, unventilated cell for four and a half months and became a nervous breakdown. During the British period, most of the converts of Agra were from the leather-working Scheduled Caste people known as the Jatavs. There have been serious riots between Jatavs and general caste people, especially the Jats about a decade back.

According to the 1931 Census, there were 2,05,006 Christians in the State of United Provinces of which 1,32,296 were in the 13 districts of Western U.P, namely1 - Muzaffarnagar - Meerut 3 -Bulankshwar 4-Aligarh 5-Mathura 6-Agra 7-Manipuri 8-Etah 9-Budeun 10-Moradabad 11-Sahajahanpur 12-Farukabad 13-Etawah[7]. This shows that in 1931, the above districts of Western U.P accounted for 64.5% of the total population of the State. The Christian population in the above 13 districts has come down to 52223 in 1991 i.e. about 26.2% of the total population of the State [8]. This decline of Christian population from 64.5% in 1931 to 26.2% in 1991 shows that in the Western U.P. the appeal of Christianity is minimum and lot of Christians have migrated from these areas because of the hostility of the people to their presence particularly in the rural areas. At the time of partition, thousands of Meos (Muslims) were massacred in the adjoining district of Bharatpur and Alwar in Rajasthan. 30,000 of them were killed in Bharatpur State alone.[9]

In most of the districts of the Western U.P, the BJP party candidates have won in most of its constituencies both of Parliament as well as of State Assembly during the 1990s.

During the decade 1981 – 1991, the growth rate of Buddhism is many more times as compared to the growth of Christianity in U.P. The decadal growth rate for Christians was 23% while in case of the Buddhist (Neo-Buddhist) it was 306%. The Buddhist population rose from 54,542 in 1981 to 2,21,433 in 1991 overtaking the Christian population of 1,99,575 in 1991 [10]. But this caused no alarm among the Hindu community while in case of the Christians, despite the decadal growth rate being lowest of all the religious communities and was even lower than Hindus, there is intolerance and opposition to the activities of Christian Missionaries in Hindus particularly in Western U.P. It is perhaps because Buddhism is considered as a native religion and Lord Buddha is regarded as one of the ten incarnations of God Vishnu.

During the recent years, the maximum conversions have been among the Tharu tribes inhabiting the Tarai areas of Uttaranchal and in the areas of U.P bordering Nepal.

Notes:

1. 1991 Census
2. Hindustan Times 28th November 1990.
3. Letter dated.26th June 2000 of Rajesh Choudhary, District Convener (Samyojak), Bajrang Dal.
4. Times of India---23rd June 2000.
5. Hindustan Times 4th July 2000. (Justice Masood).
6. Census of India, 1931 United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Part I – Report by A.C. Turner, Superintendent, Census Operations. Published by Superintendent, Printing and Stationery, United Provinces, 1933, Allahabad Government Press.
7. Census of India 1951, Vol-II, U.P., Part – II C, Table D – II Religion, By Shri Rajeshwari Prasad, Superintendent, Census Operations
8. 1971, Government of India Census, Religion Tables; and Census of India 1991, Series – 1, Part IV – B (ii), Religion (Table C-9).
9. Subaltern Studies IX – Writings on South Asian History and Society – Edited by Shahid Amin Dipesh Chakrabarty – The Making of partition violence in Mewat – Shail Mayaram – page No. 144-149 - Oxford University Paperbacks 1997- Oxford University Press 1996, Delhi.
10. Census of India 1991, Series – 1, Part IV – B (ii) Religion (Table C-9).

Chapter – 10

Haryana

Two incidents were reported in Haryana relating to Hindu-Christian tensions during 1998 – 99. One was from a village in district Jhajjar and the other from Hissar. In the Hissar case, it was complained that in February 1999, about seven Bajrang Dal workers shouted slogans against the Christians in the St. Thomas Church and threw pamphlets containing matter against the Christian religion and threatened to kill them if they did not leave the place. A case u/s 147/148/149/153 A/ 295 A/ 452/ 506 IPC was registered. The police on investigation found the complaint to be true and arrested three accused on the next day.

In the case of Jhajjar district two Christian nuns, Sister. Daisy and Sister Litsy were running a sewing centre in village Kheri Khummar for the last two years. They were living as tenants in a house of an advocate, Shri. Rajender Singh. The problem in the village started over a complaint by the Christian nuns on 10-11-1998 to the Deputy Commissioner about their teasing by some boys. A police party came to the village and met them on 11-11-1998. The Christian nuns told the police that they did not want any action against the boys but only wanted that the police should admonish the boys against such conduct. A guard was posted in the village for the security of the nuns.

In the evening of 11-11-98, a *Panchayat* was held in the village under the chairmanship of ex-*sarpanch* Shri. Rameshwar. About 100 to 125 villagers attended the Panchayat. It was discussed during the *Panchayat* that these Christian nuns have been propagating the Christian religion in the village, and were inducing the boys of the village with the offers of marriage to some Christian girls. They also threatened the villagers that if they continue to tease them, they would get them beaten by police through their influence in the Christian Mission. The Panchayat decided that the nuns should leave the village and told the advocate, Shri. Rajender Singh that he should get his house vacated by the Christian nuns. He agreed to do so.

On 12th November 1998, Shri. Pratap Singh, the *sarpanch* of the village along with 20 to 25 villagers met the Deputy Commissioner Jhajjar and gave him a memorandum containing the complaints of conversion activities of the two Christian nuns in the village and told him that they are vitiating the atmosphere of the village. They demanded that the nuns should be told by the administration to leave the village. The Deputy Commissioner gave them assurance that he would get the sewing centre in the village shifted to some other village.
On 14-11-98, about 5 to 6 Bajrang Dal workers came to the village and held a meeting with the villagers and told them that they would join in their agitation against the nuns, if the nuns did not leave the village by 18-11-98.

It is said that under the inspiration and guidance of the Christian nuns, a Women's Organization was constituted in the village and one Vimla was elected as its president. According to the nuns, another woman of the village was made the president of the organization because Vimla was misappropriating the funds of the organization. Vimla did

not appreciate it because according to her, it was she who brought the nuns to the village. Her son and some other boys of the village started teasing the nuns when she was removed from the post of president of the organization. She felt humiliated and insulted when the police admonished her son and a guard was posted in the village for the security of the nuns. At her instance, some of the villagers were collected and a *Panchayat* meeting was called. It is said that, for some time, the village was divided over the issue of expelling the nuns from the village but later on they united on the stand that the nuns should be made to leave the village. It is also said that most of the women of the village were keen that the nuns continue to live in the village but they didn't say anything because of the fear of their men.

It appears that one of the major reasons for this incident was a personal affair between the nuns and ex-president of the Women's Organization Mrs. Vimla. Initially, the incident was not of a communal nature. It was over a trivial mater, but later on, the media exaggerated it as quite sensational, while the Christian Organizations projected it as a case of harassment and assault of nuns etc and by the Hindus as an attempt by the Christian Missionaries to convert the villagers etc.

On 13th November 1998, a missionary team from Punjab attacked by VBP activists in Bai town in Haryana while they were distributing leaflets on Christianity and the Gospel.

Chapter – 11

Punjab & Rajasthan

Punjab

In June 2000, Mr. Ashish Prabhash, a Christian priest was killed in his house in Kaniyawat village in district Jallandhar. Nothing was stolen from his house. The incident was said to be first of its kind in Punjab. The Jallandhar police recovered his partiality burnt body. He was associated with the Jesus Films Ministry, a wing of a Christian Missionary organization. The police believe that the preacher was either murdered while he was sleeping or the assailants gained a "friendly entry". Mr. Prabhash had never received any threatening message and neither have the local Christian organizations made any allegation regarding it being of a communal killing. According to the police, the case does not seem to be of communal nature.

Mr. R.P. Mittal, S.P. Intelligence, PHQ Punjab, Chandigarh told that there is no communal tensions between the Hindus and Christians in the state of Punjab.

Rajasthan

Mr. G.C. Gupta, AIGP Traffic, Rajasthan, Jaipur told that generally there are no Hindu – Christian tensions in Rajasthan except in the tribal areas of Udaipur, Dungarpur, Banswara and Sirohi districts where Christian Missionaries are trying to lure the tribals and converting their religions.

Chapter – 12

Bihar

Communal tensions in Bihar between Hindus and Christians after Independence:

1) In March 1997, Father George Verghese of Forbesganj Church in district Araria in northeast Bihar was manhandled and beaten up by three accused Sitaram Rai and his two sons when he objected to grazing of their cattle in the Church premises. On conclusion of the investigation by police station Forbesganj, the charge sheet was submitted in the Court against all the three accused.

2) In March 1998, some unknown robbers on National Highway No.31 intercepted the truck, which was carrying medicine, clothes, milk powder etc., received from Mother Theresa organization from Calcutta to Patna, The dead bodies of Brother Luke P.J Missionary and the driver and cleaner of the truck were found lying near a railway track about 120 km. from Patna. The names of the murdered driver and cleaner were Harendra Yadav and Raju Yadav respectively, and both were Hindus. The Brother Luke had also boarded the truck on March 22, 1998. Police arrested and interrogated five accused. The case according to available police records is still under investigation in police station Nawada, District Nawada. This seems to be a case of criminal nature.

3) According a case filed at the Goldengunj Police Station, a 25-year-old nun, Sister Ruby of St. Joseph Health centre, Jalalpur district Chapra was taken to a lonely place on 20-9-1999 and was sexually assaulted and made to drink her urine by the driver of a three-wheeler and two others. They also attempted to rape her. It was also alleged that the culprits asked several questions to her as to how many persons have been converted to Christianity and how many Sisters were there at the centre. They also threatened to close down her institution. A case under section 342/ 354/ 376/ 511/ 324/ 34 IPC was registered at police station Chapra town. The case is yet to be worked out and is pending under investigation. Sister Ruby had gone to Chapra, which is the closest market to Jalalpur, where the sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary run the St. Joseph's Health Centre. She took an auto-rickshaw, which already had two persons in it to go to General Post Office. When the driver turned the vehicle in the opposite direction, Sister Ruby resisted. But the fellow passengers took her to a lonely place near a grove, tied her hands behind her, stripped her and forced her to drink their urine. This is the first time that the Sisters have faced trouble since the opening of the health center in Jalalpur, 7 km from Chapra. "But in June some anti-social elements tried to break the main gate for three days," said Sister Rajam. The Director-General of Police K.A. Jacob constituted a three-member inquiry committee and Superintendent Salil Kumar formed a task force to arrest the culprits.

3) One Christian Miss Manisha Herbert was shot at and injured in August 2000 in the area of police station Rampur of district Gaya. During the assault, there was an

attempt to snatch away articles. This too was also found to be a criminal act and did not have any communal bearing.

Chapter – 13
Madhya Pradesh

In undivided Madhya Pradesh 82% of the population belong to Hinduism and 2.3% to Christianity. Now Madhya Pradesh has been divided into Madhya Pradesh and newly created state of Chittisgarh.

The Christian population is concentrated mostly in the following regions.
1. The rural areas of Thandala, Alirajpur and Jhabua Tehsils of district Jhabua.
2. The rural areas of Mandala and Dindori Tehsils of district Mandala.
3. The Urban areas of Bhopal, Jabalpur, Indore, & Mhow.

The major incident that took place recently in Madhya Pradesh is the rape of Nuns in Jhabua. Following incidents relating to tensions between Hindu and Christians took place in Madhya Pradesh:

1. A case under The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and under section 429 IPC etc., was registered in police station Mohannagar, district Durg against four Christians on the information of a member of Madhya Pradesh Goraksha Seva Ayog. It was alleged that the accused were carrying cows and other animals for slaughter to district Aurangabad in Maharashtra. The Christian accuseds were arrested and were later on bailed out.

2. A co-passenger stabbed Sister Rani Maria resident of Udaipur to death in a bus in February 1995. The murder of Sister Rani Maria was as a sequel to tensions between converted and non-converted tribals of village Semli, in district Dewas. This resulted in a fight between the families of converted and non-converted Christians, in which one Jeevan Singh received grievous injuries. It is said that Sister Rani Maria was killed because she helped the accused, who attacked Jeevan Singh. A case under section 302 IPC was registered against Jeevan Singh and two more accused in police station Khudel in district Indore. All the three accused were arrested. They were sentenced to life imprisonment and a fine of Rs.5,000/- each. There was a strong reaction to this incident among the Christian community.

3. There was a reaction to the incident of alleged misconduct by the members of Bharateeya Janata Yuva Morcha Blarad Bandh in Shajalpur, Distt. Shajapur with the lady teachers and Sisters in Deepti Convent School in Sujalpur in district Shajapur. This happened during an attempt by them for closing the school on the day of call of *Bandh* on 3rd November 1992. As a protest, the Christian Missionary schools in Shajapur and Ujjain remained closed.

4. In May 2000 some miscreatants ransacked St. Paul's Church by damaging the holy cross and breaking the holy utensils and threw stones at two other churches in Indore on the eve of Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi's visit to the city. It was alleged by the Sankritic Jagran Manch that a children's home was to be handed over to Christian Missionaries by Mrs. Gandhi on the behest of Congress leaders Ajit Jogi.[1]

Jhabua Nuns Rape Case

At about 2:00 a.m. on 22/23 September, 1998 night, four nuns were raped by a gang of 15 to 20 persons at the convent, Preeti Sharan Ashram in a remote village Bhandariya Nawapara of the Jhabua Development Block of Jhabua District of Madhya Pradesh. Three nuns were from Tamilnadu and one from Pondicherry. The case was registered at P.S Kalyanpura u/s 395 on the information given by Catholic Church, Gopalpura. The convent Preeti Sharan was established only about two years before the incident. The village huts were almost within the shouting distance. The drunken miscreants forced their entry by breaking open the iron grill gate and the door of the chapel where the nuns had locked themselves in after apprehending danger from the gang. The Nuns were then forcibly taken to the field in front of the house where they were raped. Around 4:00 a.m. the rapists made away with their looted booty including watches, stabilizer, typewriter, clothes etc. and cash of Rs.20,000/-. One of the nuns heard a familiar voice, which she recalled to be that of one of the villagers, called Chumna. They noticed that a few of the assailants had bows and arrows and one had a gun. One of the villagers, patrolling the maize crop heard the whistle from the convent. He could not dare to reach the convent alone. But it is strange that it took him almost two hours to mobilize people from the village to the spot. It was found later on that the Chowkidars had gone to sleep that night at the priest's house, at a distance of about 200 yards from the convent and the priest was at Indore on the accursed night. The police of P.S Kalyanpura District Jhabua reached the scene of the crime at 0730 a.m. immediately after receiving the information but the medical examination of the nuns which was conducted at 0900 p.m. took more than 12 hours. The police report attributed this to the fact that the nuns had taken bath after the incident. It seems that the Missionary people waited for Bishop form Indore and the SDM recorded the statement of the nuns before their medical examination. The Doctors did not give any definite opinion about the commission of rape. But the police claimed that this did not have any effect on the result of investigation, as the Forensic Science Laboratory report about the commission of rape was positive. Under the guidance and supervision of S.P Jhabua, Shri. G.R. Meena, and D.I.G Indore Range Shri. Vijay Shukul, and I G Zone Sri Panna Lal, the police speedily worked out the case and arrested 22 (14 Christian Tribal Criminals and 8 Hindu Tribal Criminals) of the 26 criminals involved in the case. The 26 members of the two gangs belonging to villages Roonkhera, Dhewar, Jhiranya & Narvalia committed the offence of mass rape of the convent nuns. The names of the two gangs are Khamji Gang & Jhitaria Gang. The police recovered some of the looted property like typewriter, stabilizer of the fridge, clothes and cash of Rs.7,000/- from the accused. The case against the 22 accuseds was charge–sheeted on 19-12-98 i.e within three months of the occurrence of the case, and the rest four criminals were challenged u/s 299 CrPC. The motive of the offence of mass rape and loot was found to be purely criminal.

In view of the above incident, temporary police out-posts have been opened in village Antarvelia district Jhabua and village Dattigaon of district Dhar. The State Government should sanction these outposts. As many as 8 arms licenses have been sanctioned to priests/pastors of district Jhabua and security was provided to the different Churches/Missions.

From a letter sent by S.P Jhabua to Chairman of the M.P Minority Commission, it is clear that before 6th October 1998, eight accused Bhils: 1) Bahadara r/o Roonkhera 2) Nannu r/o Narvalia 3) Kehagi r/o Dhewar 4) Kalia r/o Dewar 5) Chhitu r/o Dewar 6) Titia r/o Roonkhera 7) Murji r/o Roonkhera 8) Soma r/o Roonkhera had been arrested. It was also mentioned in the letter that Catholic Diocese of Indore purchased the land in 1985 on which Preetisharan Ashram is situated and it was being used for Hospital and as a Missionary building. From the above letter, 50 cases of rapes in 1995, 45 cases in 1996, 32 cases in 1997 and 22 cases till 15th September 1998 were reported in district Jhabua that has 21 police stations. The Preeti Sharan Ashram falls in the jurisdiction of police station Kalyanpur in which six cases of rapes were reported in 1995, one in 1996, nil in 1997 and two up to 15th September 1998.

Saira Menezes in Chennai reported as below in the 15th March 1999 issue of the Outlook

Father M.A.James, Director of the Chennai based Dhyana Ashram, a Jesuit-run counseling-cum-retreat center, where the nuns spent almost a month in curative counseling sessions says: I also told them that as missionaries, they had undertaken to accept new cultures, alien values. Therefore, though this incident came in the rawest possible manner, they must accept it." In fact, for the Foreign Mission Sisters, which has its headquarters in France and has just 45 nuns in India, it was a first time foray into uncharted territory in north India. ----"Our work has been largely restricted to south India" says Sister Anastasis member of the mission's general council. "So when the Bishop of Indore requested us to set up base there, we were only too happy, because our motto has always been to go where no one else wants to. The Jhabua house was set up only in October '97. The fact that the place did not have roads, phone connections, medical facilities did not deter us. In retrospect, we feel that we should have done a little more homework about the place. We feel that we should not have sent such young sisters to such a remote place where the culture was completely alien to us." None want to go back to mission stations in north India, " We should go where people want us."

The 22 out of the 26 accused were charge sheeted by 19th December 1998 and against the remaining four, proceedings under section 299 CrPC were done.

Vijay Kataria, 1990-M.P., S.P., Jhabua, M.P.reported that the Jhabua case of the rape of nuns took place in the last quarter of 1998, before he was posted there. Twenty-three accused were then arrested in the case. After the trial of the case out of the 23, 10 have been given long term imprisonment, while six have been set free. The judgment came in the month of May 2001.

A team of three doctors Dr. Smt. Gupta, Dr. Smt. Tiwari and Dr. Dube did the first medical examination. The medical board gave no definite opinion and a request was made for an examination by a medical board from the Divisional Headquarters, Indore. A team of five consisting of three doctors, a Radiologist and a Forensic Science Specialist, did the second medical examination.

Shri. Wasim Akhtar, Collector, Jhabua mentioned in a letter to Principal Secretary (Home), Madhya Pradesh in May 1999 that the scene of offence is situated about half a km from the village and is a desolate place with no habitation around and that there was no fencing or boundary wall and no armed security guards. He was of the opinion that the place should have had telephone connection, watch tower, siren and other security arrangements. He expressed the probability that the incident might have been perpetrated as a reaction to the incident of scaring away the accused Kehuji and Chamana by Sister Dolorous when they had earlier tried to molest her before the rape case on 22/23 September 1998. But he opined that it looks unbelievable that such a notorious gang would commit such an act.

A team of the National Commission for Women with its headquarters at 4, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi, made the spot enquiry on 26th & 27th September 1998 just after three days of the incident, and made following observations and recommendations: -

Observations:

- There was deliberate delay on the part of the villagers in coming to the rescue of the nuns.
- All those who intervened between the hours of 7:30 a.m. (the time of arrival of police at the scene) and 9:00 p.m. (the time of medical examination of nuns), be they the Fathers, the police, or the administration showed a cavalier disregard for the anguish of the victims.
- The first team of doctors also demonstrated a lackadaisical attitude in refusing to give an opinion, not understanding the genesis of rape and just referring the case for laboratory investigation. Was it fear of reprisal that made them hesitate? It is unfortunate that the two medical examinations failed to conclusively and categorically state, that the rape as legally defined was committed on the hapless women.
- In the Commissions view, therefore, it becomes necessary, not only to apprehend the culprits but, more importantly, to go deeper into the circumstances that led to the miscreants indulging in this crime and to find out whether there are outside forces trying to create social and communal tensions in an otherwise placid climate of mutual trust which exists among the people and the church.
- The Commission is particularly perturbed and deeply concerned at the statement of VHP carried in the Hindu of 29-9-1998, justifying the savage attacks on Christian Missionaries in Jhabua (and Bhagpat) on the ground that they were the result of the 'anger of the patriotic youth against anti-national forces'. ----- The Commission wants to take this opportunity to correct the misinformation about the nuns and all other church officials in the area by stating that they are Indian citizens and not 'foreign missionaries' as has been alleged in the above statement.

Recommendations:

1) The Commission strongly feels that the political parties should not use, heinous crimes, such as rapes as tools to suit their purposes and vested interests. A rape is a rape; it is an experience, which shakes the very foundations of the lives of the victims and should be

treated as such. While crimes against women need to be continuously highlighted in the media, attempts to sensationalize them should cease.

2) The Commission holds the view, that social workers and voluntary organizations that work for social upliftment in the remote areas of the country should, first of all, be provided adequate security by their own organizations. Missionaries who often work in remote and far-flung areas should establish foolproof security systems for their own welfare and protection. In the event of the slightest necessity, they should call upon the State administration for augmenting their security. In this regard the Commission feels that it was imprudent on the part of the Church authorities to have allowed four young women to work in such a remote area with less than minimum security.

3) The Commission has observed that though the local police acted promptly in registering the FIR, there was unnecessary delay in conducting the medical examination of the unfortunate victims. Perhaps, the delay was due to the sequence of events beyond the control of the police, as was explained to the team. The Commission, however, feels that the police should have provided the minimum legal assistance to the rape victims as directed by the Supreme Court in its judgement dt.19.10.94 in Delhi Domestic Women Workers Forum Vs Union of India and Others. (JT 1994(7) S.C.183). The Commission has already undertaken gender sensitization for the police. This should be given top priority in all States considering the enormity of this particular crime and the fact that the police is continuously dealing with it.

The Commission noted that at the Police Station, they met Shri Dilip Singh Bhuria, former M.P from the area and who had represented Jhabua for five terms. He told them that some areas like Alirajpur had the highest crime rate in South Asia but insisted that the tribals were not rapists. He blamed the politicization of the Police Station and declared that three S.P's had been transferred in a year.

While giving an explanation about the above remark of former M.P Shri Dilip Singh Bhuria, the police report of district Jhabua, stated that 95 tribal people were involved in cases of rapes against 101 women during the years 1996 to 1998. In the adjoining district of Dhar, there were 292 cases of rapes committed by tribal people from 1994 to 1998. Areas of Alirajpur Tehsil are quite notorious from crime point of view. But the police report admitted that there were three transfers of S.P within a year before the incident and it adversely affected the performance and efficiency of police. According to a report of Shri G.R Meena, S.P. Jhabua dated 31-1-99, the tribals generally don't go to police in respect of the cases of mass rapes amongst them against each other and they generally settle such matters by way of retaliation or through mutual settlement and that 50% of the tribal children of the region drop out from the school before they reach middle class and 90% of them before they reach 12th class. The tribal people of the area are heavily addicted to drinking. There were five cases of rapes of Christian women in district Jhabua during the year 1998. Three rape cases out of the above five were perpetrated by accused of one village only i.e. Roonkhera. The four out of the above five cases were charge-sheeted.

About the Bhils of Madhya Pradesh, K.S. Singh in his book " The Scheduled Tribes" writes: "In Madhya Pradesh, the Bhil are concentrated in the districts of Jhabua and Dhar. Their population, according to the 1981 census, is 2,500,530 which includes certain groups like the Bhilala, described earlier, Barela and Patelia.

The 1981 census returns 99.37 per cent of the Bhil, Bhilala, etc.as followers of Hinduism, 0.56 per cent as Christians".

A team of Dr Harvinder Kaur and a Retired District Judge Shri J.M Bhagat, members of Human Rights Commission, Madhya Pradesh visited the scene of incident on 27th and 28th September 1998. According to their report dated 9th October 1998, the Mission had a Father and four Nuns and the Father had gone to Indore before the night of the accursed incident. One of the accused had a gun, while others had bows and arrows and other weapons. Both the *chowkidars* were local tribals and were sleeping in Father's house at a distance of about 300 meters. The fact of their having gone for sleep even in the absence of Father looks suspicious. The Nuns were still under shock and trauma when they met them. The members of the Commission recommended that a bridge should be constructed on a river near the Mission so that it would no longer be desolate and cut off from the nearby village/habitation. The Commission made the following recommendations to the State government:

Recommendations of Human Rights Commission, Bhopal (M.P).

1) Wherever Religious Missionary establishments are located in far off lonely places, a sketch of the entire area should be available with the local Police Station, inter-alias, indicating the security arrangements made by that Institution.
2) Based on the information so collected, the head of the Institution must be suitably advised in writing by the local Station House Officer in any further precautions that should be taken to improve the security of the Institution.
3) The local police must verify the character and antecedents of the watch and ward staff employed by the Institution.
4) The village *chowkidar*, during his visit to the Police Station must be asked to report if there is anything of interest and record his report in the General Diary of the police station.
5) The head of the institution should be advised in writing what steps the Institution should be advised in writing what steps the Institution should take to improve the security of the place. This would also include parameter security, use of better locks, Iron-gates etc.
6) A list of bad characters/suspicious persons living in the vicinity of the Institution & nearby villages must be prepared and activities of such persons should be periodically reviewed.
7) In more sensitive places, it may be advisable that the respective Zonal IG's constitutes a team of specialists to look into the above aspect to improve the overall environment under which such religious/missionary Institutions function.

There was a report of an attack on Father Edward Sarel by a crowd in Jhamli, about 10 Kms from Jhabua in September 1998.

OTHER INCIDENTS OF COMMUNAL NATURE BETWEEN HINDUS AND CHRISTIANS IN M.P.

(From Jan1, 2000 - July 10, 2000)

1. In the night of May 11, some miscreants damaged the cross and smashed some windowpanes of St. Paul Church (Protestant) in Bajrang Nagar locality in Indore. In this

regard a case was registered under sections 153(A), 457, 426, 427 and 34 IPC in police station Hiranagar.

2. In another incident on the night of May 11, some unknown miscreants partially burnt the outer wooden door of a Christian library on Nagar Nigam Road in Indore. A case has been registered under section 436 IPC.

3. In the night of May 11/12, some miscreants pelted stones on Evangelical Society Church in Vandana Nagar in Police Station Palasia in Indore, and thus damaged the windowpanes and Church building. A case has been registered against unknown miscreants.

In the above three incidents, 11 accused were arrested in May 2000, and were later on released on bail.

4. According to a case registered in district Bhind in May 2000, a Christian Father Anthony Swami was severely beaten up by a Hindu youth at Behrodi Road in Bhind. One of the assailants who escaped after committing the crime has been identified. The accused have been arrested and the case was pending investigation.

5. A case of theft in the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Kothi Bazar in Betul, was registered in June 2000.

6. Three accused were arrested in June 2000 for publishing and distributing pamphlets against Christian religion. The case was registered under sections 153 A, 153 B, 295A and other sections of IPC in police station Govindpura, Bhopal.

The M.P Minorities Commission came into existence in 1995. The following are the relevant extracts from its Annual Reports:

Madhya Pradesh Rajya Alpasankyak Aayog
Varshik Prativedana (Annual Report) 1995 – 96

The Christian population was 4,46,441 and was the second largest minority after Muslims in the undivided Madhya Pradesh, the other minorities being Sikhs, Boudhs and Parsis. Along with the other matters, the Commission deals with the matters pending with the government for allotment of lands for Churches and graveyards. The Commission suggested that there should be one member belonging to the minorities in the recruitment committees of Police. One of the fifteen points programme of Prime Minister for the welfare of the minorities, was concerning the steps for developing communal harmony and fraternity between the different religious communities.

Madhya Pradesh Rajya Alpasankyak Aayog
Varshik Prativedana (Annual Report) 1996 – 97

The Minority Commission also looks after the cases of relief to victims during riots belonging to minorities, their adequate representation in the government services, the allotment of government lands for *Kabristhan* and cemeteries (graveyards), the supervision of district level Minorities Welfare Committees and other welfare activities for the minorities. Their Annual Reports are presented in the State Assemblies for discussion, consideration and suitable action. It was complained by the Christian Missionaries to the District Magistrate Sagar that the concerning Nayab Tahisildar does not recognize about 100 years old lease in their favour about the land of St. Francis Orphanage, Shampura District Sagar. The Nayab Tahisildar alleges that they have encroached on government land.

Madhya Pradesh Rajya Alpasankyak Aayog
Varshik Prativedana (Annual Report) 1997 – 98

The Christian communities of Raigarh and Surguja attracted the attention of the Minorities Commission to the fact that the titles of ownership to lands of non-government educational institutions run by the Christian Missionaries are being cancelled u/s 170 (B) of M.P Land Revenue Act. They complained that these lands are now being entered in the names of tribal people who had earlier donated them to the concerning Christian Institutions. The M.P State Minorities Commission mentioned in its report that there is inordinate delay in the allotment of lands by government authorities for the purposes of construction of Mosques and Churches.

Madhya Pradesh Rajya Alpasankyak Aayog
Varshik Prativedana (Annual Report) 1998 – 99

The Commission expressed its gratitude to government for allotting lands for religious places and other community buildings at concessional rates. The Commission recommended that Jains should also be declared as minorities. A letter by the Chairman of the Commission to the government of Madhya Pradesh indicates that there was a matter of alleged encroachment on the property of Canadian Presbyterian Mission by Church of North India.

Notes :

1. Deccan Chronicle, dated 13th May 2000.

Chapter – 14

Case study –The Dangs including the adjacent areas of South Gujarat

The population of Christian community in the Dangs rose from about 0.9% in 1961 to about 5.4% in 1991 to the total population of the district.

The population of Christians in 1961 was 654 and in 1971 was 926. During the decade 1981-91 there was steep rise of Christian population to 7,824 from 1,514 in 1981. The Christian population is concentrated mostly in the rural areas. In the adjoining district of Surat too, there was a substantial increase of Christian population, which was 7589 in 1971 and became 14425 in 1981 and further rose to 31787 in 1991. In the Surat district also most of the growth of the Christian population was recorded in the rural areas. During the period 1998 – 99 there were several incidents regarding Hindu – Christian problem in Surat Rural district (especially in the Vyar block) also along with the district, The Dangs. The substantial rise in the Christian population in the rural areas and a corresponding increase in the recent tensions between Hindus and Christians in these two districts may be linked. Similarly, there was an appreciable increase in the Christian population in the rural areas of district Valsad from 322 in 1971 to 618 and further to 1544 in 1991. The district Valsad is also an adjoining district to the Dangs.

The sudden increase of Christian population from less than a thousand till 1981 to about eight thousand in 1991 and about fifteen thousand to twenty thousand at present shows that the charge of the Hindu Missionaries about conversions on large scale of tribal people to Christianity is true. In Dangs Catholic churches have nurtured welfare programmes but a Protestant denomination, Friend Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) and the Indian Evangelical Mission have drawn the greatest number of converts. It is in view of these conversions that the veteran Sarvodaya worker Chunibhai Vaidya said
"The Government should immediately enact an anti-conversion law. When even Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave were against conversions, where is the hitch?"

The Adivasis constitute 93.82% of the total population of the district. According to the 1961 Census among the Adivasis, the Bhils accounted for 32%, Kunbis 45%, Varlis 14.5% and Gamits 4%. This region is known for herbs and superior timber (teak and bamboo) species in the dense forest region. Earlier there were 5 Bhil Kings, 9 *nayaks,* and *bhanhands*, who ruled in different tracts of the princely state.
The Bhills and Gamits of Dangs speak an Indo-European dialect.

The Bhils are the largest tribal community in the state of Gujarat. The Bhil follow both the traditional tribal religion and Hinduism. The 1981 Census returned 99.59 per cent of the Bhil (including its subgroups) in Gujarat as Hindus, 0.34 per cent as Christians[1]. The1961-81 census records show that the Hindus among them are on the decline from 99.93 per cent in 1961 to 99.64 per cent in 1971, and further to 99.59 percent in 1981, while the number of persons returned as Christians increased slightly from 0.07 percent in 1961 to 0.29 per cent in 1971, and further to 0.34 per cent in 1981.[2] In the religious sphere, they worship Mahadeo

and village deities like Sitla Devi, Bhairau, Hiwerey and so on. Most of the Gamit are Hindus. Some of them have embraced Christianity but still follow the old religious practices. The 1981 census returns 95.71 per cent of the Gamit, Gamta, etc., as followers of Hinduism, 4.21 per cent as Christians. Among the Gamits, the Christian population increased from 0.94 percent in 1961 to 1.58 percent in 1971, and further to 4.21 per cent in 1981".[3]

The Dangs had remained cut-off from the main civilization till the beginning of the 20th Century. Parsis were perhaps the first outsiders to have had any contact with these people. They use to visit these areas for collection of *Mahua* flowers used in the liquor manufacture. David Hardiman in his paper " Power in the Forest, The Dangs: 1820 – 1940" -Subaltern Studies VIII has described the region and the activities of the Christian Missionaries at the beginning of the 20th Century in the following words: -

"The first weekly market was started at Ahwa in 1905. The first Christian Missionaries to visit these areas were from the American Missionary Society of the Church of the Brethern. They established a school at Ahwa in 1904. The missionary couple, J.M and Florence Pittenger was the first whites to reside in the Dangs all year round, and their school was the first ever established in the tract. In the Dangi language there was not even a word for 'education' the people came to describe this activity as 'reform'. Besides their educational activities the missionaries toured the Dangs preaching and giving out medicine. They opened a few village schools. By 1909 there were three by 1912 six schools. They did not receive a warm response. The headman at Ahwa opposed their activities, as did the people of Dolidol, who believed that they had come to steal away their children; even the Dangs Dewan worked against them. The latter was staunch Hindu who resented Christian missionary activities in India generally, and who particularly disliked the Christians." [4]

The Babalbhai committee constituted after Independence in its report suggested that *Ashrams* should be established to bring about awareness and education in this area and many Gandhi *Ashrams* were started in the region and awakening of the tribal people took place through *Bhajan mandals* and religious talks etc.

After Indian Independence in 1947 a Gandhian leader, Chhotubhai Nayak settled in the Dangs and initiated various social reforms activities and educational and economic development projects. He managed to win firm support from the Konkanas, and was elected as first president of the Dangs district Panchayat in 1958.

The district Dangs is sometimes called as Switzerland of Gujarat because of its beautiful hills & forests in the Shaydyari hill range (Western Ghats).

The Dangs district is said to be the site of the famous Dandakaranya forest, which finds a mention the Ramayana.

The District Dangs is located in the southern part of Gujarat. To its east is a famous Hindu pilgrim centre Nasik and in its northeast lies Surat. The districts of Valsad and Navsary are in the east of the district.

The religion of the Dangis has association with animism, but it is not the whole truth. The Dangis do not merely worship local gods, ghosts and spirits but they have many gods and beliefs in common with enlightened Hindus. They, also worship Lord Hanuman. But their chief objects of worship are the boundary god 'Simaria Dev', the snake god, and the tiger god "Vagh Dev" in whom they see souls of their ancestors become incarnate. They believe in omens and greatly dread witches and the evil eye. [5]

Incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians in the Dangs.

During the year 1998, there were many incidents between Hindus and Christians and the peace in the district was seriously threatened. All these incidents and mutual communal propaganda resulted in serious rioting on the Christmas day, 1998 when a Hindu Jagaran Manch rally was disturbed and its members turned unruly. For about a week the situation in the district remained out of control and many churches were damaged or burnt. There was lot of uproar among the Christians and they dubbed it as acts of terrorizing them. During the last week of December 1998 i.e. from 25th December to 31st December, 19 cases of damage or arson to prayer halls of Christians were reported. Soon after the incidents, the Home Minister of Gujarat went to Ahwa and set up inter-community goodwill committees.

The trouble on 25th December 1998 started over the pelting of stones on the Hindu Jagaran Manch meeting. But during the year 1998 before the 25th December communal flare-up, lots of incidents of communal nature had taken place between the Hindus and Christians.

A) Communal incidents between the Hindus and Christians before the Christmas 1998:-

Up to Christmas during the year 1998, ten cases were registered which shows that there was lot of tension between Hindus and Christians even before the Christmas. There are only two police stations in the district of Dangs i.e., at Ahwa and Waghai. Of these ten cases, seven cases were registered against Hindus three in P.S Ahwa and four in P.S Waghai.
The Christians were accused/ suspect in 4 out of 10 cases. Three cases related to P.S. Ahwa and one to PS Waghai. In the first case of Jarsol village in police station Ahwa, the accused threw away the statues of tribal gods Nagdev, and Vagdev on June 16th 1998. All the14-converted tribal accused were arrested on 16-6-98 and the case charge sheeted on 28th August 98. In another case at village Khamla, in P.S Ahwa in July 98, the seven Adivasi Christian suspects blackened the idols of Hanumanji and Shivji and thus hurt the religious feelings of Hindus. In Nirgulmal village, in the jurisdiction of P.S Waghai, in November 98, the accused broke roof-tiles of a Hanuman temple. Three Christian accused have been arrested and charge sheeted. In all the above three incidents, the cases were registered under section 295 and other relevant sections of IPC. In another case at Patilpada, P.S. Ahwa, 8 Christian accused threw stones and tried to stop the district BJP president, Mr. Ramesh Bhai Balu Bhai Chowdhry when he was moving in villages of Dangs with Hindu Sadhus and saints. All the Christian accused were arrested between 16th November to 18th November1998 and charge sheeted.

In the Month of June 1998, a rally was taken out and Hindu Jagarn Manch distributed pamphlets regarding the rally and containing material, which criticized the Christian religion and hurt the religious feelings of the Christians. HJM took out the rally on 29th June 1998 violating notification order by Collector of the Dangs. Slogans like "Padri Bhagao, Dang Bachao were shouted" during the rally. The accused of both the cases, the president of Hindu Jagaran Manch, Ramesh Bhai Balu Bhai Chowdhary r/o. Don village in the Dangs, was arrested on 4th July 1998 and the cases were charge sheeted on 6-7-98 and 9-7-98 respectively. In another case on 12-7-98 at Dhavlidod, in the jurisdiction of P.S Ahwa, 3 local Hindu accused disturbed the prayer of Christians, broke the door of the Church and took out the cross. The accused were arrested on 16-7-98.
From the above, it is apparent that quick actions as regards arrest etc., was taken and the cases were promptly charge sheeted..

On 21st July 1998, Ms.Nirja Gotrurao was transferred. Her transfer seems to have been done for political reasons as she has taken action even against the President of the HJM, a Hindu organization. The post of S.P. remained vacant till January 1999 and a Dy. S.P. was in-charge of the district during the period.
In Nirgudmal village in jurisdiction of P.S. Waghai, 3 accused damaged a Christian prayer hall. The accused were arrested on 6-11-98 and the case was charge sheeted on 15-11-98.

In village Borigaotha, some unknown persons set fire to a Christian prayer hall in November 1998 and in village Jarsol, some unknown persons burnt grass image of Jesus on 5-12-98.

Communal Incidents in Ahwa on 25th December 1998:

There have been different versions of the incidents of riots on Christmas day 1998 in the town Ahwa. Four cases were registered in regard to attack on HJM meeting. In a case registered by complainant Pradip Sambhji, 36 Christian were named for throwing stones on HJM *sabha* and damaging a cabin shop. Of these 36 accused, six were arrested on 27th December 98, four on 28th December and one on 31st December 98.
According to the content of another case, registered by Shri. A.C Desai, CPI Bilimora Camp, Ahwa, there were two thousand Hindus and about one thousand Christians. It was mentioned that the Hindu Jagaran Manch rally in Ahwa town was converted into a *sabha.* The police dispersed the mob by *lathi*-charge on the members of both the communities who attacked the policemen and damaged the vehicles. About 10 policemen were injured in regard to this incident. Seven Christians were arrested on 29th December and three Hindus were arrested on 3rd January 99, and 4 Hindus on 4th January 99. Most of the arrested Hindus were HJM members. In a case registered by M.G Damor CPI Dang Ahwa, the accused, Janu Avsu r/o Gadvi and Pradip Sambhaji Patil r/o Ahwa, Patilpada shouted slogans during HJM meeting and made speeches against Christians and created religious animosity. It is surprising that, though in this case the complainant is a police officer, but the case was registered after 2 days i.e., on 27th December at 2015 hrs. The fourth case registered by the Christians related to mob violence of throwing stones on the roofs and windows of the Deep Darshan School, Ahwa. Regarding this case, four accused were arrested in the month January 1999 and three were arrested in November 1999.

There was a complaint by a Christian organization of harassment of the Adivasis of village Jarsol by way of detaining them in the lock-up by Shri G.M Damor, C.I of police station, the Dangs of Christians on the false report of slaughtering a cow by in November – December 1998.

Communal incidents on and after 25th December 1998

On and after 25th December and up to 20th January 1999 as many as 35 cases (including the four cases of district Headquarter, Ahwa) were registered in the Dangs district. Of these 35 cases, the Christians were accused in 7 cases and Hindus were accused in 29 cases.

On 25th December, the prayer halls in village Gadvi, and Diwantembrun, were damaged by mobs of Hindus. About ten named Hindu accused all of village Gadvi are common in both the cases, while in case of Diwantembrun case in addition to the above ten accused there were seven more accused of village Jamalpada and Diwantembrun. The Jamalpada incident took place on 26th December and during the incident slogans like "*Christians are thieves and Hindu Jago and Christi Bhago*" were shouted. All these three villages Gadvi, Diwantembrun, and Jamalpada are adjacent to each other and only about 10 km from Ahwa. Seven more accused came to light during investigation. All the seventeen accused were arrested. All the accused of these three cases were arrested by police on 28th December 1998. On 25th December, a prayer hall in village Padalkhadi was damaged by a Hindu mob including seven-named accused. On the same day, in village Katis, a mob of Hindus burnt the Bible.

On 26th December 1998 a mob of about fifty including eight named Hindu accused, all resident of Gauhan Baripada broke the roof and wooden door of a prayer hall in village Gauhan Baripada. On the same day, a prayer hall in village Karadiamba was damaged when the Christians were praying. In this case, six Hindu accused were arrested on 5th January 1999. On the same day, in village Vanki, a Hindu mob damaged the roof of a prayer hall. The complainant opened fire in self-defence. As many as 16 Hindu accused were arrested between 27th December to 29th December 1998. A cross-case was registered against the Christian complainant of the above case resident of village Vanki for trying to convert Hindus to Christianity and for attacking them. Two Christians were arrested on 27th December. On the same day the prayer halls in village Karanjda, Ravchond and Pipaldahad were damaged by a mob of unknown Hindus. In the case of village Karanjda, the complainant alleged that some persons from the rally organized on 25th December 1998 by Hindu Jagaran Manch came to the village and damaged the prayer hall. In the case of Pipaldahad, the complainant stated that Hindus shouted slogans like "*Jai Shri Ram*". Police could not work out these three cases. On the same day a Hindu temple of Hanumanji in village Nadagkhadi was damaged and desecrated by 11 Christian accused. All the accused were arrested.
On 27th December, a prayer hall in Motikasad was damaged by four named Hindu accused, three of who were arrested on 11th January 1999. On the same day a prayer hall in village Behdun was damaged by 9 named Hindu accused, all resident of Behdun.

On 28th December, some unknown miscreants damaged a prayer hall in Mulchand.

On 29th December a prayer hall was burnt in the village Madalbari by four named accused, all resident of Madalbari. All the accused were arrested on 4th January 1999.

On 30th December a prayer hall in village Jarsol was burnt and the tiles of a prayer hall were damaged by a mob of 150 – 200 Hindus including 8-named accused. Four accused of village Jarsol were arrested in this case. On the same day a mob of 50 – 60 unknown persons broke the tiles of a prayer hall in village Hanvat Pada.

On 31st December, a mob of about 40 – 50 unknown persons damaged a prayer hall and shouted slogans like *"Hindu jage Christi bhage"* in village Nakatia Hanvat. On the same day, a prayer hall in village Kasadbari was burnt down by 5 to 6 unknown persons. On 31st December, some Christian accused threatened the complainant who had been reconverted to Hinduism on 29th December and had asserted that Christianity is a higher religion than Hinduism. Ten Christian accused of this case were arrested on 1st and 2nd January 1999

Between 25th December 1998 and 11th January 1999, there were 11 cases of burning prayer halls or Bible in which the accused were named as unknown. There were two cases around 11th January, while the rest of the 9 cases were committed in the last week of December from 25th December onwards. Thus 11 cases of arson/damage to prayer halls ended in AFs i.e. the police could not work out these cases. Thus in the cases of arson to prayer halls relating to the villages Katis (burning of Bible), Hanvatpada, Nakatia Hanvat, Karanjda, Raochond, and Pipaldahad, Mulchond, Kasadvari, Dhuda (attempt at arson to a prayer hall) and Lahancharya around 11th January 1999 and of Chikar (attempt of arson to a prayer hall, the accused could not be traced out.

In most of the cases of arson etc., to prayer halls, the damage ran only in a few hundred or a few thousand rupees and some prayer halls had only thatched roofs, and only in a few cases, there was assault on converted tribal people and even those attacked did not receive any serious injury. It shows that the prayer halls were targeted by the mobs during the attacks.

<u>Incidents of Hindu – Christian nature during the year 1999</u>

1) On 10th January 1999, some unknown persons attempted to burn the prayer hall and caused damage in village Dhuda about 17 km. from Ahwa in the jurisdiction of police station Ahwa
2) On 11th January 1999, some unknown miscreants set fire to a prayer hall and damaged its roof tiles in village Lahan Charya situated at a distance of about 21 km. from Ahwa in the jurisdiction of police station Ahwa.
3) On 13th January 1999, a complaint u/s 295, 153A, 506 and other sections of IPC was lodged at police station Ahwa by a Hindu of village Gondalvihir about 8 km. from Ahwa that four Christian accused told him to change his religion to Christianity, threatened him with dire consequences and abused Hindu religion and thus hurt his religious feelings. The case is shown as pending trial but details about arrest etc. are not available.
4) On the next day i.e. on 14th January 1999, one of the Christian accused of the above case of village Gondalvihir, also got a case registered u/s 295, 504, 506 and other

sections of IPC and under Bombay Police Act. This case has also been shown as pending trial but details of the incident as well as of arrest etc. are not shown.

5) During the first fortnight of January 1999, there were re-conversions to Hinduism of about 1200 tribals in the hot springs of Unai, in district Navsari.
6) On 20th January 1999, a Hindu of village Padalkhadi in the jurisdiction of police station Ahwa registered a case under sections 295, 153A, and other sections of IPC and under section 114 Bombay Police Act against fifteen named Christian accused. It was alleged that the Christians threw stones on the *Hanumanji Temple* and burnt it, hurting the religious feelings of the Hindu community. The case has been shown as A. Final, which means that though the offence was committed but the police investigation could not detect its perpetrators. It seems surprising in view of the fact that seventeen Christian accused were named in the FIR. This is to be checked if the nomination of the accused in the case was found false by investigation.
7) On 20th August 1999 a case under section 12 of The Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 was registered by M.G Damor, CPI Ahwa against two Hindu accused, against Janu Avsu Pawar, resident of Gadhvi and against owner of Shridhar Printing Press. The accused distributed pamphlets, which hurt the religious feelings of Christian tribals. The case is pending trial.
8) On 26th November 1999, a Christian lodged a complaint in police station Waghai u/s 153 C, 295, 427, 451 and others sections of IPC. He mentioned in the complaint that some unknown persons entered his prayer hall and burnt cloak, musical instruments of Bhajan Keerthan and books on Christian religion. The police investigation could not trace out the accused and the case has been shown as ending in A. Final.

An Abortive Attempt by H.J.M. to Hold a Rally and a Conference on the Christmas Day, 1999

During the year 1999 an attempt was made by HJM to take out a rally in the month of December. On 7th December 1999, R.S. Dabhi, P.S.I, Ahwa registered a case against Jhanu Avsu Pawar and other workers of Hindu Jagaran Manch. It was found by police investigation that the three accused including Jhanu Avsu Pawar got the pamphlets printed at Shridhar Printing Press, Navsari and distributed them amongst the tribals of the Dangs. The pamplets were in regard to holding a mammoth rally against activities of Christian Missionaries in Ahwa on 25th December 1999.[12] **BBBB** The H.J.M. leader Shri. Janu Bhai Pawar and two more accused were arrested on 9th December 1999, because they distributed pamphlets and wanted to take out a mammoth rally against the activities of the Christian Missionaries in Ahwa on the Christamas Day. The case is pending trial against all the three accused. Many office-bearers of the district Dangs BJP gave their resignations in the protest of what they called the "high-handedness" of the local police. A call for a *bandh* was given by HJM and VHP against the arrest and it had a mixed response without any untoward incident. The District and Police Administration had taken lot of precautions before the Christmas of 1999. The members of the Peace Committee, both Hindus and Muslims did their best to check and counter any rumours which were circulated for creating trouble. People entering the Dangs District before and on the day of Christamas had to register their names and addresses with the Superintendent of Police. The circular of Home Department of Government of Gujarat, which banned holding of any religious congregations on the day of

festivals of other communities, was implemented. The government issued the circular in view of the serious law and order problem in the district during December 1998 when a H.J.M. rally and a meeting was allowed by the district administration on the Christmas Day [6]. The police and district administration elicited the help of the media in diffusing the tensions.

Incidents during the year 2000:

In March 2000, a case under section 153 A, 114 IPC and under section 12 of the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867 was registered in police station Ahwa. In this case an accused Bapul Nanu Tandel was arrested in April 2000 for distributing pamphlets, which hurt the religious feelings of the Christians. The case is pending investigation as the permission of the Gujarat Government to charge sheet the case as required in a case relating to section 153 A IPC, is still awaited.

In July 2000, Kalu Chibhadya Bhai Gangude resident of Gadhvi and the President of Devasthan Yatra asked for permission for taking out Devasthan Yatra from 27th August 2000 onwards. Kalu Chibhadya Bhai Gangude is facing trial in the three cases of damages to prayer halls in villages Gadhvi, Jamlapada and Diwantembrun in December 1998. In view of the above fact, the permission for taking out the Yatra was not given by the district administration. Subsequently, on an application of Dashrath Bhai Subhan Bhai Pawar resident of Pipaldahad, the district administration granted permission for holding only a religious meeting in Sabridham Mokhamal, in Subir on 27th July 2000. But on the instigation and provocation of leaders from outside the district, they tried to take out a procession violating the notification under Bombay Police Act. Thirteen persons including Janu Avsu Pawar, President, the Hindu Jagaran Manch, the Dangs and Jayantibhai Parshotambhai Kevat, resident of Navsari and BJP General Secretary, Gujarat were arrested and a case was registered under section 188 IPC. But on the same day i.e., on 27th July 2000, on an application of Dilipbhai Rahulbhai Gavit, resident of the Dangs, the permission for taking out Yatra from 30th July to 5th August was granted by district administration. The Yatra was taken out covering 89 villages in a tempo *(Rath)* with the idol of Maa Bhavani and a picture of Lord Hanuman. After getting further permission from the district administration, the Devasthan Yatra was taken out in 125 more villages from 8th August and concluded peacefully on 19th August under heavy police *Bandobast.*

Out of a total number of 50 cases registered till the end of the year 2000, as many as 32 cases took place in the month of December and 42 cases in the months of November, December or January i.e. around the Christmas festival. Only 8 cases out of 50 took place in the rest of the nine months.

This shows that police has got to be careful and take all the possible precautionary and preventive measures around and during the Christmas festival in such areas as the Dangs.

No case of communal nature between Hindus and Christians was registered before 16th June 1998 in any police station in the Dangs district. It shows that the communal sensitivity in the district Dangs has developed only during a period of about 2 ½ years i.e., from 16th June 1998 to the end of 2000, as many as 50 cases were registered relating to communal violence

in the Dangs. Out of these, 10 cases were against Christians and 39 cases against Hindus. One case registered by A.C Desai, CPI Bilmoria, against both the communities, related to violence during and after the HJM meeting on Christmas day 1998. Before the Christmas day 1998 only 10 cases of communal nature were registered.

Of this total number of 50 cases, 40 cases took place in the year 1998 and 8 cases in the year 1999 and 2 cases in the year 2000. Out of these 50 cases the Christians were accused in 8 cases of 1998 and 2 cases of 1999 and there were suspects in 1 case of 1998. Out of the 2 cases of 1999 1 case ended in charge sheet and the other in final report (A.Final). In the rest of the 39 cases during the above period, the Hindus were accused or suspects. During 1998, the Hindus were accused in 21 cases while there were suspects in 9 cases of damage to prayer halls by mobs of unknown persons. During the year 1999, the Hindus were accused in 3 cases and suspects in 3 cases of rioting and damage to prayer hall. Only 2 cases were registered in the year 2000 and in both the cases, the Hindus were the accused.

Two cases of Nirgudmal village of December 1998, one against the Hindus and the other against the Christians, and relating to the damage to the prayer hall and damage and desecration to a Hanuman temple were compromised.

No action could be taken against Christians suspected in a case of village Khamla of July 1998 about blackening the idol of Lord Hanuman as the police could not trace out the accused. A case of 20th January 1999 of Padalkhadi in which 15 Christians were named as accused ended in final report (A.Final). In rest of the cases against Christians, the charge sheets were submitted in the Court.

The Hindus were suspects in 9 cases of 1998 and in 3 cases of 1999. In these cases, the police could not find out about the accused, which were involved in the damage/arson to prayer halls. In these cases, hundreds of unknown accused belonging to Hindu religion were suspected but nothing could be done against them as the cases ended in final reports.
Out of these 50 cases, 25 cases were in regard to damage to prayer halls by accused belonging to Hindu community. Hindus were also booked in four cases of printing and distributing of pamphlets criticizing the Christian religion and in five cases of taking out rallies without permission in which slogans against Christian religion and Christians were shouted. One case related to Bible burning, one case was of burning a grass image of Jesus and two cases were in regard to attacks on schools run by Christian Missionaries.

From 25th December 98 to 31st December, 98 i.e. within a short period of one week, 30 cases of Hindu-Christian clashes or attacks on Christian prayer halls were registered in the above police stations of Ahwa and Waghai of the Dangs district. Out of these 29 cases, 19 cases were of attacks and damage or arson to Christian prayer halls at villages Gandhvi, Jamla Pada, Diwantembrun, Vanki, Nadagkhadi, Behdun, Malchond, Chikar, Gauhan, Padalkhadi, Karanjda, Pipaldahad, Karadiamba, Madalvari, Raochond, Nakatia-Hanvat, Kasadvari, Hanvatpada, and Jarsol. Though, total amount of damage to Christian prayer halls might have been only in a few lakhs but the damage to the religious feelings of Christian cannot be measured in terms of money. Two cases were of attack by Hindu mob and damage to Christian schools, Deep Darshan School Ahwa and Navjyot School, Subir. In the case of

Deep Darshan School, Ahwa, the mob damaged the student hostel, while in case of Subir school, a motorcycle and a jeep was set to fire and the Principal of the school was assaulted. There were two more cases of attacks on Christians in villages Motikasad and Katis.

Of the cases registered against the Christians, five cases related to attack or damage or desecration of Hindu Gods, three related to conversion or re-conversion, one pelting stones on the HJM meeting on Christmas Day 1998 and one of throwing stones and stopping the district BJP President Rameshbhai Balubhai Choudhary when he was moving in villages along with *Sadhus*.

As many as 22 Christians were arrested during the week from 25th December to regard to 31st December 1998 in regard to 4 cases against them, while 40 Hindus were arrested in 24 against cases. Some of the cases in regard to demolition or damage to prayer halls were registered after a few days. The one reason for delay in registration of this case might have been a sense of fear or insecurity amongst the complainants and only when they felt secure, they got the case registered

Though many arrests were made between 27th December and 31st December, some of prominent accused could not be arrested till 3rd or 4th January 1999. Had they been arrested on 27th or 28th December, the attacks on about 8 Christian prayer halls between 27th and 31st December could have been prevented. There were attacks on 25th and 26th December apart from disturbances at the Hindu Jagaran Manch Sabha and attacks on two Christian Missionary schools. The arrests on and after 27th December up to 31st December resulted in some check over such attacks. It seems that police tried to strike a sort of balance in the number of arrests of Hindu and Christian accused, though the number of Hindu accused exceeded many times than those of the Christian accused and as stated above some prominent Hindu accused were not arrested till 3rd or 4th January 1999. This explains why despite arrests during the week from 25th to 31st December, the attacks on Christians and their prayers halls could not be completely checked. However after 1st January 1999, it seems that only one case of attempt to burn a prayer hall at Dhuda was reported.

The above analysis shows that Hindus committed the majority of the cases. Police took action in most of the cases against Christians, while many cases against the Hindus could not be worked out and no action could be taken against the accused. These cases related to mob violence in the form of arson or damage to prayer halls and in some cases, the number of unknown accused was even more than a hundred.

DSP Manoj Sashidharan told that he received complaints about desecration of Hindu and tribal idols, particularly of Hanuman by Christians under the influence of preachers.

Hindu Jagaran Manch is an un-registered affiliated organization of the Sangh Parivar and has launched movement against the conversions activities of the Christian Missionaries in the tribal areas. The Manch is opposed to the benefits, which converted Christian tribal people take. The Manch is also active in counter-acting the insult to Hindu religious customs and traditions by Christian Missionaries. In June 98 HJM had organized a rally on 29th June led by Ramesh Bhai Balu Bhai Chowdhary, president district unit of BJP.

The immediate cause for the law and order problem on 25th December 1998 and for more than a week after that was the taking out of a HJM rally on 25th December, the day of Christian festival. The police and district administration should not have given the permission for the HJM rally and meeting on the Christmas day.

Janubhai, Avsu Bhai Pavar R/o. Godvi President of the Hindu Jagaran Manch sought permission for the rally on 25th December 98 on the letter pad of VHP. The rally would turn into a public meeting at the open ground at Taluka School at 1700 hrs. Hindus from Vansda and Surat were also to take part. The expected capacity of the crowd was assessed as five thousand persons according to the PSI Ahwa report. The organizers had given assurance for its peaceful conduct. PSI Ahwa in a report gave opinion in favour of granting permission for the HJM rally and thereafter DSP In-charge of the Dangs District forwarded it with his recommendation to the DM. The then Collector and DM, on 24th December 98, gave permission to the rally. On 24th December 98 two (under certain situations, the peace committee meetings cannot do much----they have very limited scope ---they cannot achieve everything under all situations) peace committee meetings were held in the office of DSP Dangs to ensure that no untoward incident takes place. A meeting between 0830 pm to 0900 pm, was attended by Christians including Rev. T.V Gaikwad of CNI Church. The other meeting between 0900 pm to 0930pm was attended by Hindus including president of the local unit of VHP Pradip Sambhajirao Patil and BJP leader Dashavath Bhai Pawar. Both the groups gave assurances not to create any law and order problem. Some police force from outside the district was also deployed.

D.M Joshi should not have given permission for the rally on the Christmas day. Besides, he was present at the HJM meeting as reported in some magazine where slogans hurting the religious feelings of the Christians were shouted. The fact that two separate peace committee meetings were called in the evening of 24th December suggests that the police had apprehended some trouble and thus had taken some precautions. Police should not have taken the risk. The PSI and DSP In-Charge of the district should not have given report in favour of holding the rally on Christmas Day. The holding of separate meetings does imply that there was no communal harmony. The experience of the past six months during which there were as many as ten cases between Hindus and Christians, would have been enough for any police officer to realize that holding a HJM rally on the Christmas day was fraught with dangerous consequences. The events at HJM rally and *sabha*/meeting and thereafter for a week amply proved this point. Perhaps, the permission to rally was granted for political reasons by district police that did not have a S.P. Ms. Nirja Gotrurao, S.P. had been transferred in July 1998 because she took action against the President of the HJM and that had demoralized the district police force. The post of S.P was lying vacant and nobody replaced her. Dy. S.P. Shri Gaekwad was holding the charge of the district and he does not have a reputation of being a tough and exemplary officer. Besides, he is a resident of the Dangs district.

Transfer and Postings:

Manoj Sashidhar did good work in the Dangs and he was transferred in 1st week of January 2000 after completing his term of about one year and was given a better district, Rajkot. It is

complained by the Christian leaders that he was transferred because in December 1999 he arrested the President of the HJM who wanted to hold a rally and a *sammelan* on 25th December 1999. His transfer though seems to have been done on political reasons, but as he had already completed a normal term of one year and has been given a better posting, it can't be said to have led to any demoralizing effect on the Officer or on the police force of district Dangs. The State Government seems to have, thus struck a balance between pressures from local politicians as well as the need for maintaining the efficiency and morale of the police force.

Ms. Nirja Gotrurao, SP of Dangs was transferred in July 1998. It seems that she too was transferred on political reasons because she took action against leaders of Hindu Jagaran Manch after they had taken out a rally in the Dangs in June 1998, which disturbed the harmony between the Hindus and Christians. Her transfer seemed to have a demoralizing effect on the police force. The post of SP was vacant for about four months from September to December. During the above period there was a riot between Hindus and Christians on Christmas day 1998 and lot of incidents of attacks on churches for about a week after the Christmas. She was, perhaps later on after a gap, given a better district.

Husmukh Patel earlier SP Narmada took a stand and was transferred but given a better district. The then SP Dangs Mr. Sashidhar also took strong action against those named in FIR of cases of Hindu-Christian riots and attacks on Christian prayer halls or Schools run by Missionaries during or just after the Xmas. Generally all the above S.Ps showed their initiative, professionalism and impartiality in dealing with the problem resulting in fewer incidents during the Christmas festivals of 1999 and 2000. There were very few cases of Hindu – Christian tensions or attacks on Christians or their prayer halls after January 1999. Whether it related to prompt action or intelligence collection or *bandobust*, every thing was done to the best of their ability. When there is political as well as administrative will, such incidents can be easily controlled and prevented.

There are four outposts in the district two in each police station. There are two outposts in Saputara and Kalibel in police station Waghai and two outposts in Chinchili bordering Maharashtra and Subir in police station Ahwa.

Mr. Hansmukh Patel, S.P. Valsad told that he was S.P. Narmada from October 97 to April 1999. During his absence for three weeks, some incidents took place in March 1999 and there was pressure on him not to take action against some persons responsible for incidents against Christians. The Home Minister almost daily rang him up in this connection, but he took action. Though he was transferred. But he was made S.P. of a bigger district i.e. S.P. Valsad thereafter. The State Government was not vindictive. In Didiapara Taluka, District Narmada a statue or idol of Mother Mary was installed as local Goddess, Koravi Mata. Now there is a centre for Baptist conversions at this place. This may become a trouble spot as regard Hindu-Christian tension in future. He said that in District Valsad, Kapardah and Dharampur are tribal Talukas. In 1998, some prayer halls were damaged. In Atul village which is only a few kilometers from Valsad town, there has been a problem over one building which was sold to a Christian and which is being used now as a prayer hall. He was of the opinion that in regard to Hindu-Christian incidents, local or vernacular press generally

sides with the Hindus and support their views, while it has become fashionable for the English Press to side with the Christians. In village Piperoti of P.S. Kapardah, one Hindu child died and his parents and other villagers told Christians not to play music and sing Christian songs/carols. Local Gujarati Press alleged that the local Police itself framed the charge on behalf of the Christians against the Hindus. The vernacular Press always magnifies the problem caused by the Missionaries or Christians. The English Press media magnifies and exaggerates the role of VHP, Bajranglal etc. The International Press and Media too magnify it their role. Because of their network and International Organizations, the Christian Missionaries communicate fast. He said that the Dairy Co-operative Movement under the Christian Missionaries has done good work for the locals and Catholics have done good service to the society in the fields of health and education. There are many denominations of Protestants who have not done much service but are more into conversions. He said that the post of SP Dangs was vacant for about six months after Ms. Neerja Gotru had been transferred in July 1998 because she took action against HJM leaders of Ahwa. Mr. Gaekwarh, a Dy SP held charge of the district from July to December 1998 end. He is an immature officer.

Rajiv R. Bhagat, ASP under-training, Gujarat cadre told that he belongs to South Bihar. He said that the main cause for the Hindu – Christian problems is over conversions. He said that one of the reasons for this frenzy is jealousy among the non-converted tribals because they see that converted Christian tribals become well–off and get better medical and education facilities and they develop a sort of attitude which makes it easier for them to get Government or Private jobs, while among the non-converted tribals there is inhibition or negative attitude and lack of confidence.

Two Brothers and a Father (Superior) of Jyoti School, Pimpri The Dangs district told that all the attacks on churches were pre-meditated and the Sangh Parivar was spreading the venom. They said that the Sangh Parivar is determined and they have been doing this in a planned manner. Swamy Aseemanand organized a rally or meeting on Christmas day, 25th December 1997. There were re-conversions to Hinduism at Unai Hotsprings in Navsari district. In Halmodi, Vyara block, Surat the owner of the land in question became a Hindu who gave his son a piece land. A thatched church nearby was damaged and a temple's *Silanyas* was done just opposite another church on the Christmas day in the year 1999. Similarly in Vaiduna in the Dang district a temple was constructed where there stood a church. They also told that Hanuman statues have been placed near the tribal Gods at Chikar on Waghai Saputara Road and at many other places.

Shri Anupam S. Gahlot, S.P, of the Dangs district told me that during the early 90s there was a serious Naxalite problem in the district and in view of that, the police district Dangs came into existence with effect from 1st April 1993, though it had already been made a separate revenue district. The tribal people have been demanding a large part of the reserved forest as their (agricultural) land. To deal with the Naxalite problem, a special recruitment was made and lot of local tribals were enlisted in the police force during the early years of the 1990s. Out of a total strength of about 320 policemen, about 176 are in the police lines. During the year 2000 (in the month of *Sawan* – July, August) an attempt was made by Hindu organizations to take out a procession starting from Sabri Ashram in Subir. The Subir village

is associated with Sabri who figures in Ramayan. The police and the administration did not give permission to the procession and made some arrests when the prohibitory orders banning the procession were flouted. Later on, under heavy police arrangements *Rath* procession was allowed in certain areas for about 21 days. He told that in view of the Elections in February- March 2003, there might be tensions in future between Hindu and Christians. At present there are 3 heavy vehicles, 13 light vehicles and 8 motorcycles in the district police. The number of vehicles, at present, is sufficient for patrolling the areas but during the law and order problem in 1998 there might have been shortage of vehicles. In view of the law and order situation of the district, the police outpost at Kalibel should be upgraded as a Police Station and new police outpost should be set up in Galkund and Gadvi.

According to a report received from S.P. Dangs, the total population of the district is 1,86,712 according to the 2001 census and the total area of the district is 1786 Sq. Km., The total Christian population is said to be around 15,000 to 20,000. The total strength of the police force including Sub Inspectors, Constables and Head Constables is 320. There are only two police stations in the district. The ratio of civil police per 10,000 of population in the Dangs is 7.7, while in regard to total police (total of civil police and armed police in the Police Lines) this ratio is 17.1. The above ratios of civil police and total police for the state of Gujarat are 10.96 and 13.59 and for the whole of India are 10.73 and 14.55 respectively. This shows that though in regard to total police the ratio of police per 10,000 population is higher than the state or national figure but in regard to civil police, the above ratios are quite low. It seems therefore necessary that the strength of the civil police should be increased in the district Dangs by opening new police stations in the areas, which are sensitive from the point of view of Hindu-Christian tensions.

The names of the schools run by Christian Missionaries are: 1) Deep Darshan School, Ahwa – Ahwa Town; 2) Navjyot School, Subir, Village (32 km. from Ahwa): 3) Jivan Jyoti School, Pimpri, Pimpri Village (17 km. from Ahwa): 4) St. Xaviers School, Shamgahan, Shamgahan Village (32 km. from Ahwa).

There has been a polarization of Hindu and Christian tribals after the incidents. The Christian tribal have been voting for Congress, but all the results in regard to the tribal areas except one during the last Parliamentary Election of 1999 went in favour of BJP.

In later half of the year 1998, the atmosphere in Gujarat had already been surcharged over the cases of elopements of tribal Hindu girls by Muslim boys. A sort of anti-minoritism already prevailed in some sections of the Hindu society. It was in such a backdrop that the incidents of attacks on prayer halls during December 1998 took place. On August 15th 1998, which was also the day of Hindu festival Janmastami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, a mob of Hindus irate over the elopements of Hindu girls, attacked the Muslims in Sanjeli district Godhra in eastern Gujarat and looted and burnt about 35 Muslim shops and houses. The Akhandvani Ashram, the residence- cum -chapel of Father Joe Vas of an English Medium Catholic School was also attacked by the mob, which smashed the windowpanes, and furniture etc. Father Vas alleged that all this happened in front of the police. According to him, a mob of about 1,000 Hindus was shouting slogans like *"Jai Shri Ram"*, *"Hum se jo takrayega, mitti me mil jayega"* (whoever dares confront us will be consigned to dust). The

attack on the Akhandvani Ashram was just incidental to attack on Muslims. About this incident, a case under sections 143, 147, 148, 149, 337, 153(A), 447, 120(B) IPC and 135 of B.P Act was registered in police station in Jhalod, district Dahod and two Hindu accused were arrested. During the attack by the mob, stones were also pelted at the idol of Mother Mary.

Swami Aseemanand, originally from West Bengal he did M.Sc in physics in 1974 from Burdwan University. He had earlier worked in Purulia, Bastar and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad is an offshoot of the Ashram and is run in different states under different names and the Swami was made its religious head in 1992. He set up a series of ashrams and began "reconverting" Christian tribals to Hinduism. Swami Aseem Anand came to Waghai about two-three years ago. A Journalist Basant Rawat reported from Waghai, the Dangs on January 10th 1999 in Swami Aseemanand as words "I have traveled the length and breadth of this country but I never felt so attached to any place. Now I don't want to move out from here" That was when he realized that since worshipping Lord Hanuman came easily to the tribals, the deity could be used to keep them in the Hindu fold and even win back to Hinduism those who had become Christians. As many tribal families as possible were provided with pictures of Lord Hanuman-"costing Rs.50/- each"-to keep alive the religion in their minds." The journalist reported that it is the Swami's work that has been the kernel of Hindu resurgence in the region.

The Christian version of the incident and developments in the Dangs and the areas around it:

The Collector attended the rally, allowed himself to be garlanded. Despite four written memoranda, the Collector permitted the rally with disastrous consequences. It is said in Ahwa that at one time the collector did not want to give permission for the Manch rally, but was under political pressure to permit the Manch rally. In the villages of Dangs where everything is made of wood, and where people are poor, each place of worship involves major investment of money, labour and love. It is adding insult to injury, and hurting the people's simple faith, to minimize the damage purely in terms of money. Provocation also continues in the form of forcible conversions in the so-called *shuddikaran* programme organized by the Parivar in the hot springs town of Unai just north of the Dangs. These alleged re-conversion functions are being held with great pomp and are supported by the authorities. Saffron flags have been forcibly put on houses and shops, and also across the roads. Attacks were unilateral. These mobs consisted of people from outside the Dangs. Many of them were mobile, riding in tempos and in one case in a forest jeep. The police refused to register complaints by Christian victims. The Police on the other hand went out of its way to ensure that there were counter complaints by the aggressors and leaders of the mob. Since then, an effort has been deliberately on to establish parity between the Christians and the aggressors both in the number of cases and in the number of protests. One Superintendent of police posted temporarily to take charge of the district is in fact the brother of a senior BJP politician who is involved in another incident of anti Christian violence in the area of Zhankvav in the neighbouring district.

Hindu version: Randhir Khare has been a frequent visitor to the district, the Dangs.
In his book "The Dangs- Journey to the Heartland", he writes, that an interview of Dr. Pravin Togadiya, Secretary General (international) of the VHP, published in *The Asian Age,* was quite revealing.[7] In the interview Pravin Togadiya was reported as saying:
"What assaults are you talking about? Have any of their registered churches been demolished? These Christian missionaries convert any *jhopdi* into a church. And in the Dangs, the provocation came from the Christians. They attacked the Hindu Jagran Manch meeting on Christmas Day. Before that in November they had attacked a group of *Sadhus* in Ahwa who were discoursing on Hindutva. If they have the freedom to propagate their religion, we too have the freedom. Even a police complaint had been lodged against the missionaries in November. They stoned *bhajan* gatherings and demolished fourteen temples. Why was there no hue and cry then? The situation in Orissa is worse than that in Gujarat. But just because transnational forces want to give a bad name to Gujarat – since it is a state where the BJP has a clear-cut majority- this *hungama* is being created. The tribals have been such an impoverished lot. The Congress simply did not care about them. Hence, the Christians lured them, giving them medicines, education comfort. Even the Niyogi Committee reports say that the use of any medicines or other professional services, as a direct means of making conversions, should be prohibited by law. The Constitution gives the right to propagate religion but it does not give license to conversions brought about by force, fraud or other means. There have been FIRs when poor tribals have admitted that they became Christians after being given two hundred rupees by missionaries. This is not a political fight. It is a war between the scheduled tribe and Christians. Since a hundred odd years, the Christians have been comfortably luring the poor tribals and converting them. The tribals have now realized their dirty games.... History substantiates that the church always played in important role in governance in the past. They are again trying to do so with Sonia Gandhi as their representative." When the interviewer asserted that adivasis had never been Hindus, Togadiya replied, "No, don't ever say that. Hinduism has a very broad meaning. These tribals have been nature worshippers. Don't we Hindus worship water, earth, fire, etc.?" But the interviewer persisted, "You yourself admit that the tribals get converted because of better education and welfare facilities provided by the Christians." Civilization and sophistication after conversion is acceptable but at the cost of the country's integrity?" asked Togadiya. "Remember that conversions always end up not only in a change of religion but also in a change of nationality."Getting back to the Dangi debate he said, "The provocation always came from the Christians. Our workers burnt copies of the New Testament only after we found that the Christians were forcibly making students sign on a piece of paper which said 'I admit I am a sinner and that Christ is my only saviour.' Is it right? Do Christians have the right to indulge in such lowly acts? Why is Christ the only saviour? And why did the Christians give us a written apology after we exposed them?"

After the interview of Dr. Pravin Togedia, Mr. Randhir Khare writes, "To meet the challenge of the missionary schools and hospitals, Togadiya proudly announced, "VHP will set up one thousand one hundred schools in tribal areas of the country out of which one hundred and twenty will be in Gujarat ... we will take time in undoing the harm done by the Christian missionaries since the last two hundred years."

According to Mr. Randhir Khare, "it appeared that the media had a field day. The Dangs, once merely a soft social and cultural story had become, overnight, the hottest piece of controversy. --The world sat and watched and read the story of how champions of two great religions slugged it out for supremacy over the souls of the adivasis in some back-of-beyond Indian jungle. The story of a displaced dehumanized people was incidental." [8]

A team of the National Minorities Commission visited the district after the incidents of December 1998 and made the following important recommendations:

- The DG of Gujarat police should be directed to call periodical meetings of all SPs and other officers to brief them about civil rights and liberties of all citizens, including those of the minorities and to guide them properly for effective protection of those rights.

- In order to create and maintain a congenial atmosphere and cordial inter-communities deterrent measures should be undertaken by the state government to curb the tirade against a particular community and their religious practices carried on through pamphlets, leaflets, periodicals and false or exaggerated media reports.

- The state government to evolve ways and means to create, promote and preserve communal harmony in the state and to make all citizens of the state fully aware of national obligations and responsibilities towards each other should convene regular state-level meetings of non-political representatives of all religious communities.

- The government should closely scrutinize the activities of Swami Aseemanand, who is noted to have been camping in the tribal areas of Gujarat and is stated to be the main factor behind the prevailing tension in the area. Action should be taken against him if the content of his speeches is found to be communal.

- The state government should initiate an inquiry on why the state home department failed to tackle the situation on a number of occasions and did not issue proper directives to the concerned officials in the district administration.

- The conversions record should be properly kept to counter false propaganda.

Of the 30 recommendations, the Gujarat government claims it has accepted 24.[9]

Apart from the district Dangs, there were many incidents in the neighbouring districts of Valsad and Surat Rural. The Songadh and Vyara talukas of Surat Rural are sensitive from the point of view of Hindu-Christian tensions.

The Halmodi village in district Surat Rural is only about 15-20 km from Waghai, in the Dangs. The Hindu Jagran Manch organized a foundation ceremony for Ram temple in the village on the Christmas Day Eve i.e. on December 24, 1999 just before the festival. Before the foundation Ceremony, many pamplets of the H.J.M. were in circulation in Dangs District and in Vyara and Songadh *taluks* of district Surat. In 1995, a tribal named Ukadiabhai had

converted to Christianity and a small chapel had been built over his land. In 1997, he was reconverted to Hinduism under a campaign launched by some pro-Hindu groups. After his re-conversion, the Hindus demanded the land should be given back to him but the Christians refused to hand it over. In November 1999, the administration mediated. An armed guard was posted at the site. The media, especially the English national newspapers gave it undue and too exaggerated publicity by printing the news of foundation ceremony in large headlines covering the whole of the front page in December 1999.

Notes:

1. K.S Singh ' The Scheduled Tribes', Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994.
2. Ibid Page 128
3. Ibid, Page 128 & Page 276
4. David Hardiman in his paper " Power in the Forest, The Dangs: 1820 – 1940" - Subaltern Studies VIII.
5. Gujarat State Gazetteers, Govt. of Gujarat, Dangs District, Chief Editor Dr. G.D Patel, 1971.
6. Rathin Das reporting from Gandhinagar in 'The Hindustan Times', New Delhi, 14th December, 1999.
7. Pages 305 to 308, Khare, Randhir – 'The Dangs – Journey into the Heartland', HarperCollins Publishers India 2000.
8. Ibid Page 308.
9. Outlook February 14, 2000, page 16.

Chapter – 15

Case Study – North Orissa

A-MAYURBHANJ AND KEONJHAR B-SUNDERGARH AND OTHER DISTRICTS LIKE JHARSUGUDA, SAMBALPUR ETC.

A- Mayurbhanj & Keonjhar districts: Staines Case:

In January 1999, Graham Steward Staines was burnt alive along with his two sons in a station wagon in village Manoharpur in police station Anandpur of district Keonjhar. This act of barbarism was done by a Hindu fundamentalist Dara Singh and his associates and shook the whole nation.

The districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar are being studied together because both the districts have been the areas of the activities of both Dara Singh as well as of Staines. Accused of this ghastly act belong to both the districts Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar and they came from Thakurmunda, which is in district Mayurbhanj. Manoharpur is nearer to Thakur Munda than to Anandpur and so the complainant went to police station Thakurmunda instead of police station Anandpur. The mission headquarters of Graham Staines was in Baripada, the headquarters of district Mayurbhanj.

All the cases against Dara Singh were registered in different police stations of these two districts. These districts were also the areas of the activities of Graham Steward Staines. He used to tour these areas for organizing Jungle Camps and other mission work. Both the districts are adjoining to each other and the river Baitarni may be said to make a rough demarcation between the boundaries of the two districts. Both the districts have similar terrain and similar problems from the policing point of view.

Areas of these two districts border Chhota Nagpur plateau of Jharkhand in the North. The Industrial towns of Rourkela in district Sundergarh, in Orissa state and Tatanagar in Jharkhand state are nearby. Most of the land is red soil with undulating terrain and there are lot of forests of Sal and Sheesham. About 70% people of the total population of the district belong to the tribal communities. Santals alone contribute about 40% to the total tribal population of the district.

The Mayurbhanj district was earlier a princely Hindu state during the British period with Brahmanic Hinduism as the State religion since the date of supremacy of the Bhanja Princes in Mayurbhanj
According to The Report of Census of Mayurbhanj State, 1931:

The village deities have generally few temples erected to them. They are commonly installed at the foot of tress associated with religion or in particular patches of well-protected forests known as Jahira, which offer sufficient shade and shelter both to the deities and their

devotees. The worship of the village deity is universally common among all classes of Hindus and Animists alike and there are many villages where an Animists Dehuri performs the worship of the deity for a high class Hindu. As a matter of fact Animists are allowed, as rule, to offer worship to Hindu gods and goddesses. This mutual tolerance is the main reason as to why the process of absorption of Animists in to the fold of Hinduism has been, as noticed, so steady and marked in the State. There are in all 131 different castes or tribes in the State. Of these the most outstanding five tribes are – 1) Santals, who are in the largest number, 2) Kols, 3) Bhumij, 4) Kurmi Mahato, 5) Bathuri. The Santals, the Kols and the Bhumijs alone form together a little over 50% of the total state population. There were 634,168 Tribal Hindus, 127,975 Caste Hindus and 114,311 "Other Hindus" in the whole State. The Tribal Hindus belong to those races, castes or tribes, which are of Dravidian or Mundari origin. There has been an institution from a long time past in Mayurbhanj known by the name of Dharma Sabha. Originally, managed by the "Raj Purohit," and since 1910 by a Committee. This "Sabha" generally, including even the Tribal Hindus and Animists, governs Hindus castes. Persons adjudicated upon as offenders are punished according to the Sastra, which consists in excommunication from the society, making the person punished to be treated as an outcast. The door, however, is allowed to be left open for restoration to caste, should the offender express his or her repentance, and his or her desire to be retaken into the society. (Pages: 146,147 of the Report on the Census of Mayurbhanj State, 1931)). In the Statement V from Page no.139 to 143 of the said Report, a list of 168 names of Village Deities are given for example:- Shree Chandiabir Thakurani, Shree Chandiapat Thakurani, Shreee Chandika Thakurani.

Source: 1981 Census (page 478)
1991 Census (pages 136-137)

The Santalis are the main tribes, which inhabit these areas. Besides their mother tongue Santali, they are conversant with Oriya, the Indo-Aryan language. The Oriya script is used for writing. A good number of them own land and are engaged in cultivation. In addition, a large number of them are Industrial workers and labourers in mines and quarries. Following the Santal religious customs, each village has a grove of sal trees known as sarna, which is worshipped during various rituals. The 1981 census records 51.71 per cent of the Santal as followers of Hinduism, 0.36 per cent as Christians and 22.18 per cent have not stated their religion. The followers of their traditional faith, who have been returned under the category of 'other religions', constitute 25.75 per cent of their population. The census data shows that the Hindus have declined from 99.61 per cent in 1961 to 86.48 percent in 1971, and further to 51.71 per cent in 1981. Those who follow their traditional religion have increased from 13.44 per cent in 1971 to 25.75 percent in 1981. The Christians have also shown a marginal increase, from 0.03 per cent in 1961 to 0.08 percent in 1971 and further to 0.36 per cent in 1981. Developmental measures have brought about considerable changes in their lives.[1]

Santhal tribals believe in "Singhbouga Chief Spirit" and some of them still believe in witchcraft.

Maharajas of Mayurbhanj State in 1879 and 1902 gave lands to Missions at Krishna Chandrapur (about 16 sq. miles of jungle and waste land) and Baripada (about 5 acres) respectively.

According to the Census figures, the population of Christians in the Mayurbhanj district was 783 in 1911 and 699 in 1921 and 882 in 1931. During the decade of 1961 – 71 the Christian population in the Mayurbhanj District recorded a phenomenal decadal growth rate of 131, though their population was only 0.14% to the total population of the district in 1971. For the State of Orissa, the % Decadal growth rate during the above period was 25 and for Hindus it was 23.55 and for Christians 88.48. The population of Christians in district Mayurbhanj was 2,010 in 1971, which rose to 3,622 in 1981, and 5,517 in 1991. The Christian population increased from 0.2% to the total population of the district 1981 to a corresponding figure of 0.3% in 1991 and thus recording a growth rate of about 150% during the decade 1981 to 1991. Though in absolute numbers, the Christian population did not increased much but the decadal growth rate during the above period was quite high. The Christian population is concentrated mostly in the rural areas of the district. On the contrary, and quite interestingly in Keonjhar the large chunk of the Christian population is in urban areas. In Keonjhar district also during the decade of 1961 – 71, the growth of the Christian population was quite substantial recording a decadal growth rate of 223, while the percentage of the Christian population to the total population of the district was only 0.27% in 1971. The Christian population in district Keonjhar was 2595 in 1971, which rose to 3,416 in 1981, and 4,112 in 1991.

The increase of population of Christians in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar has been due to conversion of tribal people to Christianity. Most of the conversions took place among the uneducated people of Ho and Santhal tribes. The causes of conversion are largely economical. The tribal people of these areas are very poor and lot of their money is spent on rituals for propitiating the evil spirits and gods. They live in constant fear of spirits. But when Hinduised through a reform movement or converted to Christianity, their economic conditions improve.

The Incident of Staines Murder:

On 22/23 January night 1999 Graham Stewart Staines, an Australian Missionary and his two sons were burnt to death while they were sleeping in a station wagon (Jeep) in front of a Church of Village Manoharpur, District Keonjhar, Orissa. Though, the incident took place in the jurisdiction of Anandpur Police Station, District Keonjhar, the nearest Police Station is Thakurmunda in adjoining Mayurbhanj District. On 20th January Mr. Staines had reached Manoharpur along with his two sons and friends to organize and attend a *jungle mela*. The village Manoharpur with 22 families having converted to Christianity over the years was divided on religious lines when Staines arrived on January 20 with some fellow preachers and his two sons. The last conversion in Manoharpur took place a year ago. Mr. Staines and his two sons had gone to sleep in one of his two station wagons parked in front of the Church of the village after the programme of the day was over. A mob of about 50 people armed with *lathis, bhujali,* and firearms descended on the village under the cover of darkness at about 12 in the midnight, attacked and set fire to both the wagons. Mr. Staines and his two

sons tried to come out of the station wagon but the mob including Dara Singh pushed them back inside the vehicle and did not allow them to come out. The villagers who tried to rescue the Staines and his two sons were threatened with dire consequences by the accused. The mob set on fire another station wagon also parked nearby only a few meters away. About 100m away, young Santhal boys and girls were celebrating their attainment of adolescence by dancing the traditional Dhangri to the beat of drums. They witnessed everything but chose to do nothing. After ensuring that Mr. Staines and his two sons were burnt to death, Dara Singh blew the whistle, the accused shouted slogans like " Bajrang Bali Ki Jai" and "Dara Singh Jindabad" and thereafter they escaped towards the village Dumuridiha. CBI found after investigation that Dara Singh conspired along with his associates namely Dipu Das, Renta Hembram, Mahendra Hembram, Andha Nayak, Sundershan Hansda, Kartick Lohar Rabi Soren and others in January 1999 to kill Mr. Graham Staines, a Christian Missionary. The motive of attack on Staines was his alleged involvement with the conversion of tribal Hindus to Christianity and the destruction of Hindu religion and culture. Between 20th January and 22nd January Dara Singh, or his associates Dipu Das, Andha Nayak etc. contacted to arrange manpower at village Banbir and Bharandia and instigated the villagers of Ramildiha to accompany them to village Manoharpur to attack the Christian Missionaries.

The careers of both Dara Singh and Staines have some striking similarities. Both happened to visit these areas of lovely forests of Northern Orissa through their friends. Both were attracted by the calm and serene beauty of the nature and decided to settle there. Both made these areas as the fields of their religious activities-Staines for propagating the Christian faith and Dara Singh for upholding and defending the Hindu religion. But here, the similarities between the two end. While Staines pursued the peaceful method of propagating Christianity through *Jungle Melas* and through serving and treating the lappers, Dara Singh employed violent means for upholding the Hindu religion.

Dara Singh:

Dara Singh @ Ravindra Kumar Paul, is a resident of village Kokara, in police station Dibiyapur, district Etawah (now a new district Oraiyya). He worked with Bapu @ Chitaranjan Das s/o Ramdas resident of Rudhiapada, police station Ghatagaon, district Keonjhar in a shoe factory in Delhi and they became friends. Later on he visited the village of his friend in Keonjhar and decided to settle there. For about four years, he helped Ramdas, the father of his friend, a *Baistav by caste* in the grocery business in local weekly markets at different places as well as in the agricultural work. He also worked as a temporary Hindi teacher in Maliposi Janta High School for a few months as there was a vacancy. He is said to have participated in the *Ram Shila* movement in the district.

He was involved in many cases of freeing cattle including cows from the trucks of Muslim traders and other cattle dealers. Some of the people of the *Mahato Kurmi* caste of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts, who regard cow as a sacred animal and worship cattle, joined Dara Singh in such crimes of looting of trucks. There were lot of cases against him and other accused. One of the Muslim cattle-trader succumbed to injuries received during one of such attacks. Most of the areas of districts Mayurbhanj & Keonjhar are densely

forested and as a result Dara Singh and some of his associates could avoid police arrest for about a year. He was active in the areas of Police Stations Patna, Ghatgaon, Sadar, Turumunga, Keonjhar district and Police Stations Thakurmunda, Mahuldiha, Karanjia of district Mayurbhanj. The above areas of these two districts are adjacent to each other. He had substantial support from Kurmi Mahtos, Santhals. Kulhos and Bathurias. There was an attack on a Church in Kesidihal in January 1998. Distributing the looted cattle among the villagers earned him popularity. Tribal youth looked at him with awe as if they found a Messiah in Dara Singh.

Graham Staines:

Graham Staines was born in Palmwoods, Queensland, Australia. He came to visit this area in 1965 through his pen friend Shantanu Satpathy who lived in Baripada. First, he worked at Rajrangpur, district Mayurbhanj and later on shifted to the mission station Baripada of Evangelical Missionary Society in 1983. He married Miss. Gladys from Brisbane in the 1980s. Staines used to arrange speakers and take Bible studies in jungle camps. The Evangelical Missionary Society in Mayurbhanj had its early beginning in 1896 when Miss Allanby from Brisbane (Queensland, Australia) did commendable job in regard to the State Leper Asylum in Baripada. About 90 percent of the leprosy clinics in India are Christian-run, according to the Red Cross. Mr. Staines looked after the Leper Asylum in Baripada. He picked up not only Oriya but also Santhali. His Santhali poem was broadcast over radio as part of the pulse polio immunization drive.

He evolved the concept of Jungle Camps in the late seventies and held once in a year in villages, which had Christian families. The idea behind the Jungle Camp was to collect the converts annually and to give them group counseling, moral lessons, scriptural teachings, projection of slides regarding Jesus and other biblical characters and instructions on health and hygiene. The basic aim of the camps was to keep the flock together and to win over more people to the love of "Jesu". Although, Graham Steins was responsible for conversions in the area, he, however, had a non-controversial image. He was generally liked by the people and during his 34-year stay in the area; there were no formal complaints against him. The major funds for the activities of Graham Staines came from Evangelical Missionary Society of Australia. The leprosy home in Baripada has about 16 acres of land –The income from these lands (farm produce) also contributes towards the funding of the mission. Sale of diary products and of religious literature is another source of funds.

Funds for the Leprosy Home are also received from the Leprosy Mission of India, which is run by the International Leprosy Mission, with the objective of eradicating leprosy from the world. Grants are also received from the Government of Orissa for the Leprosy Home. During the years 1996 to 1998, he received an average of Rs.10 lakhs per year from foreign sources.

Cases against Dara Singh

District Keonjhar cases: 1) Patna police station case 80/97 19th October 1997:-Dara Singh and his associates numbering around 20 looted 36 cattle from a lorry. 2) Patna police station

case 83/97: - On 7th November 1997, he along with his associates looted 17 cattle 3) Non FIR-96 u/s 110 CrPC dated.11th November 1997 of Patna police station 4) Patna police station case 19/98: - On 19th February 1998, he obstructed the vehicle of the Chairman of Patna *Panchayet Samiti* by putting big stones, damaged the window glasses, and assaulted and threatened to kill him during the election. The Chairman of the *Samiti,* a Congress leader was proceeding in a Jeep for election campaign for the parliamentary election. 5) Ghatgaon police station case no. 16/98: - On 5th March 1998, he abused and threatened a Forest guard 6) Keonjhar Sadar police station case no.46/98: - On 16th March 1998, he looted 36 cattle, being taken to a *haat* (Weekly market). 7) Patna police station case no.1/99: - On 5th January 1999, Dara Singh and his associate Dipu Das and 7 or 8 other persons looted readymade garments from a Muslim trader, when he was returning from the weekly *haat.* District **Mayurbhanj Cases:** 8) Thakurmunda police station case no.34/98: - On 28th June 1998, he along with his associates stopped a truck carrying cattle, assaulted the Muslim trader and looted cattle etc. 9) Karanjia police station case no.91/98: - On 16th August 1998, he and his associates looted cattle taken in a truck by a Muslim trader. 10) Mahuldiha police station case no.24/98 registered as a case of loot on 14th September 1998 (converted to 396 / 412 / 302 IPC later on):- He looted cattle from a Muslim trader and fatally assaulted one Muslim helper in the truck. 11) Karanjia police station case no.123/98: - On 15th November 1998, he looted readymade garments of a Muslim Trader.

From a perusal of the chronology of the above crimes by Dara Singh and his associates, it is evident that in the beginning, i.e. from October 1997 to March 1998, he was active in the police stations of Patna, Keonjhar, and Ghatagaon of district Keonjhar. From end of June 1998 onwards he became active in the police stations of Karanjia, Mahuldia and Thakurmunda of district Mayurbhanj. Dara Singh and his associates committed only one case after March 1998 in district Keonjhar and this case related to loot of a Muslim garment dealer in the jurisdiction of police station Patna in district Keonjhar. This suggests that when Dara Singh and his associates were active in a particular area, they were having shelter in the other area. The institutions of police station and district sometimes go against the very purpose for which they are meant. Some of the station officers tolerate some criminals in their areas if they are not active in that area and are committing crimes elsewhere. Similarly, sometimes some senior officers for example of the rank of S.P. in-charge of a district may not bother much about the movements of a criminal or a gang of criminals in their area, if they are not committing crime in the district. In this case, the districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar fall in different police ranges under the command of different D.I.G's whose headquarters are at Balasore and Rourkela respectively. In such a situation, it becomes very difficult to co-ordinate the efforts and actions and sharing of intelligence of the police force of two districts against Dara Singh and his associates who in different phases, became active in either of these districts. Before the Staines assassination in January 1999, Dara Singh and his associates were involved in 11 cases of district Mayurbhanj & Keonjhar----6 of their crimes were against cattle traders (3 Keonjhar district, 3 Mayurbhanj District) and 2 against Muslim garment traders (grocery business in the weekly *haats* - one each in district Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar). Before his arrest on 10th November 1997, Dara Singh had committed only two offences, which related to looting the cattle traders in the jurisdiction of police station Patna, district Keonjhar. But between his release on bail on 27th November 1997 and the murder of Staines and his two sons, he and his associates committed 8 offences

in the different police stations of the above two districts. The application for the cancellation of bail of Dara Singh was moved only on 16th April 1999, while during this bail period itself, he had committed an offence of assault on a Congress (I) leader- the Chairman of Patna Panchayat Samiti in February 1998 in jurisdiction of police station Patna, had assaulted and threatened a forest guard in the jurisdiction of police station Ghatagaon and had looted the cattle traders in March 1998 in a case relating to police station Keonjhar Sadar. All the above cases related to district Keonjhar. Had the bail of Dara Singh been cancelled and had he been arrested earlier, some of the above 8 cases and the murder of Staines and his two sons would have been averted. It is quite surprising and shows utter negligence on the part of police that despite the involvement of Dara Singh in the above three cases after his release on bail in November 1997, the police of district Keonjhar did not move for the cancellation of his bail till 16th April 1998. The Wadhwa Commission has held the state and district administration responsible for the Staines tragedy.

Arul Doss Murder:

On 1st September 1999, Arul Doss of the Balasore Catholic Church was murdered in village Jamuvani in police station Mahuldiha. He had been a frequent visitor to the village Jamuvani and had gone there on the morning of 1st September with his two associates to participate in the *Nuakhali* festival celebrations of the tribal Christians. About 15 people mostly tribals and armed with bows and arrows and started beating up the tribal boys and girls who were dancing near the prayer hall of the village. Arul Doss was sleeping in a room near the thatched prayer hall and tried to run away on hearing the noise. According to the complainant Durga Charan Gadsera, Arul Doss was killed while trying to escape the assailants and he was first hit with bows and arrows and then later on battered to death. The river *Salandi* was in spate and the police and the media could reach the spot only in the afternoon of 2nd September 1999 after trekking about 15 km.

Difficulties in the arrest of Dara Singh:

There was a prize of Rs.8 lakh on his head. The border areas of districts Mayurbhan and Keonjhar are densely forested and the river Baitarani makes a rough border between them. There is a very dense forested area in and around Atai reserve forest dotted with some villages, which Dara Singh and his associates used as their hideouts. The Similipal National Park in district Mayurbhanj is also very near to the areas of P.S Mahuldiha. The district Mayurgunj has an area of 10500 sq. km. The Simlipal National Park is in this district, which is famous for wildlife and three beautiful waterfalls. Only 1000 policemen man the district, which makes almost one Policeman for 10 sq. km of area. The Police Stations in the affected areas has the ratio of 1 Policeman for 30 to 40 sq. km. About 100 different tribes live in these areas

Areas affected by the activities of Dara Singh in the two districts were near the dense forests of Atai Reserved Forest where he had his hideouts and could evade police arrest for about a year after the assassination of Staines. The problems and methods of Policing in the forest areas and in the villages around are quite different from policing in non-forest areas. For policing in the forest areas, the policemen need to know the topography of the area and should be well acquainted with all the forest roads and bridle paths etc. They need to have a close co-

ordination and exchange of intelligence with the forest officials of the concerning areas and should have regular meetings with them. Apart from this, the village defense societies may also contribute quite significantly in these areas. Dara Singh had the support of some sections of tribal societies especially the Mahato caste that worship cows. He immediately knew the presence and movements of police in these areas through the villagers who also gave him shelter. He had his hideouts in the dense forests as well particularly in the areas around Roundum in police station Ghatgaon in district Keonjhar. The areas of police stations Mahuladiha and Thakurmunda etc. too have dense forests bordering the Simlipal National Park. Apart from this, the problems of lack of co-ordination as these two districts are part of two different ranges also worked against the efficiency of police in arresting Dara Singh.

Arrest of Dara Singh:

Shri Y.B. Khurana, S.P Mayurbhanj managed to arrest Dara Singh in the forest near the village Gohira within 20 days of his taking charge of the district. The failure for arresting Dara Singh was attributed to lack of coordination within the force and to the fact of not sharing of information.[2]

Aftermath of Dara Singh's Arrest

After Dara Singh's arrest, Dara Singh Bachao Samiti was formed. There were lot of processions and slogan shouting in favour of Dara Singh on the dates of his cases in Courts. . It was reported that Dara's court appearances had become stage-managed shows with large audiences.[3] All this caused lot of commotion in the district and threatened to disturb the communal harmony between the different religious communities. Mukesh Jain, the founder President of the Samiti and Ranjan Sahu, Secretary of the Dharma Rakhyaka Sri Dara Singh Surakhya Samiti and Dara Singh's advocate Pradeep Choudhary were arrested [4] in this regard and some of them were booked under NSA.

There was a token *bandh* called by the Karanjia Bar Association protesting against Choudhary's arrest under the National Security act. It was reported in the 'Outlook' magazine that according to Y.B. Khurana, S.P, Mayurbhanj, there were three organizations affiliated to Dara Singh, operating in the region, the Dharma Rakhyaka Shri Dara Singh Bachao Samiti, the Dara Singh Parijan Sahayata Samiti and the Dara Sena. While the first two organizations are Delhi-based, the latter has its headquarters at Karanjia. All the three organizations were floated after the arrest of Dara Singh. Some of the members of Dara Sena are anti-social elements. Sahu allegedly has four cases pending against him in the Keonjhar police station, while secretary of the Keonjhar unit of the Dara Sena, Tilak Bahadur Thapa, has six. [5] Jain visited Karanjia, Baripada and Keonjhar a number of times to organize public meetings and press briefings. He was also involved in the publishing of a 16 – page booklet written by Dara, which declared he had taken the shape of Hanuman or Krishna to destroy Staines.[6] Support for Dar is restricted largely to the Mahanta community, and with his arrest, it has been dwindling. According to the Outlook Magazine the state government has decided to take prompt action and nip any further communalization of the Dara Singh affair. State Home Secretary T.K.

Mishra was reported as saying that the state government will take stringent action against any attempt to incite or foster communal violence in the guise of protecting rights of the majority.[7]

Conviction in Staines Case:

On September 29, special judge Sukumar Sahu found Sudarshan Hansada alias Chenchu, 13, guilty of the murder of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two minor sons, and convicted him to 14 years rigorous imprisonment.

Chenchu's conviction came early as his case was taken up separately because of his Juvenile status [8]

The fate of cases against Dara

Assistant public prosecutor in Karanjia (where the cases are pending trial) does not sound very hopeful about the fate of cases against Dara Singh. He told Outlook: "Till now, the weapon used in the Rehman murder case has not been recovered. Rehman was allegedly chased and attacked by Dara in a local market in Padlabeda. His hands were chopped off with a *farsa* (cleaver) before he was set on fire in full view of the villagers who had come to the weekly bazaar. Yet, the police could find only two eyewitnesses to the crime and one of them – a gramrakkhi (village watchman)-happens to be a police appointee whose testimony can be doubted.[9]

Just a week before the conviction of Chenchu, a minor accused in the Staines murder case conviction, the sub-divisional judicial magistrate of Karanjia had acquitted Dara and his four accomplices in a case of looting a truck as the driver and trader refused to depose against Dara and associates.

In the case involving looting and rioting in Kondumundi market, the witnesses have turned hostile. Mayurbhanj district authorities had pleaded that all cases against Dara be transferred to other districts, as witnesses were afraid of deposing against him. In fact, supporters of Dara started flocking court premises whenever he was brought for trial.[10]

National Human Rights Commission

D.R. Karthikeyan, Director General (Investigations) of the National Human Rights Commission arrived at the following conclusions in February 1999 after inquiry into the causes of Staines murder: -

"Certain sections of Santhal tribals were not happy about some of their people getting converted to Christianity. There was no evidence of forced conversions and no material available to show any recent spurt in conversion activities. Santhal tribals live in backward areas. It is possible that neglected tribals who got medical and other facilities were impressed and attracted by the preaching of Christianity and embraced Christianity. Like all traditional societies, the tribal community was not happy with such conversions taking place. Though there has been no open protest against conversions, tension and trouble was growing over the issue of Christian converts not observing tribal customs. The relative affluence of the Christian

converts was also a source of irritation. The activities of Dara Singh have not been checked effectively and he got emboldened by the fact that nothing had happened to him despite many crimes committed by him."

Mr. I.J. Jachuck, IG Crime Branch told that the Nun rape case of Baripada, in Mayurbhanj district was a false case. He also said that only one of the two under-trials that were killed by the mob in Ramgiri Udayagiri was a Christian. He also told that there was some problem in Baliposi, Mayurbhanj last year.

Anandpur District Keonjhar and met the S.O., Anandpur. There were only two cases of murder in 1999 till the second week of December. One of these cases was that of Stains murder and the other, a dowry death case. I was surprised to see many cases of riots of political nature registered at the Police Station. About 15%-20% of the total registered cases at the Police Station were of rioting cases between different political parties like Congress, or BJP or Biju Patnaik Janta Dal Party.

The D.G of Police, Orissa discussed with Shri P.V. Rajagopal, Director, and S.V.P National Police Academy about the atrocities reportedly committed against Christians in Orissa and the police inability to apprehend Dara Singh. D.G.P., Orissa stated that one of the main reasons for the inability of the police to prevent such occurrences and apprehend the accused is the fact that police stations are situated far apart and the strength of the police station is very poor. He stated that the place where Graham Stains was killed was 45 km. away from the nearest police station. This would by itself indicate that reporting the crime and police reaching the spot would take several hours. While as the strength of the Armed Police Battalions has increased, the strength of the civilian police continues to be what it was several decades back. He also explained the reasons behind the atrocities against Christians. It was, according to him, a reaction to the change brought about in the tribal way of life. The Christian missionaries appear to be paying about Rs.300/- per month to the tribals for a prolonged period of 8 to 10 years and once the tribals become dependent on their monthly subsidy, they ask them to convert to Christianity failing which the subsidy is stopped. Tribals who are in receipt of the small subsidy have a better way of life in the tribal areas than the other tribals. There is a general reluctance on the part of the tribals to convert, but this economic factor appears to be motivating some to change their religion. With the change of religion they are not adhering to the tribal customs and there appears to be a conflict between the converted tribals and those ones who are not converted. When the new rice crop comes the tribals have a festival called "Nuakhali". There is a lot of dancing and merry-making and the tribals partake of the new crop. This year the Christian tribals started observing this festival 10 days in advance of the scheduled date disregarding the advice of the tribal elders and the tribal chiefs. The tribal society did not take kindly to this act and did not appreciate the converted tribals breaking the age-old custom. It was as a consequence of this that one of the missionaries Arul Doss was killed. Most of the killings are attributed to Dara Singh and he had now become a cult-figure. Dara Singh has become so popular in the area that none is willing to give any information regarding him even if they come to know about it.

Causes:

A lot of Hindus including those belonging to Mahato caste had rallied around Dara Singh and his associates for their crusades against cow-slaughter as was evident in their loot and liberation of cattle. After his arrest on 10th November 1997 in regard to the offences relating to looting of cattle, local Hon'ble M.P. Shri.Upendra Nayak, President BJP Keonjhar district protested against the arrest and demanded their early release. It seems that the motive behind releasing of cattle was religisio-political as in some of the above cases the assailants were having vermilion on their foreheads and identified themselves as BJP boys. This is to be noted here that BJP had been trying to make its impact in Orissa at that time and the elections were scheduled to be held in the early year 1999. Again this also needs to be emphasized here that on such sensitive issues as the freeing of cows which is held sacred by Hindus and thus saving them from slaughter, the government officials and the policemen may sometimes find themselves in a precarious predicament because of the religiosity involved and fearing that they might be dubbed or seen as irreligious by the fellow Hindus or by the majority community, they may hesitate in taking any action and thus some fanatics like Dara Singh might take undue advantage of such situations.

Two of the ten cases committed by Dara Singh before the Staines murder, related to loot and assault on Muslim cloth merchants/ garment traders. It seems that the motive of the attack on them was mixed –both religious as well as economical. Dara Singh had also helped earlier in the grocery (garment) business of Ramdas, the father of his friend Dipu Das and such attacks might have been done with the motive of scaring away the Muslim competitors and monopolizing the grocery business in the weekly *haat* markets for Ramdas and his sons. After Staines murder, Dara Singh was also involved in another case of murder of a cloth merchant Rehman in the year 1999 in district Mayurbhanj.

Re-conversions after the Staines Case:

The Pioneer dated.27-6-2000 reported that 15 Members of four Christian families in Orissa's tribal-dominated Keonjhar district have sought the local administration's permission to convert to Hinduism. In Kathakata village some tribal were reconverted to Hinduism after the visit of the Puri Shankaracharya to these areas. About 72 Christian tribals were re-converted to Hinduism in a function organized by the Shankaracharya's supporters in Maranadlhi village. The administration has however, decided not to give permission to hold any religious function during the re-conversions ceremonies.

Christian population has grown marginally from 1.98 percent in 1981 to 2.9 percent in 1991. The Missionaries work in the farthest and the most inaccessible areas, and thus divide the tribal society into rival groups, as the converts no longer observe the age-old tribal customs.

Between June 1997 and January 1999, there were ten dispatches from Mr. Graham and Mrs. Gladys Staines, which were published in the Australian Magazine " Tidings".[11]

'TIDINGS'

"JUNE, 1997 Issue

The first jungle camp in Ramchandrapur was a fruitful time and the Spirit of God worked among the people. About 100 attended and some were baptized at the camp.

At present Misayel and some of the Church leaders are touring a number of places where people are asking for baptism. Five were baptized at Bigonbadi.

SEPTEMBER 1997

Praise God for answered prayer in the recent jagganath carfestival at Baripada. A good team of preachers came from the village churches there were record book sales, so a lot of literature has gone into people's hand. Pray for a man named Suraj Singh who bought a Bible. He believes Lord alone deliver him from the fear of evil spirits."

NOVEMBER, 1997

Praise God we now have the Ho New Testament in Oriya Script and many copies are now in the hands of the Ho people. The Ho believers in Thakurmunda still face persecution. For time to time the village people have beaten them up, broken their bicycles and not allowed them to worship in their own church building. Three people came to Baripada to meet district officials and petition for justice. Pray that action will be taken to allow freedom to worship.

APRIL 1998

Jungle Camp means four days of Bible teaching, prayer and the fellowship of Christians living together. It enables believers from other churches to meet with local Christians to discus experiences and encourage one another. Also speakers form other places broaden the vision of those whose lives have been confined to one small village. The Camp can also create hunger in the hearts of those who come just to observe. Each camp has a bookstall, which for many is the only chance to buy Christian literature. We have just arrived home from the Baliposi Camp a day early. Some people form a militant Hindu group who are persecuting the Christians came to the Baliposi Camp but were not able to disturb the meetings. On the last evening the police came and told us to stop the meeting and leave, as they would not able to protect us.

MAY 1998

Six men came to Baripada to speak with officials in the intelligence department regarding the tension I the Thkrumunda. Over the next two months there will be a programme of baptism in nearby villages for those asking for them. These are times of witness to non-Christians too."

JULY 1998

There are many new believers in the Manohorpur church and the work is growing. The devil is now finding opportunity to hinder the work of God. There is disagreement between the young people and the older men of the church. A problem arose about the land on which the church is built and the planned vacation Bible School had to be cancelled. Last year more than 100 children attended this programme. A translation of Daily Life into Oriya is complete. We have been told that a militant Hindu group plans to concentrate on Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts to turn Christian back to Hinduism.

AUGUST, 1998

In many Churches here Sunday schools have ceased to function. I have been advocating these and at a recent church leaders meeting I heard that some have re-started this work.

OCTOBER, 1998

Recently Paul, Matthew, Nehemiah and Misayel went to Deleswar church near Sarat where they encouraged the believers and talked about some problems. Some young men who asked for baptism were found not to be ready. There are still divisions in the church at Manoharpur. It is lovely to see the little girls being cared for in the Rairangpur hostel. They have a wonderful opportunity to learn to read and to learn of the Lord.

NOVEMBER 1998

Four men visited Manohorpur Church to discuss the problems there and much was sorted out. A man who seems to want to be the head of the church wants to bring in or join with two mother groups who do not teach and walk according to the scriptures. Others in the church, particularly young men, who were following this man, now do not do so. Pray for wisdom and grace for Timothy who leads the church there.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1999

It is encouraging to hear of some improvement in the church at Manoharpur and that they are preparing for the jungle camp. Misayel, Paul and Nehemiah visited Patana in early December but as many were away rice harvesting they could meet only with a few. They were able to encourage a new believer who had been a priest of the Sana Dhoram, an animist sect. The village people pleased with him not to become a Christian, saying, 'How can we continue our worship if you leave us?' 'You can do so you like, but I am following Christ' he said. Continue to pray. God is working."

Wadhwa Commission drew some inferences from the above dispatches of Mr. & Mrs. Staines in the Magazine "Tidings": -

(1)Conversions did take place in jungle Camps. (2) These conversions were not caused by any threat, inducement or duress (3) Persons, who had been converted to Christianity were Hindus. (4) Though Staines was involved in ceremonies connected with baptism, it was not that he would baptize persons who are not true believers. (5) In the issue of January-February 1999, Mr. Staines mentions Sanatan Dharam (Sana Dharam) as an animist sect. (6) There was tension between Christian and non-Christian villagers because of the spread of Christianity.

Apart from the above, a perusal of the above dispatches in the Australian Magazine "Tidings" indicates that 1) There were divisions in the Church in Manoharpur and a problem or dispute about the land on which the Church is situated 2) Some Hindu militant groups were creating problems in the jungle camps etc., organized by Mr. Staines. They were planning to concentrate on Mayurbhanj & Keonjhar districts to bring the converted Christians back to Hinduism (July 1998 issue of "Tidings"). 3) There was a meeting of the aggrieved Christians with the Intelligence Officers in Baripada about the tensions in Thakurmunda (May 1998 issue of the Magazine 'Tidings").

All this shows that, the district and police administration as well as Intelligence Agencies were sleeping over the developments in these districts or nobody took them seriously.

Lapses in the Staines case

Following lapses were found in the working of police in the Staines case:
1) Failure to book Dara Singh under NSA: - Dr. K.S Subramaniam Retd. IPS, a former Senior Fellow, Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi reported in the 'Mainstream' magazine [12]

"It is matter of enquiry what prompted the SP of Keonjhar district to bypass his colleague, the DM, and send his recommendation for the preventive detention of Dara Singh to his own departmental superiors who had no direct responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in the district. If what is reported is correct, the SP was possibly avoiding his responsibility and playing safe perhaps in view of the perceived political connections of Dara Singh. It is also possible that the SP and DM jointly decided that the SP should act in this manner in view of their own political perceptions and preferences. All this is in violation (albeit increasingly frequent) of the establishment procedure---- Staines paid the ultimate price. Such violations of established procedures and practices have been underway everywhere in India since Independence with a deleterious effect on the maintenance of public order in an increasingly complex political environment. The major fallout of independence and parliamentary democracy has been the partisan politicization of the administration in a multiparty and increasingly incoherent political system. The hurly-burly of politics and administration after independence, in conjunction with other important developments has undermined the limited neutrality, independence and benevolence, which characterized even the colonial administration. This is a price we have paid for the neglect, after independence, of far-reaching administrative reforms to suit the needs of a new nation with progressive political ideals and goals". [13]

This needs to be stressed here that public order is a state subject and according to the established procedure of action under NSA, the S.P on his satisfaction sends the report to D.M. who after his satisfaction that enough grounds exist for the preventive detention in the interest of public order passes the preventive detention order against a person under the NSA. The Senior Officers like D.I.G., or Commissioner or D.G.P. do not have any role and do not come into picture for taking any action under NSA.

2. Failure to arrest Dara Singh or to get his bail cancelled:

The Wadhwa Commission made the following observations in this regard:
Dara Singh was arrested in Patna P.S. case 80 dated 19th October 1997 and 83 dated 9th November 1997 by the SDJM, Keonjhar. It is interesting to note however that the administration has moved for the cancellation of his bail only on 16th April 1999. Dara Singh however remained an absconded in Patna P.S. case no. 90 dated 19th February 1998. He has also not been arrested in Ghatgoan P.S. case No. 16 dated 9th March 1998; Sadar P.S. case No. 1 dated 5th January 1999.

3. Arrest of 51 innocent persons in Staines Murder Case and their detention for about two months. The High Court ordered that 44 of the 51 jailed be set free because of lack of evidence. The ruling came after the state crime branch made a plea that cases registered against them may be dropped. [14]

4. There was no control over the public visiting the site of the crime. A half- burnt wristwatch recovered by Gurudas Dasgupta M.P. was handed over to Hon'ble President of India. The watch stopped at 12.32. All this shows that immediate investigation was not thorough and important evidence and vital clues were allowed to be lost.

5. There was no SP or Addl S.P. of Keonjhar at the time of the incident at Manoharpur. The post of SP, Keonjhar was vacant from 16th December 1988 to 26th January 1999 when Mr.Ray joined as SP.

6. S.O Thakur Munda, Mayurbhanj was informed about the incident at 4 am, the same night of 22/23-1-1999 but did not reach the spot saying that it is in different Police Station, Anandpur of the other district Keonjhar.

7. About a fortnight before the incident, there was a tension between the converted and non-converted tribals over playing of music during a marriage ceremony but nothing was done.

Wadhwa Commission Report:

The Wadhwa Commission has drawn the inference that if the police and the district administration had got their act together and arrested Dara Singh, things would have been different. They have allowed a criminal to feel that he is invincible. The Commission found that from all angles the report lodged at the police station concerning the incident is doctored FIR, a large part of which has been disowned by the informant himself and also has been shown to be false. The Wadhwa Commission has concluded that the incident of murder of Staines and his two sons was an avoidable tragedy. There was a failure of intelligence both at the State and Central levels. According to the finding of the Commission, the D.M.s and S.P.s were not aware of the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act. The district and police administration was also not aware of Jungle Camps and about the conversions of Santhals and other tribals and the tensions that followed. The immediate causes for conflicts between the Christians and non-Christians in the area was non-participation and non-observance of tribal rituals, non-contribution by Christians in the local religious festivals, and jealousy on the part of the unconverted tribals towards the Christians who had better quality of life when they had started saving money previously spent on drinking and rituals to propitiate spirits and gods. The Commission did not find any evidence of the involvement of any authority or organization behind the Staines murder.

The Commission made the following important recommendations: -

1. It is imperative that development of tribal areas is accelerated.
2. To avoid any distrust among the different communities and to bring in communal harmony, it is necessary that at the school level itself, children are

taught components of all religious faiths making available to them treasure of all faiths.

3. It is necessary to evolve a common framework for the future and for that National Foundation of Communal Harmony be made a statutory body on the lines of National Human Rights Commission.
4. Proposal for transfer of Superintendent of Police should emanate from Director General of Police in the State. IPS and IAS Officers, who are on the cadre of Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, while in their respective Academies, should be taught about the tribals, their culture, their customs and their habits.
5. Intelligence gathering machinery also needs strengthening especially the community intelligence.
6. There should be proper understanding of the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967 and the Rules made thereunder.
7. Visits of VIPs need drastic curtailing as their visits hamper investigation and there is every chance of important evidence being lost by delay in investigation.
8. There should be a Code of Conduct for the political parties when their leaders make statements without verification in a situation like the present one. Leaders cannot make statements merely for gaining political mileage. Their statements should be subdued and not to fan the fire when the atmosphere is communally surcharged. It is the duty of everyone to have regard to each other's faith and to spread a message of love, peace and kindness. Murderer is a murderer to whichever faith he may belong. A criminal is a criminal. Religion need not be brought in such matters. Allow the police to make independent investigation of the crime uninfluenced by politics or religion or caste.
9. Media, both print and electronic, has also to exercise restraint. Screaming headlines should be avoided which have the effect of misleading the public and creating more tension and suspicion among different communities. News headlines in the cases of rape of nun and murder of a Christian boy and girl after rape have been noticed. One cannot imagine the damage that might have been caused to the polity by such headlines and reporting. Reporting of communal strife should not be done without proper verification or an ordinary crime given a communal twist.

B-SUNDERGARH,JHARSUGUDA, AND SAMBALPUR ETC.

SUNDERGARH

According to the 1961 Census, the tribal population constituted 58.1 per cent of the total population of the district and the numerically most important tribes are Oraon, Munda, Kharia, Kisan, Bhuiyan and Gond. Among the total tribal population (440,910) in the district 353,751 were Hindus and the rest 87,159 were Christians according to the 1961 Census. This shows that 19.7% of the total tribal population belonged to Christian community in 1961. District Gazetteer of Sundergarh contains the following relevant information:

"The 1961 Census reveals that most of the tribal belong to Hindu religion but each tribes is having its specific faith and they all believe in totems, magic and sorcery. They also believe in the existence of the malevolent and benevolent spirits. The malevolent spirits are supposed to be the cause of death and diseases and as such are appeased by the offerings of fowls and goats made with elaborate tribal rituals. This religion is also called Alekha Dharma because the only God it believes is Param Brahma, one of whose attributes is Alekha, which means indescribable. The Christian population in the district is mostly spread over in the rural areas of Sundargrah and Panposh subdivisions. According to the Census the subdivision of Bonai had also a Christian population of 14,086. The Lutheran mission started their activities in the Raiboga police station areas as early as 1870. A branch of the German Evangelical Mission, with its headquarters at Kumarkela, has been at work since 1899 and has made several converts. The Roman Catholic Jesuit Mission with headquarters near Ranchi, in Bihar, also claims many converts chiefly among the Oraons. While following the religious festivals and rituals of their new faith these converted Christians also observe some of the customs and festivals, which belong to their tribal past. In Census reports, during British rule, the tribal population was classed as Hindu, Christian or Animists. The distinction between Hindu tribals and Animist tribal is often arbitrary. A large number of tribal people have adopted Hindu religion and worship Hindu gods and goddesses excepting those living comparatively isolated for a long time. But gradually with he spread of education, implementation of various development projects and establishment of industries they have come in close contact with their Hindu neighbours. In general, the tribals believe in a Supreme Being residing in the Sun. They believe in ancestral spirits and a number of natural and malevolent spirits. The tribals lead a primitive way of life and inhabit the remote and less accessible areas of the district where there was no facility for schools previously. In the larger villages schools were established by the Durbar administration, but the tribals looked upon them as useless encumbrances. In the past, if a parent was taken to task for irregular attendance of his children, he would, in perfect good faith, offer to attend on their behalf. From their early childhood they are used to assist their parents in various economic pursuits and attendance at school is of secondary importance. The Christian Missionaries operations in that area were the pioneers in spreading western education and culture among the converted tribals. After Independence the State Government started a number of schools.

The Oraons are the most numerous tribe in the district. They have projecting jaws and thick lips and are cheerful and lighthearted".

Accrding to the book 'The Scheduled Tribes' by Shri K.S.Singh, the population of Oraons following Christianity has increased in Orissa,

"In Orissa, the oraon have a population of 215,536 (1981 census). A study of the census returns shows that the Hindus among them have declined from 76.16 per cent in 1961 to 64.17 percent in 1971 and further to 61.26 per cent in 1981. The Christians during the same period have increased from 23.84 percent in 1961 to 34.37 percent in 1971 and further to 37.41 per cent in 1981".[15]

Shri. B.K Roy Burman writes about the growth of the population of different religious groups among the Oraon tribal society in district Sundergarh;

"In Orissa religious affiliation of the Oraons has run a zigzag course. In 1961, 23.83 per cent of them enumerated as Christians and 76.16 per cent as Hindus. The followers of 'other religions' were negligible scoring a zero. During 1961 – 71, there was a decline in the percentages of both Christians (21.00) and Hindus (64.31). Correspondingly the claimants to be followers of 'other religions' came up Miranda like, almost from nothing to 14.82 per cent. However, there was complete reversal of the trend during 1971 –81. The percentage of the Christians went up to 37.12, while that of the Hindus came down to 61.41 and followers other religions became almost invisible being only 0.54 per cent in number". [16]

Shri Ignes Majhi, Sundergarh told that the Christianity spread along the towns on the railway line as many stations were opened in railway stations like Rajgangpur, Jharsuguda etc. He told that officers are not willing to serve in such areas. He further told that Sambalpur came under British rule due to the Doctrine of Lapse. He told that the cases of tensions between Hindus and Christians are generally sorted out and resolved by District and Police administration.

As per 1991 Census, Sundergarh District has a total population of 1573617 of which Hindu population is 1256916 and Christian population is 259540 (about 16.5% of the total population of the district). Most of the Christians are from Oraon, Kharia, Munda and Kisan tribes. They are concentrated mainly in the areas of police stations Biramitrapur, Bisra, Rajgangpur, Kutra, B.Tarang, Talsara and Lephripada. There were about 28,000 Christians in the Industrial town of Rourkela. Though, Sundergarh and Rourkela are two different districts from policing point of view, and have separate Superintendents of Police, they form part of a single revenue district i.e. Sundergarh. Rourkela town along with adjoining areas was made a separate police district after the Hindu-Muslim riots of 1964.

In Sundergarh District, there are 349 Churches, 14 Nun Hostels and 9 Christian Mission Stations one in the Sundergarh town, two in Raibaga police station jurisdiction, two in Biramitrapur police station and four in Kutra police station.

The Christian Missionaries have been active in propagation of their faith and conversions since long. A large section of Scheduled Tribe people and have been converted to Christianity. The Hindu organizations like V.H.P., R.S.S., Bajrang Dal and Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram have lately become active and are now challenging the activities of the Missionaries. They insist that propagation of Christian faith should be carried out according to the provisions of law and should be without allurements. They are also concentrating on and carrying out re-conversion programs to bring back converted Christian to Hinduism. Thus, due to these activities of Missionaries of both the groups, tension between Christians and Hindus is constantly on the rise in this district.

The Christian Missionaries established Schools in rural areas for giving education to the poor people accompanied with food, medicine, clothing etc for attracting the poor Adivasis towards Christianity.

Both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Missionaries are active in the district. Most of the Protestant Christians belong to the Church of North India (CNI) and Gossner Evangelical Lutherans (GEL) denominations.

INCIDENTS BETWEEN HINDUS AND CHRISTIANS IN SUNDERGARH DISTRICT:

(I) At Pasara in police station Birmitrapur, the Hindus claim to have been observing Ram Navami festival for the last 12 years on a hill called Chilam Tungri. In the year 1998, the Christian inhabitants living nearby removed stone from the hill, which was objected to Hindus. The Christians put a cross on the hill close to *Hanuman Jhandas* (flags), which created serious tension. The matter was resolved through negotiations and persuasion and the cross was removed to a distance. Both the groups keep making allegations of interference in regard to the *Hanuman Jhandas* or cross, which creates disharmony between the communities and tension in the area.

(II) There was a resentment among the Christians to *Shudhikaran* (re-conversion) function at village Pankadihi in Gurundia police station in September 2000, organized by the V.H.P supporters of Bonai Unit

(III) The Father of the Church in village Kantapali reacted when the Adivasi Hindus constructed a temple, though in their own plot but close to the Church in police station Gurundia.

(IV) In January 2000, on the hilltop of Anadhari in police station Raiboga, a cross was erected. At the base of the said hill, the Hindus observe Sarda Puja. Erection of the cross on the top of the hill created resentment among the Hindus.

(V) Resentment was noticed among the Christians in village Barilepta in police station Bisra in August 2000, as some Hindus uprooted the cross, erected by the Christian people at the top of the hillock.

(VI) There is a dispute in village Samnamara in police station Talasara arising out of the construction of a boundary wall of the Church by encroaching on a part of government land by Christian Missionaries which was objected to by the V.H.P.

(VII) There was tension between Hindus and Christian over construction of a "Dharmasala" near Shiva temple in village Sankaraposh in police station Bargaon

(VIII) The Sundergarh Christian Association took out a procession of about 20,000 Christians on 14th April 2000 from R.C Mission Church compound to the Collectorate Sundergarh. At the Collectorate, their leaders including Shri Ignes Majhi, Nelson Soreng, Victor Kujur, Bijaya Toppo and others delivered speeches appealing the Christian community to be united and demanding the withdrawal of the Freedom of

Religions Act. They also submitted a memorandum to the District Magistrate, Sundergarh. There was a reaction to it among the Hindus activists

(IX) Tensions between the Hindus and Christians mounted over the construction of a boundary wall of a disputed graveyard in Sundergarh town.

(X) Discontentment between the Hindus and the Christians was noticed in April 1999, in village Kalsar over fixing of a *Hanuman Jhanda* on the footpath.

The district administration and police resolved most of the above incidents of tensions between the Hindus and the Christians by timely mediation and through negotiations, between the leaders of the communities.

JHARSUGUDA

Total population of Jharsuguda district is 4,41,744. In the Jharsuguda town, there are Christians of both the denominations, Roman Catholic and Baptist Church Christians, though Roman Catholics are in majority. The population of the Christians in the district is 6748 and in Jharsuguda Municipality, there are about 3500 Christians.

A British national namely, John Patrick Bridge obtained Indian citizenship in 1992. Most of the Christians of Jharsuguda are concentrated in Cox colony. In the year 2000, up to end of November, a total 11 foreigners including eight from New Zealand and one from England, visited this district. People belonging to Munda, Oraon, Kharia tribes and Harijans (SC) were converted to Christianity. There are about eight Christian institutions working in the district and about four of them have been registered only since 1997.

SAMBALPUR:

There were 54,679 (about 2% of the total population of the district) Christians in undivided Sambalpur according to the 1991 Census. Most of the Christians are in the rural areas and some of them are in the Sambalpur town. Sambalpur came under direct British control in 1849 because of the Doctrine of and Lapse and the activities of the Christian Missionaries started subsequently though because of the unhealthy climate, no permanent Christian mission station could be established in the district till 1897. Hirakud Dam on Mahanadi is just a few kms away from Sambalpur town.

At present, there are various Christian Missionaries like Catholics, Baptists, Lutherans, and Pentecostals working in the district.

Notes:

1. The Scheduled Tribes by K.S Singh, Page 1047, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994..
2. Outlook 14th February 2000.
3. Outlook July 3, 2000

4. Outlook 14-2-2000.
5. Outlook July 3, 2000.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid
8. The Week Magazine, October 15th, 2000.
9. Outlook 14-2-2000.
10. The Week Magazine, October 15th, 2000.
11. Wadhwa Commission Report.
12. Mainstream March 20, 1999.
13. Ibid.
14. India Today, April 5, 1999.
15. Page 954, Singh, K.S. – 'The Scheduled Tribes', Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994.
16. B.K. Roy Burman – 'The other Side of Conversion' an article in Mainstream.

Chapter – 16

Case study – Northern districts of Chattisgarh

The population of Oraons following Christianity has been showing steady increase in Madhya Pradesh (now Chattisgarh) even after Independence, [1] " In Madhya Pradesh, the Oraon are also called Dhanka and Dhangad. Their number, according to the 1981 census, was 88,819. In this part, marriage between a Christian and a Hindu Oraon is permitted, but in such cases, the Hindu spouse has to be converted to Christianity [2]. A scrutiny of the census data shown that the population of Hindus among them declined from 67.13 per cent in 1961 to 59.99 per cent in 1971 and further to 59.08 per cent in 1981. The Christians have increased from 32.87 per cent in 1961 to 39.59 percent in 1971 and further to 40.84 percent in 1981" [3]

District Jashpur

The population of Christians in Jashpur state was 48,700 in 1931 [4]. In the undivided district of Raigarh the number of Christians according to the 1991 Census was 1,70,923 [5]. Majority of the Christians earlier in District Raigarh are now concentrated in the newly created District Jashpur.

Shri Sarathi resident of Raigarh District D.M Jashpur told me that the tensions in the district are due to political reasons. The figures of re-conversion to Hinduism have always been inflated. All the MLA constituencies are reserved from Panchayat to district level. The BJP party has substantial control in the district and its candidates get elected because of Judeo and propaganda by him. During 1999 and 2000, there has been no case of slaughter of ox and cow. During Xmas celebrations before the year 1999, the cases of cow and ox slaughters were sometimes reported. Among the tribal people, the Oraons have taken maximum advantage of reservation quota in the jobs. Perhaps, they grab 80% of the S.T quota because of better education and more literacy among them, mainly due to Missionary efforts in the past, especially during the British Period.

Shri Blasius Ekka, an advocate told that he was earlier member of the Minorities Commission of the state of Madhya Pradesh during the years 1997 – 1999. He has been a Minister in Arjun Singh's government during the early 1980s and was dropped on several charges. During his childhood days, there was terror of his father in the family. They would enter the house only when he had gone to sleep. His father used to drink and in an inebriated state, he used to beat their mother. He further told that he got converted when he was in Class V or VI at the age of 14 or 15. Their forefathers were *Bhandaris* of Raja Sahab Dilip Singh Judeo's forefather. His father was a forest-guard *(Naka)*. His village is only one or two km from Ambakone Mission station. He was studying in their school and was impressed by the patronizing behaviour of the schoolteachers and wanted to be a Christian around 1945. His father had only one objection to his becoming a Christian that in case of his conversion

to Christianity, it would be difficult to find a suitable girl for him. The Christian Missionaries found a girl for him from among the Christians. He told that their forefathers believed in *Sanatan Dharma*. Around 1930 – 31, a priest was attacked by sword by brother of Raja Sahab and was sent for *Kala Pani*. Before getting converted, the Oraons used to remain dirty. The tribal people had to pay taxes to Raja and had to do *Bhetbegari* (bonded-labour) in his farms or in his hunting expeditions etc. If they did not pay taxes or if they did not do *BHET BEGART,* the lands tilled by tribal people were annexed by Rajas. We were given inferior social status in the Hindu caste-hierarchy. Even our shadows during Hindu religious bathing ceremonies, should not have touched somebody of *Rajparivar*. According to him, there is a story as to how Christian Missionaries entered the state of Jashpur. Once upon a time, a car of the then Raja had gone out of order, and nobody could repair it. But somebody from the Mission of Ranchi repaired and set it right and a friendship developed between him and the Raja. Subsequently, the Raja gave land to the Missionaries in Gholong. The ancestors of Raja Dilip Singh Judeo invited the Missionaries to the area. About Latboura incident, he told that he had visited the place as member of the MP Minority Commission. The temple was not destroyed as such. Only some of the bricks of the temple were removed and just stacked nearby. The Christians did not retaliate because they believe in forgiveness. There are lots of Christians in villages around Latboura. If they had intentions of taking revenge, they could have played havoc on Hindus living in that area.

Shri. Shivkumar Kalluri, S.P. Jashpur told that the Christians employed elsewhere, strike terror before Xmas, when they visit their villages and run out of money due to drinking and gambling sprees. He told that he is a resident of Guntur district and studied in St. Ignatious, Guntur. He told that S.P Raigarh Mr.Madhukumar is a Christian. These districts of Andhra Pradesh were under Madras Presidency during the British period. He opined that the areas under princely states are still backward, while those under direct British rule are progressive, and forwarded-looking. Religion occupies a backstage in these areas of Andhra Pradesh. The people are more concerned as to how they can progress and many of them- almost one from each family is abroad. The Missionaries in Andhra Pradesh do not have this sort of enthusiasm and zeal as we witness here in Jashpur. Before and after Xmas, the Christians are generally found in a drinking spree and then commit some crime like loot etc., when they find themselves having no money even for returning to their places of postings etc. But for the Missionary efforts, these places (Raigarh, Jashpur, Sarguja) would have remained primitives. No case of cow slaughter has been reported during his tenure of the last two years. Raja's figures of re-conversion are fictitious and are more for publicity. They do not want these areas to develop. There are four or five Ashram Schools.

The Bishop and the Vicar General in Kunkuri told that Kunkuri is about 42 km southwest of Jashpurnagar. Bishop Victor Kindo and Vicar General are both Oraons of district. Jashpurnagar. Most of the Missionaries (a few are from Kerala) are locals and have generally studied in St. Xavier's College, Ranchi. Ranchi is only about 170 km from Jashpur. According to them, there was tension in the bordering district of Gumla over the rumours of poisoning of wells and of biscuits and sweets after the visit of Pope to Ranchi on 3rd February 1986. There were some tensions in Jashpur area also at that time. In 1986, a chapel was burnt in Nakna, Lakshmipur in Dharamjaigarh area. In the Latboura incident, Khairwars and some outsiders from Tapkara and Sundergarh were involved. According to

them, the Raja Dilip Singh has only three points (i) -G*har Bapasi* or Re-conversion programmes, the figures of which he inflates. (ii) Oxen or cow slaughter and (iii) if you are a Hindu, vote for B.J.P and if you are Christian, vote for Congress. Catholic Missions were set up in the 1890s and the Protestant Missions were there before that. But most of the Christians of Jashpur and Sarguja are Catholics. There are about 2 lakhs Christians in district Jashpur and 80,000 in district Sarguja. One Father Lievens, of Ranchi Mission fought legal battles for the rights of tribal people to land and succeeded to a great extent, which paved the way for mass -conversions to Christianity in Chhota Nagpur region and the areas around.

History of Christian Missionaries in Chhota Nagpur Area of Chattisgarh

The Christian Missionaries belonging to the Protestant denomination started their mission in Ranchi in 1845 and the first converts were *Kabir Panthi* belonging to the Oraon tribe. Their number by 1868 had increased to 10 thousand. The Catholic Missionaries also became active in the areas around Ranchi after 1880. They set up their Missions in Gholeng and Ginabahar in Raigarh State (now district Jashpur) by the year 1912. In the conversions to Christianity, one Missionary Lievens played a key role. He helped the tribals in their land disputes with the Zamindars. He exhorted the tribals against the practice of gifts to Zamindars and against *Bhet Begari.* The Mission helped the tribals in the fields of education and medical aid. By 1930 lot of Hindu Oraons had converted to Christianity due to Missionary efforts. The Feudatory States of Jashpur, Raigarh and Udaipur (Dharmjaigarh) enacted anti-conversion laws in view of the increasing Christian influence in the area. In 1998, in the undivided district of Raigarh including Jashpur, there were 47 stations of Roman Catholic Church, 9 of Protestant Church of Gossner Evangelical Lutheran denomination, 2 Missions of Church of North India and 1 of Pentecostal Church of God. In the 47 mission centres of Catholic Church, there are 143 Priests including 2 foreigners. Roman Catholic Mission runs 102 primary schools, 49 *Purva Madhyamik Vidyalayas* and 18 Madhyamik and *Uch Madhyamik Vidyalayas,* 16 BTI's, 136 Balwadi Centres, 39 Primary Medical Centres in the districts of Raigarh & Jashpur. In the district of Sarguja, the Catholic Mission has 44 Primary Schools, 32 High Schools, 13 Higher Secondary Schools and 33 Primary Medical Centres. Most of the Oraon tribals of the above regions became Christians before or around Independence. At present about 60 % tribals of district Jashpur are Christians.

Hindu Missionary Organization "Akhil Bharatiya Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, Jashpur"

The Ashram was set up in 1952 by Shri. R.K Desh Pande under the inspiration of R.S.S Chief Shri. Kelkarji at Nagpur. The objective of the Ashram is to organize the tribals and to strive for their uplift and to bring them into the Indian mainstream. Shri Jagdev Oraon is the President of the Ashram.

Activities of the Ashram:

The 60% of the tribals, mostly the Oraons of Bagicha, Sanna, Tapkara, Kunkuri, Kansabal, Pharsabahar, Bagbahar, and Patalgaon became Christians because of the activities of Christian Missionaries and their impact is still felt in the area. To counteract the activities of

the Missionaries, the Ashram under the guidance of Shri. Dilip Sigh Judeo started *Ghar vapasi* (re-conversion) programmes in 1984. There have been about 3,778 re-conversions. This has started a sort of competition between the Ashram and Mission and has given rise to allegations and counter-allegations between them. The task of police has become quite tough in the wake of the conversions and re-conversion programmes of Christian and Hindu Missionaries respectively. Akhil Bharatiy Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, Jashpur, under the guidance of Shri Dilip Singh Judeo, took out a rally or route march for organizing the Hindus in the months of July and August 1995. A precession Shri Balaji *Up-Yatra* was taken out by V.H.P in certain areas of Jaspur district in October 1995 for inculcating values about Indian culture, cow protection and nationalism etc.

Latboura incident

1) There was an incident of damage to Shiva temple on 25-10-95, near village Latboura in the jurisdiction of police outpost Tapkara of P.S. Pharsabahar of district Jashpur, then district Raigarh. The case was registered u/s 295 on the complaint of Shri. Chhabil Khairwar. It was suspected that this was perpetrated by the accused of an offence of cow-slaughter of village Latboura. The villagers of Latboura and other nearby villages entered the house of John Karketta and his brother Prakash Karketta and attacked suspecting them to be involved in the above case of damage to temple. Later on they damaged the statue of Mother Mary in the Christian locality, pillaged and carried on destruction in the houses of Christians and set the house of John Karketta on fire. John Karketta died on way to the hospital, while his brother survived the grievous injuries.

As many as eighty Hindu accused were arrested and sent to jail in this case.

The land adjacent to the temple belongs to Simon Karketta, the father of the deceased John Karketta. There was a dispute about the land in which the temple is located. Simon Karketta claimed it as his own. The Revenue department looked into the matter and found it to be a government land and made demarcations of the temple land accordingly. I was told that the Police had taken action under 107/116 Cr.P.C. before the incidents. The Hindus of village Uparkachar (Latboura) said that an eight-year-old boy of the village saw John Karketta damaging the temple. After coming to know about the temple destruction, the Hindus of the village got agitated and assembled at Bajrangbali temple same evening at about 7 or 8 p.m. and reported about the matter to O.P Tapkara at about 10 p.m. Next day at about 9 a.m., the villagers attacked John Karketta and his brother and some more Hindus from Tapkara came in a truck and joined them in ransacking the houses of Christians of the village. About 12 cases relating to different offences of temple destruction by the Christians, and murder, rioting etc. by the Hindus were registered at the police station Pharsabahar. The cases are pending trial.

It is a case of utter negligence and lack of professionalism on the part of local police. There was enough time for police to reach the spot but they failed to react and appreciate the gravity of the situation. It seems that the senior officers were not informed. The matter was reported to the outpost at 10 p.m. on 25-10-95 and the police station Pharsabahar is just 15 km from the out post. The policemen at the out post and the police station regarded it just as

a routine matter and reached the spot only after the murderous attack and damage had taken place. They could have easily reached the village the same evening or village in the night or before the incident on the morning of 26-10-2000. But perhaps, nobody at the police outpost in Tapkara or at the police station Pharsabahar understood the gravity of the incident and therefore enough time was given by police for hostile and agitated Hindus and anti-social elements to plan, regroup and come from outside etc., and to attack the Christians of the village. The deceased was a *Kharia* tribal. Had it been an Oraon tribal, there might have been repercussions to the incident, as most of the Christian tribals of the district are Oraons. The Christians complained that some people had come from outside i.e. from Sundergarh district and from Tapkara.

According to 1931 census they were 48,700 Christians in Jaspur State and just 29 Christians in Surguja State. This shows that though there were hardly any Christians in Sarguja in 1931, their number increased to 48,110 in 1991. When a sizeable population of a particular tribe adopts a particular religion in a particular area this may spread to other members of the same tribe in the adjacent areas. It is like breaking of the initial resistance of a particular tribe to conversion by the Missionaries.

Sarguja and Korea Districts:

Korea and Chang Bhaskar states along with Sarguja, Udaipur and Jashpur formerly attached to Chhota Nagpur came under the administration of the central provinces in 1905. The capitals of the former three states now forming districts Sarguja and Korea were, Bharatpur of Chang Bhaskar state, Baikunthpur of Korea state, and Bishrampur of Sarguja state.
Sarguja was the second largest district of M.P (Chattisgarh), now perhaps the largest after the trifurcation of district Bastar.

The northeast part of the district Sarguja makes a boundary with the Naxalite affected districts Garhwa, Palamu, Shimdega of Jharkhand state. Even district Sonbhadra on the north of district Sarguja is slightly affected with Naxalite activities.

In Sarguja, the Christian population rose from a negligible 29 in 1931 to a paltry 545 in 1951 and to around 9,000 in 1961 and then to 25,000 in 1971 and to about 38,000 in 1981 and finally a little above 48,000 in 1991.[6] Their percentage rose from 0.07% (in 1951) to 1.88% (1971) and then to 2.31% (in 1991). They were the second largest religious community in the district after Muslims who composed 2.83% of the total population of the district in 1991. The high increase is a direct impact of vigorous Christian Missionary activities in the district. One reason, which accounts for this dramatic increase in the number of Christians from a meager 545 in 1951 to about half a lakh in 1991, is the opening of the areas for Christian activities after the Independence. The Constitution of India in 1950 gave freedom of propagating religion to all the religious communities. Earlier during the British period, the entry of the Christian Missionaries was forbidden in the princely state of Sarguja

The other reason for the growth of missionaries in district Sarguja may be that most of the conversions took place among Oraons, which corroborates to the fact that in India, caste or tribal identity plays a great role.

The tribal population constitutes 54% of the total population of the district
In Sitapur *tehsil* the tribal population is 74.5% of the total population of the *tehsil,* while in Pratappur *tehsil* this ratio is 65.5%. The Scheduled Caste population is only 5.5% to the total population of the district. The Christians are mostly concentrated in Sitapur *tehsil.* The above figures illustrate that the maximum conversions to Christianity have taken place in tribal populations.

According to Anthropological Survey of India (Annexure to the tribal map of India, 1971) the important Schedule Tribes in Surguja Districts are Gonds (about 44% of the total tribal population of the district), Oraons (about 20%), and Kawars (17%).

Following information of the **District Gazetteer of Sarguja** are relevant:
"The Gonds in the district are also sometime referred to as *Kisan* (agriculturists) by other tribal groups. The Gonds are believed to have come here as a conquering race after the break-up of the Gond kingdom in the central Madhya Pradesh.

Another important tribe of Surguja is the Oraon. Ethnologically they belong to the Kolarian tribe. The people belonging to the tribe are simple by nature and prone to gullibility. It is sometimes observed that other tribes maintain a certain distance with them in social intercourse. Some of the festivals peculiar to the District are the Karma, the *Sarful* and the *Kanihari.* The Karma is celebrated during the plantation of rice by many tribes and particularly by the Oraons. At the *Sarhul*, the marriage of the sun god and earth mother is celebrated about the beginning of April. The Kanihari is held previous to the threshing of paddy, and thrashing floors are not prepared unless it is observed. It can only be held on a Tuesday and dancing is the most important item. During the last few decades, a number of socio-religious movements have sprung up in the districts and nearby areas. These movements are known as: Rajmohni, Birsa Bhagat, Mahua Dev and Gabira Guru Movements. All these movements may collectively be called as Bhagti Movements. Some are of the opinion that these movements came about as a direct result of oppression, which had been going on under different moneylenders, over bearing or corrupt officials and autocratic rulers. According to others, these movements sprang up in the District as a direct result of mass conversion of tribals to Christianity. These Bhagti movements started essentially as religious movements but later on took the shape of social reforms also. Initially the Mahua Dev movement started as a religious movement preaching and demonstrating the efficiency of the tribal gods and deities but subsequently helped the people to remove the fear of witchcraft, prohibited drinking of liquor and eating of meat, enjoined daily bath and cleanliness on its followers. Christian Oraons still follow some customs and rituals of tribal religion like *Karma Puja.* The Oraons are stocky, well built, and muscular with pronounced Dravidian features. Their remarkable characteristic, as elsewhere, was their expression of cheerfulness. They seem to be given to a life of gaiety, fun and frolic, and have an eye for the splendid moment during festivals, through their songs and dances. They are also fond of cutting jokes even between members of the family, including brother-in-law, sister-in-law, cousin sisters, etc. Their hair is jet black and look frizzy. The Oraons show an indifference to hygiene and that is why the other tribes have nicknamed them as 'Ravan Bansi' taking the euphony of the word Oraon to suggest Ravan. However, the Oraons,

because of their cheerful disposition and their 'eat, drink and be marry' attitude of life, have earned for themselves a reputation for amiability". [7]

The Nishkalanka Ashram founded in 1955 at Ambikapur is one of the three Rosarian Ashrams in India and their activities are confined to prayers and penance within the premises of the Ashram. They never go out of the monastery for preaching or for any Missionary activities. [8]

There were six mission stations till the 1950s and four more stations were added in the decades, 1960s and the 1970s each. Nine more mission stations were started in the 1980s and 15 more in the 1990s making the total number of mission stations in the district 38. This shows that the numbers of mission stations are fast catching up with the number of police stations in the district (in Sarguja there are 39 police stations) there are almost as many mission stations and during the 1990s lot of mission stations were set up. From the point of view of communal problem between the Hindus and Christians, following police stations are most sensitive: 1) Rajpur in which Jingo Kodora Mission stations are situated and an agitation under the aegis of a Christian supported NGO Bharat Jan Andolan is afoot. Some of the NGOs have taken up the cause that the villagers should not be displaced for the proposed Semarsot sanctuary. An agitation by Adivasi *Swashashan* (self-government) is under the leadership of Brahmadev Sharma of Bharat Jan Andolan. The other sensitive police stations are Sitapur and Balrampur. In the southern part of the district, there is a Buddhist settlement in Mainpath, which is said to be a best hill station in Chattisgarh.

The three main denominations among Christianity in the district Sarguja are 1) Roman Catholics 2) Protestants, 3) Manonites.

The Roman Catholic Mission Stations are in 1.Rajpur, Jhingo 2. Balrampur 3. Kodora 4. Sitapur 5. Vishrampur and there is a Bishop house in Ambikapur.

District Korea has the Catholic mission stations in Manendragarh, Baikunthpur, Chirimiri, Bhainswar and Janakpur.

An officer of the Intelligence Branch told me that the Missionaries work in remote, economically backward, and uncivilized areas. In remote areas, their movements are not noticeable by administration. They frequently visit and help and thus indirectly by eliciting sympathy, influence conversions. The tribals do not get proper response and respect from general castes Hindus but when they become Christians, they get social respect.

According to the 1961 Census, most of the Kurukh / Oraon speaking tribals are concentrated in rural areas of Ambikapur Tehsil and some in rural areas of Samri Tehsil. The number of Kurukh / Oraon speakers in Mahendragarh Tehsil is almost negligible. There are in all 61 languages and dialects spoken in the District. The percentage of speakers of the important languages dialects to the total population is Hindi (77.44%), Kurukh/Oraon (9.38%), Chattisgarhi (6.69%), and Korea (6.67%).

In the Varshik Prativedana (Annual Report) 1997 – 98 of the Madhya Pradesh, Minorities Commission, it is mentioned that The Christian communities of Raigarh and Surguja attracted the attention of the Minorities Commission to the fact that the titles of ownership to lands of non-government educational institutions run by the Christian Missionaries are being cancelled u/s 170 (B) of M.P Land Revenue Act. They complained that these lands are now being entered in the names of tribal people who had earlier donated them to the concerning Christian Institutions.

The Hindu organizations have been making allegations against the Christian Missionaries that they are destroying the tribal culture and distancing the tribal people from the Indian culture and mainstream. But the contributions of the missionaries especially in the field of education and health in these districts cannot be belittled. An NGO Sarguja Mazdoor Vikas Samiti has taken up the cause of reawakening of the people and development programmes for the poor and tree plantation etc., most of its members of Christians and it is said that because of this they are favourably inclined towards the Christian Mission.

About seven institutions are registered under *Videshi Anshadan Adhiniyam.*

On 29th April 2000, the Kurukh (Oraon) tribal people organized a "*Sarhul Mahotsav*" and (collective) *Sarna Puja* programme was organized in Patel Para in Ambikapur town. During the programme, the Goddess Mother Earth was worshipped and a *Shobha Yatra* (procession) was also taken out in the city on the main roads of Ambikapur. During the above *Mahotsava*, it was alleged that the Christian Missionaries have been trying to destroy their tribal identity. They also alleged that on the occasion of *Sarna Puja*, the Christians tried to implant /change the *Sarna* symbol into the figure/symbol of Jesus Christ or rather put the Jesus symbol too in the middle of the *Sarna* symbol. This allegation was said to have been made at the instance /instigation or under the inspiration of Hindu organizations. Many leaders and members of the Oraon society from Orissa and Jharkhand participated in the above programme.

The Hindu Oraons organized a meeting on 11th November 2000 and opposed the granting of tribal status to Christina Oraons.

Father Patras Minj, an Oraon told that most of the Christians are Oraons and other tribals like Korakus are also Christians. He told that there are 73 educational institutions run by the Catholic Missionaries in the districts of Sarguja and Korea and a Women's Holy Cross College. Most of the Christian population is concentrated in the eastern part of the district near Sitapur, Batauli, Mainpart, Rajpur, Shankergarh, Chando, and Balrampur. There about 70,000 Christians in Sarguja and about 6,000 in district Korea. In the year 1998 or 1999, there was a *ghar vapasi programme by* Raja Dilip Singh Judeo in Rajpur area about 35 km. northeast of Ambikapur. The figures of re-conversions are generally exaggerated. Sometimes, some baseless allegations are made against Christians of helping the Naxalites. It may happen that some members of Naxalite groups from Jharkhand state may come to meet their relations in villages in the border areas of Jharkhand state, and whether Hindus or Christians, such relations may have nothing to do with Naxalite activities. About the allegation of planting the symbol of Jesus Christ in the middle of *Sarna* symbol and the

Sarhul Mahotsav on 27th April 2000, he said that the tribal resentment was both against Hinduism as well as Christianity.

On 19th January 1998, a rally was organized in Balrampur under the leadership of Dilip Singh Judeo, which terminated into a meeting in High School, Balrampur Campus. In the meeting six tribals were dressed according to *Kodaku* customs with bows and arrows. About 200 Christians were reconverted and given a pair of *Dhoti and Sari* along with a copy of *Ramayan.* Similarly, on 16th October 1998, the organizers of Shri Amranandji Kalyan Ashram, Jashpur in the presence of Shri Dilip Singh Judeo, did the re-conversion of about 200 people to Hinduism according to Vedic Rituals. On 7th November 2000, a similar programme of re-conversion was organized on Batgaona-Jarahi crossing for the re-conversion of 128 people in the presence of Shri Dilip Singh Judeo and Shri. Amranandji.

District Raigarh

The Raigarh district recorded around 14,000 Christians in 1951, a little above 90,000 in 1961, above 1,32,000 in 1971 and above 1,44,000 in 1981 and 1,70,923 Christians in 1991. The sharp increase of the number of Christians from around 14,000 in 1951, to above 90,000 in 1961 was because of the merger of Jashpur State in Raigarh district. In 1931 there were 48,700 Christians in Jashpur State alone constituting about 50% of the total number of Christians (102,285) in Central Provinces and Berar including CP States.

Tehsil Gharghoda and Tehsil Dharamjaigarh have the maximum concentration of tribal population with figures of 59.8% and 67.6% respectively, while the percentage of tribal population in the district is 36% to the total population of the district. In these two Tehsils, we have the maximum population of the Christians, as most of the tribal population is concentrated in the rural areas. The Udaipur state area now falls in Tehsil Dharamjaigarh of district Raigarh. About the activities of the Missionaries in the Udaipur state, the Niyogi Committee has reported as below:

" In 1936-37, there was an unauthorized attempt made by the Jesuit Missionaries to enter into the Udaipur State for Missionary enterprise. It was found on enquiry by the Agent to the Governor General that they used their station at Tapkara outside Udaipur state which was a forbidden area for proselytizing the subjects of Udaipur, by making loans to people to attract converts and opening Mission schools in Udaipur State without permission and the abstraction of 120 boys and girls from Udaipur for education in the Mission center at Tapkara, and the Government of India warned the Jesuit Mission that any further development of Missionary enterprise in the Udaipur State should be avoided. The Mission was also asked to maintain a register showing in the case of each new convert, his name, his father's name and other particulars including any kind of material benefit given to the converts at the time of their conversion (Col. Meek's Report).[9]

In 1941, the political agent placed many restrictions for the entry of Christian missionaries in the Udaipur State. In 1946, the anti-conversion Act of Udaipur came into force. The Niyogi Committee found that after integration of these princely states into India, Rev. Tigga visited the Udaipur state several times and there was apprehension of mass conversions of Oraons

and government apprehended an imminent danger of breach of the peace and disturbance of public tranquility and an order under section 144 Cr.P.C was passed restricting the entry of Christian Missionaries in the Udaipur sub-division except for religious work.

According to the 1991 Census, Bastar district had the maximum concentration of Hindu population (98.1%) in the undivided Madhya Pradesh and Raigarh had the maximum number of Christians (9.9% in the undivided Raigarh District comprising of present Jashpur district) in the entire state.

Hindu-Christian Tensions in Chattisgarh before the reorganization of states

There was lot of tension in the northern districts of Chattisgarh before the reorganization of states. The tensions started right from the day India adopted its Constitution and gave Freedom of Religion to all the people of the country and the Christian Missionaries entered these areas for the purposes of conversion of tribals especially Oraons to Christianity. Earlier, various anti-conversion laws in Raigarh, Sarguja, Udaipur and other princely states banned the entry of the Christian Missionaries. In 1950, the missionaries became active in the areas of these states bordering the state of Bihar and missions were opened in Sitapur and Ambikapur in Sarguja district. The main reasons for the tension were the proselytizing activities of the Christian Missionaries in the districts of Raigarh, Jashpur and especially in Sarguja and the alleged involvement of the Christian Missionaries in the demand for inclusion of princely states of Sarguja and Jashpur etc., into the state of Bihar and its opposition by Hindus. It was alleged that the concentration of the missionary enterprise funded with the foreign money in these inaccessible regions, was done with the ultimate design for the creation of a separate state "Adivasistan" or "Christistan" on the lines of Pakistan etc. On the other hand, the Christians particularly the Missionaries complained of harassment of Christians by government officials. Missionaries were reported to be carrying on propaganda for the isolation of the tribals from other sections of the community and for the movement of Jharkhand.

Gandhiji resented this approach to these classes and asked the Missionary to influence the minds of the *intelligentia*, but he was told that the uneducated and the unsophisticated classes were more responsive to religious appeal as they were in real need of it.

Mr. Jaipal Singh, the father of the Jharkhand movement and the Captain of the Hockey team, which won the first Olympic gold medal for India, protested in 1947 against the merger of Jashpur and Sarguja with Madhya Pradesh. He and other tribal leaders were for the creation of a separate Jharkhand state including the areas of the princely states of Chattisgarh.
To counteract this movement, the non-Christians formed Prajamandal.

A meeting was organized by the Lutheran Christians at Bargaon in Jashpur to further the propaganda of merger with Bihar. There was propaganda on the border villages of Sarguja district by Christian Missionaries of Palamu and Ranchi. In October, 1948, a Gaonthia of Surguja was detained under the Public Safety Act for objectionable activities and a search of his house revealed him in possession of letters which showed that he was an active worker of the Jharkhand movement, on behalf of the Missionaries and that the agitation was still being

carried on for the creation of a separate Adivasis Province. The Gaonthia was ultimately released on his giving a written undertaking that he would not take part in any subversive activities.

As Missionary activities spread in Sarguja district, the local non-Christians got alarmed. In 1952, leading citizens of the district, including the Maharaja of Sarguja distributed pamphlets and addressed gatherings advising the Adivasis not to give up their religion for the sake of monitory benefits or temptations. Members of the RSS and Arya Samaj joined hands and intensified propaganda against missionary activities. A conference of Virat Hindu Rashtriya Sammelan was convened at Ambikapur where all non-Christian organizations were asked to present a united front against the Christians and the Jharkhand movement. There was tension in the area, which was attributed to the objectionable methods adopted by the missionaries. In May 1951, Rev. K.C. Burdett took out a procession of about 25 followers in a truck in village Chando and singing provocative songs denouncing the Hindu religion. The case was not prosecuted as Rev. Burdett tendered a written apology. In village Salba, in police station Baikunthpur, 16 Christian preachers entered the house of a Oraon in November 1952, threw away his utensils and threatened him with violence because he had opposed conversions. On another occasion, the *pracharaks* in the same village Salba in the area were prosecuted under section 506 IPC for threatening and intimidating the local Oraons. In some other villages of the area also, the cases under different sections were registered after reports of the use of violence and threats by the newly appointed *pracharaks* (preachers).

There were complaints by villagers of police station Samri in Sarguja against Patras Kerketta of the Roman Catholic Mission and other *Pracharaks* about conversions to Christianity after giving medicines. Sub-divisional officer did an inquiry and according to the wishes of the villagers, the children were re-converted to Hindu religion and Patras Kerketta tendered an apology to the ADM. Rev. Kerketta made a complaint in March 1950 that converted Christians had been beaten by a Head Constable and handcuffed. The Sub-divisional officer (police) made an inquiry into the matter and the allegations were found untrue. Father L. Von Royee of Ambikapur made another complaint in November 1952 against a Head Constable for having molested a Christian lady teacher. A Circle Inspector did the inquiry and the allegation was found false. A case of smuggling of rice worth Rs.25/- from Sarguja state to Bihar against Rev. J.C. Christy, head of a mission with headquarters in Palamu district, was registered. Another case under section 332 IPC for causing injury to public servant in February 1952 was registered against him. He was convicted in both the cases.

Some of the Christian Missionaries complained of harassment of Christians by government officials but senior officers found these complaints false after inquiries. The Niyogi committee found that during the early 50s the conversions by Missionaries were limited to Oraons alone. Whereas Missionary activities were confined to only three villages prior to 1951, it covered 23 villages of Sarguja district where large number of conversions took place. In 1952, there were more than 4,000 conversions.

A committee under Retired Justice Niyogi was constituted for looking into these matters and complaints from both sides. The Committee covered the area of 14 districts of eastern Madhya Pradesh, (Raigarh, Sarguja, Raipur and Bilaspur, -now mostly lying in Chattisgarh

and Jabalpur), eastern Maharashtra (Amaravati, Yeotmal, Buldana and Akola) and southern Madhya Pradesh (Nimad, Mandla, Betul, Chindwara, and Balaghat.

The Niyogi Committee found that there were more than 360 conversions in ten day from 1st to 10th February 1952 and that there was an attempt to alienate the Indian Christian community from their nation and that the mass conversions effected in the Sarguja district could hardly be justified as exercise of religious liberty and that there has been no discrimination against Christians as a community anywhere in Madhya Pradesh. The Committee further observed that the Strength of the Foreign Missionary has increased by 500 since 1951. There was an invasion of the Missionary teams in the Surguja district, which had been closed to the Missions before the integration in 1947 in Madhya Pradesh The Committee highlighted how money flowed into the Sarguja district to effect mass conversions after it was opened to Missionary, pursuant to the liberal provisions of the Constitution of India.

The Committee also recommended for the enactment of an anti-conversion law, which however, could not be passed in the 1950s, and the legislation in this regard came as late as 1968.

The government of Madhya Pradesh, pursuant to the provisions of Article 46 of the Constitution of India, created a separate Tribal Welfare Department. Under Article 46 of the Constitution, the State is directed to promote with special care the educational and economical interests of the weaker sections of the society in particular, the Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribes and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. The Tribal Welfare Department set up a series of schools in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh. Roman Catholic Missions protested against the establishment of these schools side by side with the missionary schools in Jashpur district and other areas.

It was alleged by the Missionaries that the schools were opened mostly in those areas where missionary run schools had already existed with the intention of weakening their hold on the tribal people. As a protest, the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Congress Government, Shri Shukla was shown black flags by a section of Christian community when he visited Jashpur.

Notes:

1. Singh, K.S. – 'The Scheduled Tribes', Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Central Provinces and Berar 1931 Census Vol.XII, Part II- Tables by W. H. Shoobert, Supdt., Census Operations, CP & Berar, Nagpur, 1932 publication.
5. 1991 Census.
6. Central Provinces and Berar 1931 Census Vol.XII, Part II- Tables by W. H. Shoobert, Supdt., Census Operations, CP & Berar, Nagpur, 1932 publication.
7. Sarguja Gazetteer
8. Ibid.
9. Niyogi Committee Report

Chapter – 17

Case Study: Southern Orissa

The districts Brahampur, Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Koraput, and Kandhmals make the southern part of Orissa. Out of these districts, Kandhmals, and Gajapati are super sensitive from the point of view of communal tensions between Hindus and Christians. Apart from these two districts, Rayagada and Koraput are also sensitive. There have been some incidents in Brahampur town as well. There is some sensitivity in other districts also because of the conversion and re-conversion activities of the Christina and Hindu Missionaries.

In Phulbani there were 75,725 Christians in the district according to the 1991 Census. (about 8.8% of the total population of the district). About 98% of the Christian population is in the rural areas of the district. In Ganjam there were 1,30,812 (around 4.1% of the total population of the district) Christians in the undivided district of Ganjam according to the 1991 Census. About 97% of the Christian population was in the rural areas of the district. Now district Gajapati, has been created out of the district Ganjam and made a separate district. In Koraput there were 93,939 Christians (around 3.1% of the total population of the district) in the district according to the 1991 Census. About 83% of the Christians live in rural areas of this district. [1]

Gajapati, Rayagada, and Malkangiri make border with Northern parts of Andhra Pradesh. District Gajapati lies east of Rayagada. District Kandhmals is situated north of districts Gajapati & Rayagada. The terrain of most parts of these districts is hilly with narrow valleys. Most of the areas are inaccessible and therefore, the movement of force into interior areas becomes difficult and takes lot of time. Cerebral Malaria and Kala-azar are prevalent in the interior areas. The officers and Government servants are reluctant to serve in these areas and are generally sent as a sort of punishment. There are always vacancies in the government departments in these areas.

Tribals along with the Schedule Caste Panas and Dombos predominantly inhabit these districts. In Kandhmals district, the Kandh tribals constitute about 50% of the total population with Pana S.C's as the second largest caste. In the districts of Rayagada and Gajapati, Savaras lead in population with Pana S.C's standing second.

It is said that Panas are generally resident of plains and migrated to hills for barter business in salt, tobacco, chillies, onions, dried fish etc. in tribal villages. They also worked as errand boys for the tribals. The tribals were given to drinking and when they were left with nothing, they went to Panas for loans. If the tribals did not repay the loans, the lands passed into the hands of Panas. Because of the usurious practices, the tribals detested the Panas. All the lands was made cultivable by tribals by clearing forests and thus belonged to the tribals. During the British period many Panas had embraced Christianity. The Christian Missionaries supported them. Through the Missionaries, the British Government was often influenced in favour of Panas in their disputes with the tribals. [2] Mission Hospitals generally

helped Panas only. As no medical help was generally coming to the tribals, they continued believing in witchcraft attributing all the diseases to it.

Against this background many tribal rebellions against the government and incidents of confrontation between Adivasis and Harijan Harijans have taken place in the past.
Adivasi Harijan confrontations sometimes have religious overtones of Hindu-Christian or Tribal-Christian nature.

Among the Adivasi Tribes, Saoras are generally concentrated in district Rayagada, the Kandhas or the Kondhs in district Kandhmals and in Bissam Cuttack, Rayagada, and Jhadias and Gadabas are mostly in district Koraput.

About the Kandhas and Saoras of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, K.S Singh in his book "The Scheduled Tribes" writes:
"Census figures about Kondh/Kond/Kandha show that the population of Hindus declined from 99.23 per cent in 1961 to 97.74 per cent in 1971 and further to 90.26 per cent in 1981. The number of Christians, on the other hand, increased from 0.77 per cent in 1961 to 2.25 percent in 1971 and further to 3.20 per cent in 1981. They believe in benevolent and malevolent gods and spirits.[3]

"The Saora believe in the existence of benevolent and malevolent spirits and deities. The 1981 Census returns 92.97 percent of the Saora, Savar, etc., as followers of Hinduism, 7.00 percent as Christians and the remaining 0.03 percent have not stated their religion. A comparison of the census returns between 1961 and 1981 shows that the population of the Hindus declined from 99.45 percent in 1961 to 96.05 percent in 1971 and further to 92.97 percent in 1981, while the Christians increased from 0.55 percent in 1961 to 4.95 percent in 1971 and to 7.00 percent in 1981. The Saoras of Andhra Pradesh are distributed in the districts of Vizianagaram and Srikakulam, and to some extent in Visakhapatnam district. The 1981 census records 99.60 percent of the Savara as the followers of Hinduism, 0.28 percent as Christians. Some of the Saora joined the Naxalite movement between 1967 and 1975 to work against exploitation by the dominant communities of the area". [4]

District Rayagada

The district Rayagada was earlier a subdivision of district Koraput. It is in the Southwest Police Range, which has its Head Quarters at Sunabeda. The district had a population around 7 lakhs in 1991. The tribals accounted for 56 % and the Scheduled caste to over 14% to the total population of the district. This shows that over 70% of the population comprises of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.

Additional S.P. Rayagada Sunita told that there are tensions between tribal people and scheduled caste people in the district over lands. If the matter is resolved or conciliated at the sowing time, nothing happens. If this is not done so, then at the time of harvesting season, the tribals come and forcible cut and take away the crop. People have even opposed to development projects as was evident from the incident of police firing recently in the year

2000 when they were opposing the setting up of a Alumina factory. Land is more important for them.

Norman Lewis has described the conversion activities of the Missionaries in the region inhabited by Lanjia Saora near Gunupur in district Rayagada and near Vamsadhara River close to the border with Andhra Pradesh in his book "A Goddess in the Stones":

"Suddenly we were in an area of Christian missionary effort and conversion. The Indian government had consistently opposed the presence of missionaries in wholly Hindu areas, but tolerated Christian evangelism in tribal country such as this, persuaded that the integration of the tribals into the national society can best be effected by the demolition of tribal customs and religious beliefs. The Catholics and Lutherans have long shared the harvest of souls and continue, often in fierce competition, to confuse potential converts who find it hard to understand why the same God is to be reached by such widely divergent paths. To its credit the government has banned fundamentalist sects of the kind involved in recent years in Latin-American scandals in which they have been charged with forcible conversion and genocide. The missionaries bought conversion with food and medicine. They were the only source of anti-malarial pills in the anopheles-ridden mountain villages of the Saora country. If the Saoras were only required to say, Yes, I believe in God, before receiving the handout, he thought it would have been an excellent thing. It turned out that much more than that was expected in exchange to complete the deal. The Saora had to convince the good father, or the Christian evangelist, that he no longer believed in the Earth Mother, the gods of fire and water, the gods and goddesses in charge of the fertility of a whole assortment of crops, in the Lord of Thunder, the Guardian of Roads, in Thankurani, the blackened pole under its thatched roof defending the village, in the goddesses of each individual household, the cobra god to be placated with flute music and fed with rice and milk, and Labusum, Divine Earth Worm and Creator of the World. The Saoras saw no objection to adding the Christian deity to the others, but even with the magic tablets within their grasp were profoundly troubled at the obligation of doing away with all the rest. We Saora have many gods, A total of twenty-three was agreed upon. Most of them have always been kind and useful to us, the Gomang said. The missionary is asking us to exchange twenty-three for one, plus a month's supply of Nivaquin. It seems unreasonable." [5]

The Incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians in district Rayagada:

1-Village Jharling, police station Gunupur:
There is a church house in the village, which is managed by Sadananda Sugriba Bidika. There are 50 Harijan families, 200 Adivasi families and 15 other caste people residing in the village. Out of 50 Harijan families, 11 got converted to Christianity. Sadanada Bidika adopted Christianity in the year 1992 and is working as a *pracharak.* He is responsible for most of the conversions to Christianity. In the year 1997, the local people objected to the offering of prayers by Christians in the Harijan locality. The Christians afterwards constructed a mud-built thatched-roof prayer house outside the village. It is complained that this prayer house is built on a Government land.

The Christians observed a Baptist religious function from 20.7.99 to 24.7.99 in village Nilanguda. Sadanand Bidika along with a widow Christian *Pracharika* preached to the Harijans of the village that their woes and miseries would end if they adopted Christianity and told that they would not get any benefit by worshipping *tulsi* plant and stone. They further, told that if they became Christians, no decease would visit them and the polio of a child and wound of a housewife would be cured. The complainant Panchanana Lima told that when he refused to get converted to Christianity, Sadanand Sugriba Bidika threatened him to implicate him in a dowry case, as the complainant's wife is her niece. The police during the course of investigation, found sufficient evidence against the accused Sadanand Bidika and arrested him in August 1999 and charge-sheeted the case u/s 506 IPC and section 4 of Orissa Freedom of Religion Act 1967.

2-In the jurisdiction of police station Chandrapur, one Saheb Dalai, a S.C Christian of village of Gundriguda got patta of about 28 acres land in 1966 in his favour and was in possession of the said land from the people of S.T. Community. The Adivasis of different villages in Chandrapur under the banner of Kui Sanskrutika Unayana Parishad, Kui Labang Sangh and Chasi Mulia Samiti started a movement of forcible harvesting of standing paddy crops from Harijans in a number of villages in the area including village Lidingpadar, Gundriguda, Khilundi, Taparang etc. taking the plea that the same lands presently under occupation by the Pana Christians actually belong to Adivasis. They alleged that the Panas have cunningly taken possession of the lands from the innocent and illiterate Adivasis. There are disputes between both the Adivasis Christians and the Harijan Christians of the area as well as between Adivasi Hindus and Harijan Christians. There have been cases of forcible possession of land or harvesting of crops generally belonging to S.C Christians by schedule tribe people belonging to both Hinduism and Christianity. The role of peace committee meetings becomes quite limited in such situations as in the present case in the areas, which are affected by Naxalite activities. Though a peace committee meeting was held under the chairmanship of ADM in 1999, its recommendations could not be implemented. Chasi Mulia Samiti, Gajapati have circulated a leaflet in *Oriya* demanding the Government to wind up all the Police camps of Rayagada and Gajapati District which were set up for maintaining law and order due to tensions between S.C's and S.Ts. In the leaflet, the Government has also been threatened against dire consequences if their demands are not accepted. The areas of district Gajapati, Rayagada and Malkangiri bordering northern districts of Andhra Pradesh are affected with Naxalite activities.

3-Village Mundabali P.S. Bissam-cuttack, District Rayagada
The complainant, Shri Balram Kausilia of Village Mundabali, on 15-1-98 submitted a report at P.S. Bissam-cuttack that seven accused of his village along-with two outsiders who had projector and reels, showed a film on 12-1-98 on Christian religion in Harijan street despite opposition by the villagers. This was done with a motive for converting people to Christianity and it hurt their religious feeling and sentiments. The accused persons showed the film in the government *Anganwadi* center near the tribal population on the next day. The accused also propagated that they would go to hell, if they failed to see the film and said derogatory words against the Hindu religion. They also told people that they would get nothing by worshipping their "*Dangar Devata*". The accused denied the charge and stated that they only showed a film on Jesus Christ. They did it with the motive, that thus the people

would know how the Lord Jesus helped the poor in the film. They confessed that they did not obtain permission about showing the film from district authorities in the village, which is a prohibited area under the D.K.D.A. (Dandakaranya Development Authority, now called KBK or Kalahandi Bolangir Koraput Project).

The Mundabali village is in the foothills, and falls under P.S. Bissm-cuttack. The police investigation found that there was an element of allurement and false promises in the attempts of the accused to convert the villagers by making propaganda to the effect that those who would take to Christianity would get free medical facility, government jobs etc. Confidential police inquiries also revealed that the accused persons made persistent efforts to convert some of the Adivasis and Harijans of the area to Christianity. --The police during investigation arrested six male accused under sections 294/34 IPC read with Sec.4 of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act. Three female accused surrendered in Court and were released on bail.

District Gajpati

The district of Gajapati is very sensitive from communal point of view. From 1997 till date, two communal incidents over religious symbols occurred in Gajapati district – one at Serango under Serango Police Station and another at Ranalai under R.Udayagiri Police Station.

Communal tension arose at Serango when some miscreants disfigured the 'Cross Mark' displayed at Samar Hill, and Hindus and Christians clashed, Gajapati district. In this connection, Serango Police Station case no.29 & 30 dated.26.7.1997 were registered and preventive measures were taken to prevent a breach of peace.

Ranalai Incident:

There was communal flare-up in March 1999 over the issue of the disfiguration of Cross Mark painted on a big stone on the hill-top of the Khamari Hill at village Ranalai under police station R.Udayagiri. The communal tension developed which led to arson of the Pano Christian *bastis* of village Ranalai. In this connection R.Udayagiri P.S case no.10/99 u/s 395/436/147/148/149IPCand25ArmsActNo.11dt.16.3.99u/s353/341/506/426/186/323/332/324 IPC and No.12 dt.16.3.99 u/s 147/148/294/323/436/149 IPC/3 SC/ST Act have been registered.

The village Ranalai is inhabited by members of both Christian and Hindu community in 3:1 ratio with 165 Christian families and 60 Hindu families. They were living peacefully and were extending all possible help to each other till the incident of 8th December 98 of R.Udayagiri. On 1st February 1999, B.J.P. had organized a rally at Chheligada hardly 6 to 7 km. away from the village and the seeds of communal hatred and suspicion were sown after that meeting. There was a symbol of Cross on a piece of rock on Khamari hillock since 1972 and as claimed by the people of Christian community, they used to pray there on Good Friday. On 8.3.99, the villagers of Ranalai found that some mischief mongers have tampered with the cross symbol at Khamari hill by making it a *Trishul.* People of both the

communities had a meeting on 10.3.99. The villagers decided to allow the cross to fade up in the rain and not to paint a fresh symbol of any religion. As the villagers settled the matter among themselves, it was not brought to the notice of police or any other Government servant and the tension somewhat subsided. However, again on the morning of 15.3.99, the Hindus of Ranalai and of the neighbouring villages disfigured the cross. Through mediation of police and the Block Development Officer, both the parties reached a settlement that Hindu members of the committee would wipe out the disfigured cross on 16.3.99. The members of Hindu community went to Khamari hill and painted lime over the disfigured symbol. At about 12 in the noon, on 16th March 1999, the B.D.O., R.Udayagiri received a telephone about the gathering of Hindus in large numbers for attacking the Christians. The C.I in-charge of the police station R.Udayagiri proceeded to the village and found only children and women in the Hindu street. It is strange that though the Christians have been shown by the C.I to be assailants and as precipitating the incident, these were the Christian houses, which were burnt. The houses of the Christians were burnt down, though the Christians outnumber the Hindus in the village. In this case, the Hindus from the neighboring villages had collected and committed arson and rioting in Christian *basti*. Another question about which the C.I has made no reference in the report lodged in the police station is where the Hindu men were at that time.

Three cases were registered in regard to the incident at the police station G.Udayagiri. Two cases related to the cross -complaints lodged by the members of the Christian and Hindu communities blaming each other for the incident. CI of police R.Udayagiri also lodged a report at the police station that the Christian community manhandled him while he was performing official duty for controlling the communal incidents in the village.

Again tension mounted when a voluntary organization "New Hope" with headquarters at Muniguda under took construction of 36 houses for affected Christian people, whose houses were burnt in the incident of arson on 16.3.99. Besides this, the N.G.O also proposed to construct a Hospital and a school in the locality. The Hindu Community who claims that the land originally belonged to Hindus vehemently opposed such activities of the N.G.O. Preventive measures like promulgation of section 144 Cr.P.C. around the areas of the disputed site were taken to prevent breach of peace.

G.Udayagiri Incident:

On 1.12.98 the bus carrying about 35 tribals from different villages to Maharashtra was looted by a criminal Jay Singh, a Pana Christian and along with his associate. All the tribal passengers returned home without getting any refund of the fare of their tickets collected by the bus-owner. The case of loot was registered at the Police Station R.Udaigiri.

Next day the tribals from nearby villages detained the bus and made their intentions clear to the bus-owner as well as the police and administration that the bus would not be released till the refund of their bus ticket fares was made to them. But the bus was somehow released in the mid-night of 4/5 Dec 98, which infuriated the tribals. On 5th December 98 accused Jaya Singh and his associate were arrested and were sent to Sub-Jail R. Udaigiri on 6.12.98. Now before going to the main incidents of 8th Dec. 98 a few words about the local Hindu

sentiments are necessary here. It is said that the local Hindus had grievances against both the noted Pana Christian criminal Jaya Singh and the Officer I/C Police Station, R.Udaigiri. Jaya Singh assaulted a VHP activist temple priest Laxmi Baba when he refused to allow a Pana Christian porter to carry his cement bags. Jaya Singh was also President of the local Pana Christian porters group. This assault on a VHP activist hurt the sentiments of local Hindus. Earlier a dispute between Hindu and Christian porters associations had resulted in different areas allotted to the associations.

The tenant of a Jagannath temple in R.Udaigiri according to the clause of the contract was supposed to supply daily *Prasad* to the temple. But as he failed to do so, some of the Hindus of R.Udaigiri forcibly harvested the crop. In this case Shri. H. Singh, officer I/C of Police Station R.Udaigiri arrested 9 Hindus of R.Udaigiri in the last week of November 98. All this explains why the local Hindus supported and instigated the tribals in their agitation since 1st Dec. 98 and attacks on Sub-Jail, Police Station and Christian Basti. It was complained by the Hindus that the Officer In Charge of Police Station R. Udaigiri, an S.C. Officer was soft towards S.C.s (Pana Christians) and did not take strong action against Jaya Singh and that he was prejudiced against the caste Hindus.

Set against this background let us now continue the sequence of events. On 7th December, 98 the tribals congregated at the weekly market in R.Udaigiri town and 150 of them armed with bows, arrows etc. came to the Police Station and demanded that Jaya Singh and his associate should be handed over to them for trial in a *Praja Court*. They further demanded that S.P and D.M should immediately come to them to settle the issue of looted bus ticket fare. They waited at the P.S. from 11 A.M to 2. P.M for them and when the Senior Officers did not come, they dispersed after uttering threats of dire consequences on the following day. In the evening of 7th December the road to R.Udaigiri town was blocked by felling trees, which made the movement of the force to Udaigiri very difficult if not impossible.

On 8th December, 98 about 3000 Savara Tribals flouted the S-144 Cr.P.C. and in the presence of ADM, DSP, Circle Inspector R.Udaigiri, Officer In Charge R.Udaigiri and two sections of force burnt the Police station records and the two Jeeps of ADM and CI parked inside the P.S. One group from the agitators left for attack on R.Udaigiri Sub-Jail. Some of the local Hindus and tribals rushed to the local Christian Basti situated just behind the Police Station and set fire to the houses of the Christians. The Hindus are said to have dispersed after this but the tribals waited for the group that had gone to Sub-Jail to return. Jaya Singh was killed during the attack on Sub-Jail itself but his body and his other associate Trisanku Behera Dalai who was till then alive were taken to the Police Station and were set on fire in front of the police station.

There is another angle attributed to the incidents of 1st to 8th December 98. Some of the principal accused are said to be sympathizers of Kui Labanga Sangha, an organization of the tribals on the lines of P.W.G under the leadership of Buddha Gomango against their exploitation. After the incidents of 8th December 98, the leaflets were circulated to the effect that Kui labunga Sangh, own the responsibility of the incidents.

It seems that the senior officers did not appreciate the gravity of the problem or local officers did not properly brief them. The senior officers must have passed R.Udaigiri in the initial stages of the problem, when VVIP, HH Dalai Lama was camping only a few kilometers away from R.Udaigiri from 2nd December to 4th December 1998.

The incident took place over a paltry amount of a few thousand rupees looted from bus and for each passenger it meant just a few hundred. But even that amount means a lot for tribals living below poverty line in these under-developed areas. The administration by sensing the gravity of the situation and the feelings of the tribals, could have helped by giving away the looted amount to each of them especially when the issue had been raging continuously in R.Udaigiri for one full-week from 1st of December 98.

Three cases were registered regarding the incident at the police station G.Udayagiri. (Against thousand unknown persons of Saora tribe.

A Commission of Inquiry was constituted by Orissa Government to look into the above incidents of communal violence at Ranalai and R.Udayagiri in police station R.Udayagiri. Shri K.C.Jagadev Ray, a Retd. Judge of the Orissa High Court has submitted its report to the government. The report has not yet been made public.

LAND DISPUTES BETWEEN ADIVASIS & HARIJANS

The basic issue of discord between the Adivasi and Harijans is the land. The Kandhas are reclaiming the lands now under the possession of the Pano Christians on the ground that these lands belonged to their forefathers and these Panos have fraudulently recorded these lands in their name.

Leaders of organisations namely 'Kui Labanga sangha', Chasi Mulia Samiti, and Lok Sangram Manch are instigating the gullible Adivasi people. Persons namely Sabyasachi Panda, Buddha Gamange, Htringia Majhi and other Adivasi leaders are instigating the Adivasis to indulge in wanton act of violence against Pana Christians.

Sustained efforts are being made by both police as well as Revenue authorities to resolve these land disputes by organizing revenue camps/courts and through peace committees.

The following incidents relating to land disputes took place in the district since 1997:

There is a land dispute between Adivasis and Pano Christians in village Sindhaba under police station Adava.

In December 1998, in village Mukundapur, a clash between tribal people and Christians took place regarding a dispute over land. During the incident, the Pana Christian *basti* was set ablaze by Adivasis. In this connection a case was registered in police station R.Udayagiri.

Police opened fire in December 1999 on tribals of neighbouring villages who had collected with bows and arrows in village Majhiguda to take forcible possession of a land owned by

Pana Christians. Seven tribal people lost their lives in the police firing, while the tribals killed a Pana Christian by bows and arrows.

In June 1999, a mob of about 2000 Adivasis of village Nidhiguda and its adjoining villages armed with deadly weapons came to village Dolipanka (Amarpur) and ploughed forcibly about 2 acres of land of Pano Christians. In this connection a case has been registered in police station R.Udayagiri.

There is a land dispute between Souras and Pano Christians in village Ranalai in police station R.Udayagiri In this connection preventive proceedings u/s 144 Cr.P.C were submitted in the year 2000.

There is a land dispute between Adivasi and Pana Christians at village Dabaraguda in police station R.Udayagiri. Preventive reports for proceedings u/s 107 Cr.P.C were submitted against both the parties in the year 2000.

There is a land dispute between Saora tribal people of Kutiniguda and Pano Christians of Dhepanuda in police station Adawa. Due to timely intervention of local police, the situation was brought under control and preventive proceedings u/s 107 Cr.P.C against both the parties were submitted.

There is a land dispute between Adivasi and Pano Christians in villages Tiamma and Poipada in police station Mohana. In both the cases police took preventive actions.

In 1941, there were serious law and order problems in the form of riots between the Panos and the Saoras or in the form of attacks on Panos by Saoras. We have almost similar problems between them in regard to the land disputes at present in the districts of Gajapati, Rayagada etc., of South Orissa. Shri S.K. Ghosh, Retd. IP, who was posted to these areas mentions in his book "The Light of the Other Days" about the problems which police face in regard to such tensions;

"In 1941 Saoras, who had deep-rooted acrimonious relations with the Panos, the Scheduled Caste people, resorted to lawless activities of arson, loot dacoity, murder and rioting with theft in which the Panos were the victims. The absence of good communication made the disturbed areas almost inaccessible. The movement of force to disturbed areas was beset with insurmountable difficulties. It has unhealthy climate and against this background government officials did not live in their places of posting and had no touch with the local residents. If a good officer was sent there, he was promised he would not have to stay long. More often the officer who came had some contempt to purge or some misdemeanor to be forgiven. A large part of the land passed away from the tribals into the hands of a rapacious and sedentary class (i.e. the Panos) who were detested by the tribals. Even government officials—the police, revenue, excise and forest officers—joined hands with the Panos in the exploitation of the Saoras. The areas where hill tribes lived were known as "Agency" areas. The Political Agent, very nearly an autocrat possessed a power-which the Governor himself did not possess. Several policemen died of Kala-Azar, which infested all the Agency area. The revolt was suppressed with a massive armed police force. No doubt, the police and the military will suppress such revolts and peace will be restored. But that does not mean that the problem is

solved. Such revolts are outward symptoms of a serious decease in the body politic. Our constitution contained special provisions to help tribals develop according to their own genius. There were exploited by the moneylenders, their village headmen and the government officials. I recruited many able-bodied Saoras into the police as constables. Policing the tribal areas needs particular attention of the government. Not only honest officers with eye on the social uplift of the tribals are necessary but also they must collect their grievances and try to remedy them. In cases where they cannot remedy the grievances they should bring them to the notice of their District Magistrate. All complaints of non-cognizable nature should be investigated after obtaining orders from the magistrate instead of referring the complainants to courts".

Though, 60 years have passed since then, but things don't seem to have changed much in these tribal areas and the problems of policing also remains the same.

District Kandhmals

The terrain of the district is plateau with the small hills and narrow valleys. The soil is laetrile.

The name of the district was earlier Phulbani and before that it formed part of district Boudh-Kandhmals. Quite recently it has been named as Kandhmals, which means the hilly area or home of the Kandhas. The naming of the district might have contributed a little towards the building up of tensions, as the Kandhas have now become more assertive in claiming that all the lands belong to them.

The density of population per Sq.Km. is 71, which is the lowest in the State of Orissa. The district has about 50% of its area covered with forests. Malaria especially the cerebral malaria is the biggest killer in the district.

The Kandhas are simple frank, naïve and credulous in nature. The girls tattoo their faces before marriage. In the past, a Kandha never accepted a girl who had not so adorned herself. The Panos generally act as their creditors and advisors of the Kandhas. Much of their income is spent on rituals and drinks, which leads to their indebtedness. Among the Kandhas, the ritual of human sacrifice was quite prevalent till the 19th Century. Still some cases are reported sometimes. Instead of the *Meria*, as the sacrificial boy was called, they have started sacrificing a buffalo which they purchase by running into debt. The Panos used to procure the *Merias* for them.

According to the Census of 1971 the S.C population was 19% to the total population of the district. Pan, Pana or Pano is the largest Scheduled Castes community in the State and also in the Khandmal District. They are found in almost every village of Kandhas and have close relationship with the Kandhas. The Panos have acted as intermediaries of Kandhas and exploited the tribal people economically. They have been portrayed as cunning in different Gazetteers and surveys.

The Panos worship Vima Devta. A considerable number among them have been converted to Christianity in Kotagarh, Tumudibandh, Baligurha, Nuagan, Phiringia, Daringbarhi, Raikia, G.Udayagiri and Phulbani regions of the district. The converted Panos have changed their pattern of living and are more clean, health conscious and educated. The Panos write the sub titles Malika, Kahanra, Padhan, Majhi, Naik and Ghatal.

There is widespread poverty in the district. Out of 1,08,263 rural families as per 1991-92 BPL survey 1,00,715 families live below the poverty line of Rs.11, 000/- annual income. Of this, 45,706 families have annual income below Rs.4, 000/-. The district has very poor infrastructure in regard to facilities like roads, electricity and there are large-scale vacancies of doctors, para-medical staff and of the officials in other government departments also. This makes it extremely difficult for the district administration to reach out to the people.

In 1961, the population of the Christians in the district was around 16,000, which rose to over 40,000 in 1971. The Christians thus recorded a very high decadal growth rate of their population by about 150% during the 1961-1971 decade, while Hindus recorded only a little over 16% decadal growth rate during the above period. The Christian population was 6.5% to the total population of the district in 1971. The Christians are the second largest religious community in the district after the Hindus. The Christians belong to Roman Catholic and CNI denominations and are concentrated in the Balliguda sub-division.

The Christian Missionaries are quite active in Kandhmal district. There are followers of Christianity both among Kondh Adivasis and Pano Caste Harijans, who are staying inside dense forests.

To attract these poor and illiterate Adivasis and Harijans of the hilly areas, both the Baptist and Roman Catholic Missionaries have been keenly operating in these areas. However, the Roman Catholic Missions are much more active than the Baptist Missions. This Roman Catholic Mission has progressed rapidly by spending huge amounts in the way of constructing church buildings, medical centres, hospitals, education institutions and other religious institutions in these tribal areas. The Roman Catholic Missionary organizations and the Baptist organizations took measures in spreading western culture and western education among the tribal people by converting them to Christianity. It seems, the Christian Missionaries started their education work in the area in 1914 when they established the first Middle English school at G.Udaygiri. Most of the educational institutions are Government managed.

Special schools such as Sevashrams, Ashram Schools, Kanyashrams (for girls), and High English Schools were established in the areas predominantly inhabited by the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes people.

About the $2/3^{rd}$ of the population speak Oriya while about $1/3^{rd}$ speak Kui language which is the language of the Kandha tribals. The Kandhas are said to be Dravidian tribe and their language Kui belongs to the Dravidian language group.

The VHP has proposed the establishment of an ashram at Vikrampur for propagating Hindu religion amongst the tribals in the district to counter conversions by Christian Missionaries

The ethnic S.C – tribal divide in the district

During the 20th Century, there have been many cases of tensions, clashes or attacks between the Scheduled Caste people especially the Panos and the tribal people especially the Kandhas and Saoras in southern districts of Orissa.

There was tension between Kandhas and Panos during the month of August 93 on the occasion of Janmasthami over the issue of entry of 50 S.C Panos in the village Jagannath temple at Harabhanga (now in Boudh district, bordering the areas of P.S Tikabali). A similar conflict arose over the issue of entry by one Pana in the temple at Linepada on the day of Makara Sankranti. The entry of a S.C. Pana to the temple was strongly resented to by the Kandhas. In January 1994, there was a case of confrontation between Kandhas and Panos and rioting by Kandhas of nearby village, over the issue of entry of a Pano on the day of Makara Sankranti inside the Barada Ballunkeshwar Siva Temple of Adivasis at village Khuditentuli near P.S Tikabali.

Through these issues do not relate to Hindu-Christian tensions but they amply illustrate two things: Firstly, that there is Kandha - Pano divide in the lands inhabited since long by the Kandhas and secondly, the most of the Kandhas have been Hinduized or at least semi-Hinduised. Such Kandha - Pano divide might easily take the form of Hindu-Christian communal nature if the two rival groups or parties over the land issue or over some other issue, happen to be Hindus and Christians. Most of the Panos have adopted Christianity, many Kandhas, though still a small proportion to their total population, have also been converted to Christianity.

During the years 1993 - 94 there were lot of incidents of attacks or clashes between Kandhas and Panos. The trouble seems to have started over the issue of frequent thefts of cow, goats and other household articles by Panos in villages Kalapada, Pitamaha, Tilakapada under Phiringia police station. The Kandhas got agitated when the accused persons were released on bail and subsequently they ransacked the houses of Panos in village Delangasuga and Dalapada and some houses were set on fire in village Bengupada area. Some Panos lost their lives in these attacks by the tribal people who were armed with bows and arrows and *Tangi*. There were at least two casualties of Kandhas in police firing in two separate cases on 30-5-1994 in village Bhetkhol and on 1-6-1994 in the jurisdiction of police station Khajuripada. I was told that most of the cases of Kandha-Panos conflict of 1993-94 took place in the northern areas of the district, bordering district Boudh, while Kandha - Pano, incidents of the year 2000, took place in the southern part of the district bordering the Rayagada or Gajapathi districts.

The major reasons for the ethnic divide in the district are said to be as follows:1) Alleged large-scale possession of *patta* land of Kandha Adivasis by Panos through illegal mortgage. 2) Habitual criminal activities of some Panos like stealing of bullocks, goats etc., and theft of fruits, vegetables etc., 3) Greater representation of Panos in the police department or as *gram*

rakhies (gram rakshaks) and Home-guards and other government departments in relation to Kandhas among whom the literacy rate is abysmally low. 4) Large-scale registration of outsiders in local employment exchange by means of forged residential certificates 5) Instigation of violence between the two communities by members of political parties or by the caste/tribe leaders for their own vested interests 6) Alleged molestation or marriage of Kandho girls by Panos and 7) Forcible attempts for entering Shiva Temples etc., by Panos.

A perusal of the police records of district Kandhmal indicates that out of a total of 97 cases of communal nature between Hindus and Christians, registered between the years 1986 to 2000, there were 28 cases of arson or damage to Christian prayer halls or churches. Of these 97 cases, 44 were charge-sheeted in which 292 accused were arrested. Out of the remaining 53 cases, 24 ended in final reports, while two cases were found false and 25 (out of which 23 belong to the year 2000) are still pending investigation. These cases include the case of murder of a pastor in 1994, which was more of a tribal Vs Harijan nature than of Hindu - Christian and two cases of conversion of the year 1999.

The 25 communal cases between Hindus and Christians of the year 2000 include three cases of the Bethicola issue; eight of Bandapipli issue; and the five cases of Kutiguda issue. In all 56 accused were arrested in regard to the 25 cases of the year 2000. Out of the 56 arrested accused, 11 common accused belonged to the two cases of damage to prayer houses at village Sindhipankala in P.S Tumudibandha in October 2000. No clue could be found in the remaining five cases of the year 2000 relating to damage to churches/prayer houses. During the year 2000, the areas of police stations Kotagarh, Tumudibandha, Belghar, Raikia, Balliguda, G.Udayagiri and Bamunigaon remained most sensitive.

The district police of Khandmals (Phulbani) have identified 120 churches out of a total of 574 churches in the district as vulnerable. About 100 of these vulnerable churches are located in just 7 police stations of Tikawali, G.Udayagiri, Daringwadi, Saragda, Tumudibandh, Baliguda and Raikia. Though, 370 (out of a total of 574) churches are in the three police stations of Daringwadi, Kotgarh and Balliguda, but only 36 of them have been identified as vulnerable. This is because of the fact that prayer halls situated in areas where there are few Christians are more vulnerable than those in the areas where there are lot of Christians. But this should not lead to suggest that the police stations having the areas with sizable Christian population are less sensitive. In fact, on the contrary most of the cases of communal nature between Hindus and Christians have been reported from the police stations, which have maximum percentage of Christian population and maximum number of churches. Most of the communally sensitive villages from the Hindu -Christian point of view, are in the areas, where there is a substantial Christian population along with equally matched, if not majority of Hindu population. In fact, the seven police stations of Daringwadi, Bamunigaon, Kotgarh, Tumudibandh, Raikia, Balliguda and G.Udayagiri contain more than 90% of the Christian population of the district. In the year 2000, twenty-one cases out of 25 were reported from the areas of above seven police stations. The remaining four cases were from the areas of P.S Belghar and two of them related to damage to the prayer houses. The two police stations of Kotghar (12 cases), and Tumudibandh (4 cases) accounted for 16 cases. In the areas of police stations Bamunigaon and Daringbadi, the ratio of Hindu and Christian populations is almost in the proportion of 50: 50, while Kotgarh has 36% Christian population, Tumudibandh 22%,

Raikia 18%, Balliguda 11% and G.Udayagir has about 10% Christina population. According to the 1991 census, the proportion of the Christian population of the district to the total population of the district is about 13.5%, while the ratio of the Hindu population of the district to the total population of the district is about 86%. This shows that apart from Hindus and Christians other religious groups are almost negligible in the district.

In a case of village Tendring in P.S Tumudibandh, the five accused Christians in January 2000 assaulted the tribal complainant when he protested against the construction of the church in the village. On the same day in the evening, 16 Hindu Adivasis assaulted the Christians while they were performing prayers in the house of the complainant. No arrest could be made in both of these cases. In the other two cases of October 2000 of police station Tumudibandh relating to damage to prayer houses in village Sindhipankal, 11 out of 17 Hindu accused persons were arrested u/s 295/ 427 IPC.

In the two cases of damage to prayer houses in villages Lankagada and Ramgiri, in police station Belghar, police could not make any head-way as the involvement of the accused persons mentioned in the FIR could not be established. In another case of P.S Belghar relating to village Bamuni about uprooting of a *tulsi* tree in November 2000 and thus hurting the religious feelings, two accused persons were arrested u/s 295 / 34 IPC. In another case of village Bamuni of November 2000 accused Parmanandgiri was arrested on 4-11-2000 u/s 143/144/447/379/384/153 A/149 IPC, while in regard to the arrests of 13 other accused persons, the case was pending investigation. This case is about a land dispute in the village.

During the year 2000, three issues relating to the villages Bettikola, Bandapipili and Kutiguda, came to the forefront and engaged the attention of police. The Bettikola and the Bandapipili issues related to the opposition by Hindu Missionaries and the tribal Hindus against construction of a dispensary and an orphanage, respectively by the Christian Missionaries on the allegedly disputed lands under their possession. The Kutiguda issue was in regard to reaction among Hindus to conversions to Christianity after cerebral malaria had struck terror in the tribal village and claimed 7 lives. All the three issues seem to be arising out of the tensions between the attempts, on the one hand of the Christian Missionaries, to spread their religion by way of construction of hostels or Churches etc., or through conversions etc. and on the other hand of the resistance of Hindu Missionaries and tribal Hindus to such attempts.

<u>The cases relating to Bettikola issue under P.S. G.Udayagiri:</u>

There is a land dispute between Hindus and Christians in village Bettikola. A Catholic church built about 30 years back stands on the above land. Quite near the church, the site of the tribal *Pooja pitha deity* "Lingam Burbi" is situated. The ROR of the disputed peace of land was done during the 1982 settlement in favour of the then Father of the church, Joseph Pradhan, who donated it later on to the Catholic Church. The Hindus allege that the land has been fraudulently recorded in the name of the Church. In February 1998, the construction work of a dispensary on the disputed land was stopped. Despite the prohibitory orders u/s 144 CrPC, restraining members of both the communities from entering the disputed plot, some Hindus in March 1998 assaulted some local Christians. The accused persons relating to

both the cases were arrested and case was charge sheeted. In the mean time, during the year 1998, the father of the Bettikola church filed a civil- suit in the court of Sub-Collector Balliguda. The case is *sub judice.*

In October 2000, about 15 Hindus caused damage to the vegetable plants by entering cattle in the church premises. When the father and the cook protested and resisted, they assaulted them and damaged the articles and personal belongings. Twelve accused persons were arrested in this case. Presently one section of APR force has been deployed at the site.

Ten Cases of Bandapipli issue:

Bandapipli issue is also about a disputed peace of land measuring about seven acres. Ten cases (including two Non-FIR cases) were registered between June to September 2000 regarding the issue and its fall-out. Christian missionaries are intent on building an orphanage (orphan hostel) on this land, while Hindus are equally determined to oppose its construction. The communal tension in Bandapipli started building up, in January 2000, when the Christian missionaries began the work of orphanage construction. In view of the prevailing tension, the construction work was stopped by promulgation of section 144 Cr.P.C. and preventive report u/s 107 Cr.P.C. was submitted against the leading members of both the communities.

A Christian orphan hostel had been operating in a rented house of Govardhan Pradhan of village Bandapipli where some orphan children were boarding. On 22nd June 2000 Baba Parmananda Giri of Dhungiapankal Ashram in the jurisdiction of police station Tumudibandh, came to the house of Govardhan Pradhan and abused him and his wife and threatened them with dire consequences if he persisted in allowing his house to be used as a Christian Missionary orphanage. During the course of above incident Jhunu Pradhan, wife of Govardhan Pradhan, threw boiled water on Parmanand Giri causing burning injuries on his face and right hand. The complaints of both the parties were registered at the police station and Govardhan Pradhan and his wife were arrested u/s 326/34 IPC, while no action seems to have been taken immediately by police on their complaint registered u/s 294/506 against Parmanand Giri. Parmanand Giri later on assaulted Smt. Jhunu Pradhan in September 2000 about which a case u/s 325 IPC was registered. Baba Parmanand Giri was later on arrested on 4-11-2000, in a case of land dispute of village Bamuni P.S. Belghar.

On 1st August 2000, a peace committee meeting, held under the president-ship of the ADM Kandhamal at village Bandapipli was attended by the members of both the communities who made allegations and cross-allegations against each other during the course of the peace committee meeting itself. It was then decided that the orphanage hostel should be closed. Against this decision of the closure of the hostel/orphanage, the 28 students of the hostel submitted a memorandum to A.B.D.O at Bandapipli.

17th August 2000 was a very busy and tense day for the district administration and police. Lots of demonstrations, incidents and commotion took place on that day The members of the Christian community under the leadership of Ranjit Kumar Pradhan, ex-MLA from G.Udayagiri and Manas Ranjan Singh, Advocate Balliguda, held demonstrations on 17-8-

2000. They also submitted memorandum to the District Authorities for permission to construct the orphanage hostel on the disputed site in Bandapipli.

As a reaction to this, the members of the Hindu community also submitted a memorandum to Sub-Collector, Balliguda on 17-8-2000, and obstructed the movement of vehicles at village Pandaripi. In this regard a case u/s 143/144/341 was registered and six accused were arrested in August 2000, while Parmananda Giri was arrested on 4-11-2000. A Non-FIR case u/s 32 Police Act was registered against the members of the Christian community for holding of illegal demonstrations and processions in Kotgarh bazar on 17-8-2000.

During the course of traffic obstruction by the Hindus on 17-8-2000, the Jeep carrying a nun of Balliguda Convent, Sister Kusum was stopped at village Pandaripi by some Hindus who abused, and threatened her and the driver. One of the Hindu accused took away the key of the Jeep. When the driver was busy in persuading the Hindu agitators to return the key of the vehicle, Sister Kusum, sensing danger to her life and dignity, slipped away into the nearby bushes. After some time the driver of the Jeep managed to get the key of the vehicle back and on his return, seeing the nun missing in the vehicle, he went to the police station Kotghar and got a case of kidnapping of Sister Kusum, registered at the P.S. In place of kidnapping, the case was later on altered into sections 354/341/506/294/34 IPC. Two accused were arrested in this case and one surrendered in Court.

A case of throwing of crackers on the orphanage on 22nd August 2000 was also registered. On 23-8-2000, the district level peace committee meeting was held at the Collectorate and the district administration decided to close the hostel. As protest against this, and violating the conditions of prohibitory orders u/s 144, two accused persons belonging to the Christian community gave provocative speeches in village Similithapa, which created communal tensions between the Hindus and Christians. A case u/s 143/153 A/188/109 IPC read with section 7 Criminal Laws Amendment Act, was registered against two Christians and also against Father Paul Kulatharan of Katigarh Church for instigating them. The two accused Christians were arrested. On 30-9-2000, five accused Christians started construction work of the hostel. All the five accused were arrested. A Non-FIR was also registered in September 2000 u/s 24 of Orphanage and Other Charitable Homes Act against Father Paul Kulatharan and others for not obtaining the permission from DM for not following the procedure of the construction of the orphanage as laid down in the above Act.

To most of the Hindus, in view of the prevailing tensions, the issue of renting of house for Christian orphanage was an issue of communal nature to which Govardhan Pradhan and his wife Jhunu Pradhan, though they too were Hindus, reacted in a secular manner. But between Govardhan Pradhan and his wife on the one hand and Parmanand Giri on the other hand, it turned out to be a matter of personal nature. Out of six cases against Hindus in regard to this issue, three were of personal nature between Govardhan, his wife and Parmanand Giri and two cases related to the disrupting of the public traffic and one of the nature of disturbing public tranquility than of the nature of communal confrontation

Kutiguda Issue:

The Kutiguda issue cropped up because of the tensions over conversions. About 17 Kandho families inhabit the village situated about 30 km, south of Kotgarh. There were 7 deaths in the village due to cerebral malaria. The villagers under a superstitious belief worshipped and offered a special prayer to Hindu Goddess "Maa Thakurani" to avert the further casualties. The people of the nearby villages avoided contact with them and did not allow them to enter their villages and humiliated them. This sort of social boycott worked strongly towards the adoption of Christianity by the villagers of Kutiguda.

The pastor Jonathan Naik of Gampadar came to their village and a thatched (*Jhati- mati*) prayer hall was constructed in the village. Some of the Hindus of the adjacent Sajeli and other villages showed aversion to the conversions and to the construction of the prayer hall in village Kutiguda. Some miscreants from among the Hindu community of the nearby villages set the prayer house on fire in the mid-night of 10-5-2000. A case u/s 295/436 IPC was registered at the P.S Kotgarh.

The villagers of Kutiguda are said to be supporters of Congress party, while the villagers of Sajeli are supporters of B.J.P. The villagers of Kutiguda suspected the hand of the supporters of V.H.P of village Sajeli in the incident of arson to the prayer hall. Dhruba Samanta is a follower of Damodar Patra of Bandapipli and of Swami Laxmanand Saraswati. A villager and an Anganwadi helper of village Kutiguda told that Sushma Samanta, wife of Dhruba Samanta and others questioned them as to why they got converted to Christianity. The Officer In-Charge Kotgarh police station Mr. B.B Hota visited the village Sajeli in connection with the investigation of the above case of arson to the prayer hall. He called Dhruba Samanta, to him for questioning him about the case. Dhruba Samanta strongly objected to this and misbehaved with the police party and this led to a scuffle between him and a constable. This resulted in bleeding injuries to both of them. Seeing Dhruba Mahanta injured, the villagers got agitated at the instigation of Mrs. Sushma Samanta and decided not to allow the police party to leave the village till the arrival of D.M, S.P and Swamiji. But, later on they released the police party at the intervention of some villagers. About this incident a case u/s 147/148/149/294/323/332/307/342 IPC was registered by the police party and later on a cross-case u/s 341 and 354 IPC against the police party.

In the night of 13-5-2000, a prayer house in a nearby village Saranda Sahi Dharakote (Nua Sajeli) was also set on fire. Out of the seven Harijan families of the village, two belong to Hinduism and the members of the rest of the five families are Christians. The prayer house was built only three months back. A case u/s 295/436 IPC was registered after a delay of three days at the police station as the *Gram Rakshak* was not present in the village. Mikhail Badanaik told that Mrs. Sushma Samanta did not reciprocate his gesture of respect (*Namashkar).* Panmati Kadamseth told that Sushma Samanta had questioned her as to why they had become Christians and for this they would not be looked after. The villagers suspect the involvement of Dhruba Samanta, his wife Sushma Samanta, Damodar Patra and others in the incident. After these incidents, a constable and a GR each has been posted in all the three villages Saranda Sahi Dharakot, Sajeli, and Kutiguda and one platoon of Orissa State Armed Police (OSAP) have been camping at Kotgarh. Peace committee meetings have been

organized in all the three villages by SDPO, and the SDM, Balliguda and other officers. A mobile vehicle fitted with the VHF set should be provided in such areas and there is a need for setting up Repeater Stations for communication in such far-flung and mountainous regions.

DIG, Brahmapur Shri. Hota told that the areas, which are having Hindu-Christian tensions these days, are very remotely situated. Police Station Kotgarh itself is more than 120 kms from the district headquarters Phulbani and some of the affected areas are still farther and are in the interior. The Government vehicle of the Police Station is very old. There is no direct communication of Balliguda sub-division with Kotgarh and Tumudibandh areas as there is no repeater station. He also told that with the induction of VHP and RSS activities into the areas under the leadership of Shri Laxmanand Saraswati, the Christianity and the Christians are being vilified over the issue of conversions leading to communal disharmony and tensions between the two communities. Swami Laxmanand Saraswati came to the district Kanhdmals in 1968 and started a *Kanyashram* at Chakapad under police station G.Udayagiri. He stays most of the time at Jalespata at a distance of about 5 kms from P.S. Tumudibanda and has also established a *Kanyashram* in the village. He told that at present the situation is normal but due to conversion activities of the Christian Missionaries and the growing aggressiveness and intolerance among Hindu Missionaries and office-holders of Hindu organizations to Christianity is a clear pointer to the fact that situation might go out of hand, if even small incidents are not attended immediately. The police infrastructure has to be revamped to deal with such serious and sensitive issues.

DM Phulbani told that the Christians have maximum concentrations in Daringbarhi, Kotagarh, Tumudibandh, and Baligurha blocks. According to him, the problem between Hindus and Muslims has declined in intensity after Independence, while the intensity of bitterness and the problem during the Hindus and Christians have steadily increased after independence but will soon stabilize as the Hindu – Muslim problem has done so. The major cause for Hindu-Christian tension in the district is not over land disputes. There is strong animosity between Adivasis and Harijans in the district. The Hindu-Christian tensions developed and came to stay when the Hindu missionaries and organizations like VHP etc started their programmes for checking the proselytizing activities of the Christian missionaries in the 1970s. Before that Missions had carried on their activities in an uninterrupted manner.

Mr.Ranpise was S.P. Phulbani during the year 2000. He is a Boudh from Maharashtra. Earlier he was S.P. In-charge in Gajapati district. He told that, though 144 Cr.P.C may be in force, nobody respects it during periods of such mass movements, and the police cannot do anything because they are so much in number and suddenly swarm a place in a large number. According to him, the most sensitive police stations are Kotgarh, Bhelghar, Tumudibandh, G.Udayagiri, Raikia, and Balliguda. The police stations of Bamunigaon and Daringwadi are also sensitive but not as sensitive as the above six police stations because in these two police stations most of the people have been converted to Christianity. In the 1960s, there were lots of conversions by Catholics, and hence to counter-act their activities, two *swamis* came to this region.

Shri. Munish Moudgil, SDM Belligudda and the A.S.P. at Kotgarh told that in these areas, the problem of Harijan-Adivasi is primary and Hindu-Christian is only secondary. Whatsoever land-settlement took place in this area was done from 1975 to 85. The work relating to Record of Rights (RORs) is still incomplete. In many cases, the tribal people sell their *pattas* to S.C. for some money and on their non-payment of debts, the S.C people continue in possession of the lands. Now he (SDM) is disposing the cases generally in favour of tribal people, which may diffuse the problem. But a few politicians would like the problem to continue for their own political interests and their quest for power. Now the tribal people want all the Panas to evacuate their lands and leave Kandhmals. Swami Lakhanand has encroached about 5 acres of land but we would take action against both the Hindu and Christian Missionaries simultaneously in regard to matters of unauthorized possession of lands, as Christian Missionaries are also in illegal possession of government lands.

S.I. Raiguru second officer P.S. Balligudda told that the fact that Panos came to possess some lands after clearance of jungles by the Kandhas for shifting cultivation, is a historical process and should be seen like that. It would be unethical to dispossess the Panos, if their titles are legitimate.

Father Paul Kolathern told that in the 22 Mission Stations, there are 22 hostels with no schools. There is a staff of around 37 in the mission station under him. He had worked in this mission earlier too. He denied any hand of the missionary hostels in conversions.

Ranjit Kumar Pradhan, a local Kanda is president of District Congress Committee. He is president of Christian Jan Kalyan Samiti, and of the Agency Marketing Cooperative Society. He told that in 1986, there was a *Rath* procession by Swami Lakhanand and the outsiders by instigating the tribal people, burnt down the Christian prayer halls. Presently the Christians are watching the administration as to what it does in regard to the recent incidents and the prevailing issues. He belongs to a Protestant denomination, CNI.

Damodar Pradhan, a local Kandha is the District President of the VHP. He told that during his adolescence, he had a marriage offer by a Christian to some Pano Christian girl who worked as a staff nurse in a Mission hospital. But his parents married him to a tattoo- faced girl of his tribe. He has worked in a mission station as a steno and in other capacities as well. In Bethikola, the Church has encroached on land in an unauthorized manner. They purchase the land for the purpose of hospital etc. but later on build church on it. He is proud of the local Bishop, a *Pano* Christian, because he is from his village. He criticized Ranjit Kumar Pradhan who is also from his village and is his cousin, for his statement of creating a Christo Sangh on RSS lines. He told that only last year, he was made president of VHP. He told that they do *yagnas*. The Christians belonging to the Pentecostal denomination offer prayers in a loud manner, while earlier there were silent prayers. Swami Brahmanand was also functioning in this area but was implicated in a case of attempt of rape of a tribal girl. Swami Lakhanand Saraswati is running two Sanskrit Colleges at Jalespata and Chakapad.

A journalist told that the RSS creates the problem and most of the members of RSS are from the local business community and from the tribal people. He further told that the Christians wanted to construct a dispensary in Bethikola but the Hindus opposed it fearing that they

would change it into a Christian hostel. The Hindus protested against the ROR of the Church also as the land belong to village deity Burbilingam and even wanted to demolish the Church. At present a civil suit is pending in the High Court about this matter. Another journalist told that there are about 1000 churches and only 80 temples. Yet another journalist told that the Hindu Missionaries don't have heart for the people belonging to Scheduled Castes. Swami Lakhanand Sarasawati came to the district in 1969. The BJP rise in the 1980s and the activities of VHP and other Hindu Missionaries started around the same period. He told that about 25% of the tribal population follows Christianity. The journalists told that the killing of a Pastor Achyuta Nayak in 1994 by Kandhas was a case of tribal people vs. Harijan people and was not a case of Hindus Vs Christians.

It seems that the media is also divided on caste and community lines and they see and report things only from the limited perspective.

Swami Lakhanand Saraswati came to the district in the 1960s and has been staying at Chakapad Ashram under Tikaveli P.S. since 1967. In April 1986, Lakhanand Sarawati took out a Jagannath Rath Procession within the areas of Balliguda sub-division. During that time he reconverted 350 Christian families to Hinduism. There was a tension and during that *Yatra*, 8 prayer- houses/churches were burnt.

A survey Report of Benchmark Survey of Baliguda Project area in Phulbani district 1973 (undertaken by the Tribal and Harijan Research–cum-Training Institute in 1973) revealed that the image of the Pana as cunning, wicked and unscrupulous person has inadvertently emerged out of some old records. This image is far from true. The stigma attached to them is partly a legacy of the British period when certain groups were treated as hereditary criminals.

District Koraput

According to the 1991 Census, the tribal population in district Koraput is about 50% of the total population of the district and the population of the Scheduled Caste in the district is 13.4% of the total population of the district. The Hindus are the majority community with 95.6% and the Christians are the second largest religious group with 3.8% of the total population of the district. Majority of the Christians belong to the Scheduled Castes mostly Dombos or Panos. The other converts belong to the Paraja and Kandha tribes. There are 20 police stations and one Mahila (Woman's) police station in the district. According to the District Gazetteer of Koraput:

"The religious belief of the Christians has a duality. Almost all the Christians of the district are converted tribals. They follow many of the formalities of Christianity such as Church-going and observance of important festivals. They can also be differentiated, in some respects, from other tribals who do not profess Christianity. But the tribal Christians observe certain customs and beliefs, which in their religious implication are not only different by also contradictory to Christianity. The Christians are practically all converts of the Schleswig-Holstein Evangelical Lutheran Mission. Koraput was selected in 1885 as the mission station and thereafter missions were established at Jeypore, Kotpad, Nowrangpur and Gunupur.

Mission houses were also built at Rayagada, Bissamcuttack, Nandapur, Lakshmipur and Doliamba during the British period. The area comprising of the Rayagada and Gunupur subdivision was called the East Jeypore Mission and is now under the administration of the Danish Church. There are now only a few European Missionaries working in the district".&&&&&&

In 1992, the district Koraput was divided into four districts; Koraput, Nawrangpur, Malkangiri and Rayagada.

Following cases of communal nature took place in the district Koraput during the last decade:

1) In December 1992, a case under section 10 of the Unlawful Activity Prevention Act 1967 was registered in police station Jeypore Town. According to the content of FIR, the Zonal Organiser of the VHP delivered a speech in a meeting whipping up the communal sentiments among the Hindus against other non-Hindu communities. There was delay by the government in sanction of the prosecution that was received in June 1996 but by that time, the case had become time- barred. There were no cases of communal nature during the years 1993 to 1995.

2) In February 1996, a ST complainant registered a case in police station Machkund against one Ravindra Kumar Nayak regarding forcible removal of the picture of Lord Shiva and putting the photo of Lord Jesus. The accused asserted that Lord Jesus is more powerful than Lord Shiva. It was alleged in the report that the act was done to hurt the religious feelings of the complainant and to convert the members of the complainant's family to Christianity. The accused was arrested and chargesheeted under sections 452/295/ 295A IPC and section 3 (i) (x) SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. The case is pending trial.

3) A case against an accused Anand @ Jacken Hial, a Christian of village Kumma was registered in police station Dasmanthpur in December 1997 for trespassing into the Thakurani Pitha and for damaging the idols and for hurting the cow. The case was chargesheeted under section 295/426 IPC.

4) In August 1998, Executive Magistrate–cum-Tehsildar Narayanpurpatna registered a case at the police station Narayanapatna against the organizers of SC and ST Cell, Koraput. According to the report, the accused made speeches in a meeting of the above Cell attacking the Hindu Gods and Goddesses and accusing the Brahmins of creating caste division and exhorted the SC and ST people that they should not participate in the Hindu fairs and festivals. The case was chargesheeted and is pending trial against two accused under sections 295 (A)/ 153A/ 34 and section 32 Police Act.

No case of communal nature was registered during the years 1999 and 2000 in district Koraput.

In village Kathiguda in Nowrangpur district, there was a complaint by tribals in 1999 to police that they have been duped into conversions to Christianity on the false promises of jobs.

No case of communal nature has been reported from district Malkangiri during the latst years. The D.S.P. of Malkangiri.

Normal Lewis in his 'A Goddess in the Stones' mentions about a procession at Mokama organized by the Catholics for the Feast of the Epiphany, for which the converts of the several neighbouring villages had collected. According to him Religious and political demonstrations are completely foreign to tribal peoples who in neither case know what is going on. Some people pelted stones at the procession, which dispersed, but the Saoras got back armed with their bows and arrows and in the ensuing fight there were many casualties and police had to open fire killing one.[6]

Notes:

1. Census 1991
2. S.K Ghosh, 'The Light of Other Days'.
3. Singh, K.S. – 'The Scheduled Tribes', Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1994.
4. People of India, National Series, Vol.III The Scheduled Tribes (Pages 1053-54) by K.S. Singh, Anthropolical survey of India, Oxford University Press, 1994.
5. A Goddess in the Stones', by Normal Lewis, Page No. 209 to 211, Rupa Paperbacks.
6. Ibid Page 211.

Chapter – 18

Andhra Pradesh

The three coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh, Guntur (6.7%), Krishna (5.3%) and West Godhavari (4.4%) have the maximum concentration of Christian population. In Hyderabad (2.33%) and Praksam (2.03%), the Christian population is slightly above 2% of the total population of each district. In Rangareddy (1.74%), Cudappah (1.63%), Kurnool (1.42%), Khammam (1.38%), Nellore (1.26%), Medak (1.26%), Visakhapatnam (1.16%) and East Godavari (1.09%) the population of the Christians is between 1% and 2% of the total population of the concerning district. In rest of the districts of Andhra Pradesh, the population of the Christians is below 1% of the total population of district.

The population of Christians in the Andhra Pradesh was 3.97% to the total population of the State in 1961, which rose to 4.19% but came down sharply to 2.68% in 1981 and to 1.83% in 1991. One of the reasons for this sharp decline of Christian population from over 4% in 1971 to less than 2% in 1981 might be the above fact that the Malas are showing themselves as Hindus for taking advantages in regard to reservations in government jobs etc. The other reason for this fall in the percentage of Christian population over a period of two decades might be re-conversions.

During the British period, there were many conversions in areas around Machhilipatnam, or Bandar, as it was popularly known. In 1616, the English East India Company established a factory at Machhilipatnam. It was a trading and fishing center, for the French from 1750 to 1759 but later on Kakinada and Vishakhapatnam gained more importance. In the 16th - 17th Century, Hindus demolished a Church in Machhilipatnam. In the 1840s, Robert Nobel opened a school in Machhilipatnam, which became a center of controversy for its conversions. During the 19th Century, the conversion of one Pagola Venkayya, a former dacoit of the Mala Caste also attracted public attention. As a former dacoit and a convert, he became something of a celebrity. [1]

In Hyderabad the increase in the Christian population was 141.6 per cent in the decade 1921-31, and 45.6 per cent in the decade 1931-41.

The District Gazetteers of West Godavari and East Godavari contain the following information about Hinduism and the growth of Christianity:

ANDHRA PRADESH DISTRICT GAZETTEERS WEST GODAVARI

Christians: Almost all the Christians are converts from the Hindu fold. There are both Catholics and Protestants. The latter, however, are numerically larger and belong to the various denominations such as the Christians of the South Indian Church, Lutherans, Indian Christian Society, Indian Pentecostal Church of God, Seventh Day Adventists, Salvation

Army and so on. Almost all the sections of the Christians are found in this district, a majority of whom are converts from the so-called lower classes of Hindus. The Canadian Baptist Church and the American Baptist Church also have considerable following in this district. There are well-built churches in this district for both the Protestants and Catholics. The Christians of this district have taken to a variety of professions, though a large number is engaged in the teaching, nursing and preaching professions. Even though Christianity does not recognize any caste system, nevertheless, the influence of the castes to which they belonged before conversion from Hinduism does operate in their general social life, particularly in the matter of matrimonial alliances. Converts from the same caste tend to group together in such endogamous practices.

Shri Sandeep Shandilya, S.P Machilipatnam and an officer of the intelligence branch told me that "Most of the converts in Andhra Pradesh are from Mala and Madiga communities. Though, most of the Malas have been converted to Christianity, about 70% of the Madigas are Hindus. Among the Malas and Madigas, the Madigas are more backward but the advantages of reservation quota in government services etc. are utilized by Malas. Some of the Christian Malas show themselves as Hindus and take the advantages reserved for Scheduled Caste people belonging to Hindu community. According to the reservation policy of the State Government, the converted Scheduled Caste get only 1% reservation and are clubbed with OBCs. There have been inter-caste tensions between Malas and Madigas".[2]

Mr. Pradip, Assistant Librarian in the SVP National Police Academy told that he is a Christian from distict Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh State. He told that the actual number of Christians is more than shown in the Census figures as many Malas and Madigas don't show themselves as Christians to take advantage of Reservations of jobs, which are not available to them if they get converted to Christianity.

ANDHRA PRADESH DISTRICT GAZETTEERS EAST GODAVARI

The Hindus and Christians are largely based in the rural areas. Hindus and Muslims are gradually shrinking in numbers from 1931 onwards, whereas the Christians have been increasing. Particularly impressive is the growth of Christians who have multiplied from 150 in 1931 to 236 in 1961 for every 10,000 of the population. During the corresponding period, the population of Hindus for every 10,000 has shrunk from 9,689 to 9,622.

The process of what the Indian Sociologist Dr.M.N.Srinivas, has called 'Sanskritisation and secularization' can be seen among the Hindus of this district also, leading to a blurring of the rigid frontiers between one caste and another.

Visakhapatnam:

Father Phillip of St. Alyossius told that the Church is 150 years old and here a mosque and a temple are also in existence and all the communities have tolerance and respect for each other. On 8th December there is a Feast of Mother Mary and about lakhs of

people of all religions come and worship. Virgin Mary is worshipped as a sort of Hindu goddess in the region and the statue of the Goddess has vermilion and garland. It is said that 150 years back a cyclone subsided when some people worshipped the Goddess. The Daragah also has a similar story. In the Church, the Stations of the Cross are shown which depict the journey of the Jesus from the moment of Judgement against him to the crucifixion. The Dutch came here in 1600. The Port at Bhimunipatnam or Bhimli is very old and was the second Municipality after Surat. He told that the Christians are not traitors and are loyal to India though in private matters, religion is uppermost and the Missionaries serve people. In East Godavari district most of the Christians are Protestants.

Shri. A.K. Khan, the Commissioner of Visakhapatnam told that in the interior areas we still have Naxalite problems. These were earlier called Agency areas and rebellions still take place. During the British Period, Mobile Reserve was kept for these areas. The Happel report (He was Political Agent of the area and later on I.G.P of Madras Presidency) recommended for opening up of these areas by way of constuction of roads etc. He told that Medak has some historical importance for the Christians.

Shri. B. Achuta Rao, Inspector (Harbor Circle), Visakhapatnam belongs to village Rajubeta in Police Station Bobbili in District Vizianagram. He told that many of the Madigas, and Malas, both belonging to the S.C., are Christians and though both are poor, the Malas are relatively well off. He told that in his village Rajubeta, first two families got converted and a Church was built about three years back. Now about 10 families of Malas are Christians. They take all the benefits of Hindus S.Cs. In the village, they are not allowed entry to the temples by the Kappula Vellamas who belong to category of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The S.Cs. can go only up to the steps to the temple. They can't go to the Garbha Gudi. In towns there might be no restriction to temple entry. But in some village, their entry is still banned despite the punitive provisions in the SC/Sc Act. Malas (and not the Madigas who are very poor) are taking all the benefits of S.C. Reservation. When converted the S.C Christians are put in the category of backward classes and get only 1% out of 25% reservation for the OBCs. R.S.S is not attacking Christians. In Paderu & other areas of District Vishakhapatnam, the R.S.S are running Vanabasi Kalyan Kendra's and even helping tribal people in times of calamities like flood ". In Paderu tribal area, the Christian Mission has hospitals & Schools and the medical service is free particularly for the Christians in the hospitals. He told that there is no Hindu-Christian problem or tension in A.P. If there is any problem, then it is caste based.

Swamy Tatwabodhananda of the Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, Ramakrishna Beach, Vishakhapatnam is from District Coorg in Karnataka. He believes that one should aim for the good of one's own soul as well as for others. He told that the same soul is in

all the living beings and followers of the mission believe in all the religions. The Mission has done excellent work in the field of education, health and relief works in cycolones, earthquakes etc. Their religion is universal. The Mission runs spastic centers, schools and *maths*. The workers of the Mission go to interior areas like Chintapalle in District Vishakhapatnam and distribute medicines during the haats (weekly markets). Such remote areas are in the naxalite-affected region and nobody goes to primary health centers of the health and medical department of the government. He told that the Ramakrishna Mission contributed 50% of the expenses incurred towards the construction of the Vivekananda Bridge in Pallavaripalem-Mummidivaram in East Godavari District.

Incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians:

1) In July 1997, a case u/s 153 (A) was registered against six Christians of Jhansi Linga Puram, district Medak for way-laying 5 RSS volunteers of Akkannapet and for burning literature of Hinduism. The accused resented the setting up of a RSS Sakha (branch) in the village.

2) In January 1998, two accused A.Ravinder Reddy and Laxma Reddy along-with 3 other unidentified BJP workers had assaulted a pastor, Merugumalla Samuel of BBC Church, Medchal in Ranga Reddy district and two other Christians, abused them in their caste name viz, Madiga caste and snatched away the Bibles from their hands. Both the named accused were arrested u/s 298, 504, 506, 323 IPC and sections 3 and 4 of SC and ST Atrocities (Preventing Act).

3) In March 1998, a section of Voda Balija, a sub-caste of fishermen community set a thatched prayer hall on fire at Burma colony in police station Uppada Koithapalli in East Godavari district. The converted Christians belonged to the same caste, and violated the custom of their caste, of not fishing on Thursdays.

4) Some unidentified miscreants during the night on 26th March 1998 damaged a Plaster of Paris statue of Infant Jesus in Hyderabad. They also damaged a grotto in the chapel of Mount Mary and removed a flag in Hazrat Sha Wali Dargah situated only about 100 meters away from the grotto. Three separate cases u/s 295 IPC were registered in the police station, Thirumalgherry.

5) A case was registered u/s 292, 295 A, 153 A IPC etc. against Sarala Joseph r/o. Shamshabad, Ranga Reddy District, the writer of a book "Charithra Raju Darshini". According to the complaint of Gopal Goud, the book contains attacks on like Ram, Sita and other Hindu Gods. Twenty copies of the book were seized.

6) In December 1998, a pastor and other Christians pasted some posters in Bhimavaram and Veeravasaram in West Godavari district. These posters were about proposed Christian Gospel meetings in early 1999 and contained material, which hurt the religious sentiments of Hindus. Two separate cases u/s 295 A, 298

etc. IPC were registered at Police Stations of Veeravasaram and Bhimavaram I – Town of District West Godavari and five accused were arrested.

7) A case u/s 153 (A) (2), 427, 34 IPC was registered in December 1998 at police station Ramannapet in district Nalgonda against Yerra Narasimha and two other B.J.P sympathizers for manhandling a pastor B.Param Jyothi of I.G.M Church Kommaigudem and for damaging of a projector. The pastor was showing a feature film "Karuna Mayudu" in connection with Christian's celebrations. The accused were arrested.

1999

8) On the complaint of P.Appa Rao of HJM a case u/s 295 A was registered in 1999 in P.S Anakapalli in Visakhapatnam against D.David Raju for printing pamphlets before January 9th 1999, which contained denigration and abuse against Hindu gods and religion.

9) A case u/s 153 A and 477 IPC was registered at police station Tandur against unidentified miscreants by Principal of St. Marks English Medium School in Ranga Reddy District about the incident of damage in the night of 9th March 1999 of an idol of Mary Matha with Jesus Christ in her arms.

10) In March 1999, K.Mallesh and 15 others belonging to Akhila Bharateeya Vidyarthi Parishad / BJP armed with sticks, obstructed a procession of Christians propagating Christianity in Armoor Town in Nizamabad District. The assailants snatched the pamphlets etc. from their possession and burnt them, and made deprecatory remarks against the Christian religion. Armoor Police registered a case in Cr. No.77/99 u/s 147, 148, 295 (A), 435, 427 r/w 149 IPC on the complaint of Pastor Prem Kumar.

11) A case u/s 295 IPC was registered in police station Bollarum, in Hyderabad against some unidentified miscreants for damaging the statue of Infant Jesus Christ in St. Joseph Church during the night in April 1999.

12) A very recently built thatched prayer hall at Arvapally village where prayers had been started only a day before by the followers of Christianity (Mann Sampurna Suvartha Sangham) was burnt. In this regard a case u/s 295/436 IPC was registered at police station Hasanparthy in district Warangal.

13) A case u/s 153–A, 295–A, 429 IPC was registered in police station Kohil district Medak against a converted S.C Christian for removing the stone of goddess Nalla Pochamma and for damaging the temple at Picharagudi in July 1999.

14) In September 1999, some infuriated members of the Ganesha immersion procession assaulted three Christians, one Hindu and a Muslim who were near a transformer suspecting them for causing power failure during the auspicious time of the procession in Algola village in police station Zaheerabad in Medak District.

15) A case u/s 295-A IPC was registered in November 1999 on the complaint of the members of V.H.P against G.Devadhanam, a pastor of the Church of God prayer in police station Vishakhapatnam III. It was alleged that the pastor published material misquoting Vedas etc, which hurt the religious feeling of Hindus.

2000

16) In May 2000, there was a case of bomb explosion at the Gospel Crusade meeting organized by the Gospel Association of India in the premises of Ladies club, Machilipatnam in police station Chikkalapudi in Krishna district. About 27 persons got injured in the incident.

17) In May 2000, two separate cases of placing of bombs in Churches were reported- one in St. Jude's Church in police station Vikarabad in Ranga Reddy district and the other in the CSI Church Devavaram in district Medak.

18) In June 2000, an incident of a bomb explosion took place in Mother Vennini Catholic Church in Tadepalligudem in West Godavari district causing damage to the cemented platform and window glasses etc. Tadepalli town police registered a case about the incident.

19) In June 2000, in another bomb explosion in J.M.B Church at Ongole in Prakasham district, the window–panes, wooden bench etc. were damaged and four persons were injured.

20) On June 22nd, 2000 there were two separate cases of pasting of posters in two different areas of Hyderabad i.e. on the gate of New Jerusalem Church, Vijaya Nagar Colony in police station Humayunnagar and on the gates of Stanley & Methodist High School in police station Abids. These posters contained such material as "Christian Missionaries stop conversion or Quit India". . In both the police stations, cases u/s 153-A were registered.

In the above incidents of pasting posters designed to create mutual hatred between Hindus and Christians and the bomb-blast cases, the leaders of several Christian organizations suspected the involvement of activists of Hindu fundamentalist organizations and issued Press statements to this effect. However, investigations done after some breakthrough clues by COD (Corps of Detectives) of Karnataka Police revealed that the activists of Deendar Anjuman committed all the above offences to create hatred between Hindus and Christians.

21) A case u/s 293/297 IPC was registered by Rajhamundry I town police regarding the uprooting of Crosses and symbols of Lord Jesus in a Christian graveyards by some unknown miscreants at Cenetarypeta, Rajamundry on 22/6/2000.

22) A case of arson by unknown miscreants to a thatched-hut Church in December 2000 in the outskirts of Arvapally was registered in police station Hasanparthy in district Warangal u/s 295/436 IPC.

2001

23) A case was registered in January 2001 by a pastor Smt. N.Bharatamma in police station Ibrahimpatnam in district Ranga Reddy against 12 RSS workers. According to the complaint lodged by her, the RSS workers entered her house while she was offering Sunday prayers with other converted Christians, and abused and threatened her with dire consequences.

24) According to a complaint lodged u/s 295, 295-A, 296 etc. by pastor Showrily, Narotham Reddy and 15 others suspected to be RSS/BJP activists assaulted him, damaged the loud-speaker and burnt Bible during a Christian congregation at Chevalla in Ranga Reddy district in March 2001.

25) In April 2001, a case u/s 153-A was registered against unknown miscreants in police station Tappachaputhra in Hyderabad for painting Holy Cross marks on the wall of Sri Annapurna Temple at Jaffarguda (Kunwarguda), Karwan in Hyderabad.

26) Recently the management of Immaculate College on Guttumukkala road at Kanchikacherla village in district Krishna, constructed toilets with broken (scrap) tiles purchased at cheaper price and having inscription on them of some gods belonging to Hindu and Muslim religions. On 6-8-2001, a student apprised about the matter to the management who expelled him from the school by issuing T.C. The student informed about the incident to his parents and other members, both Hindus and Muslims of his locality. Some of them took photographs of the toilets. The management became alert and removed the tiles, but some people informed about the matter to the media. Around 300 people belonging to Hindu and Muslim religious communities started in a procession and demanded for explanation of the College Management about the incident but they explained that it was not due to their fault, and the contractor was responsible for this. But the members of the public were not satisfied with the explanation of the Management and demanded the closure of the college. They also went to MRO (Mandal Revenue Officer) office and presented a memorandum and in the office and to S.H.O., Kanchikacherla Police Station. On the memorandum, Kanchikacherla Police registered a case under section 295(A) IPC and investigated it. On 19-8-2001, the people belonging to both the Hindu and Muslim communities distributed phamphlets to observe 'bundh' on 20-8-2001 as the district administration and police had not taken any action against the Management of the College. M. Mastan Rao, the State V.H.P., and others tookout a procession through the main streets and organized '*dharna*' in front of MRO office, Kanchikacherla and presented memorandum to M.R.O., Kanchikacherla demanding for the arrest of the Principal and for the withdrawal of the recognisition of the college etc. Shri Sandeep Shandilya, SP, Krishna District, Machilipatnam visited the village, and called a meeting of the prominent members

of all the communities who postponed their proposal of 'bundh' on 20-8-2001. Mallela Baliston @ Bala S/o /George H-madiga, Israilpet, Vijayawada and two others were arrested in regard to the incident.

Notes: 1) Page 203, Copley Antony – 'Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India', Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.

2) DGPs/IGPs Conference.

PART - IV

Questionnaire – Response Data Analysis

Chapter – 1

Objective Questions

80 officers filled up questionnaire, which had 16 quantitative questions and 6 Descriptive questions. Of these 80 officers 15 were of IG rank and 55 of DIG and SP rank and 10 officers were from non-police government departments.

Q. 1. How far have the police been able to tackle the problem with professionalism? Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
2	16	54	8	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

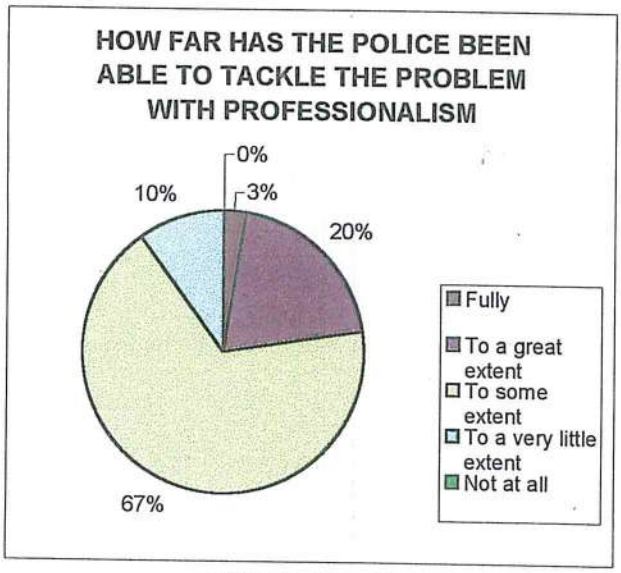


FIGURE – 14

The above figure shows that the majority of the officers think that police has been able to tackle the problem only to some extent.

Q. 2. How far have the Police been able to tackle the problem with impartiality? Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
3	27	42	8	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows:

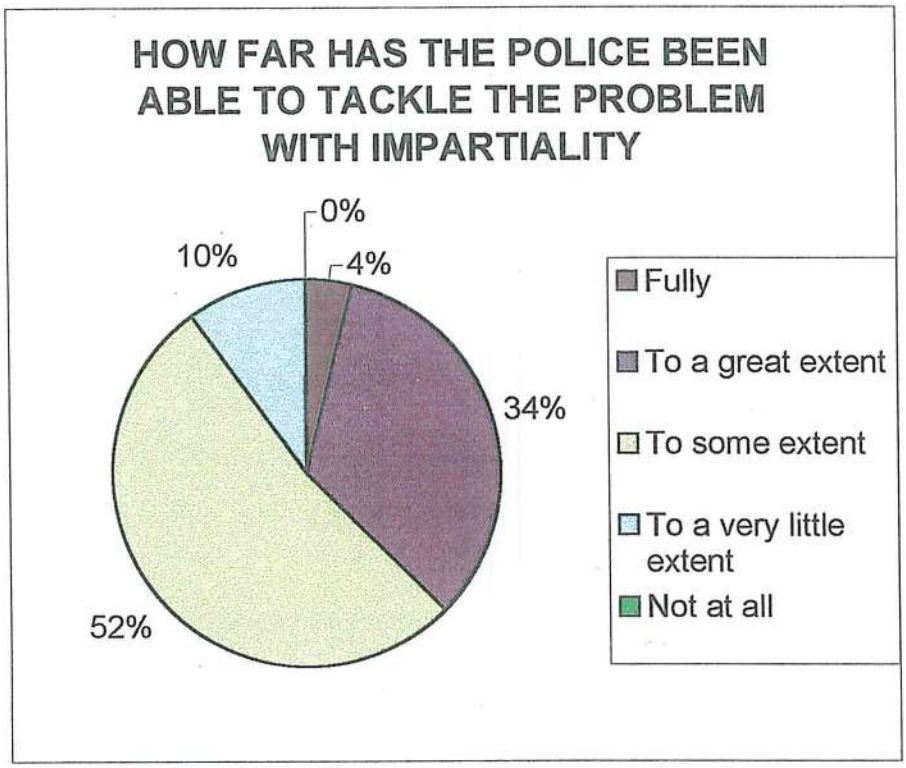


FIGURE – 15

The above figure shows that majority of the officers think that the police has been able to tackle the problem with impartiality only to some extent.

Q. 3. How far is the predominantly majority community composition of the Police Force responsible for the tensions and recurrence of incidents?

Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
-	6	22	37	15

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

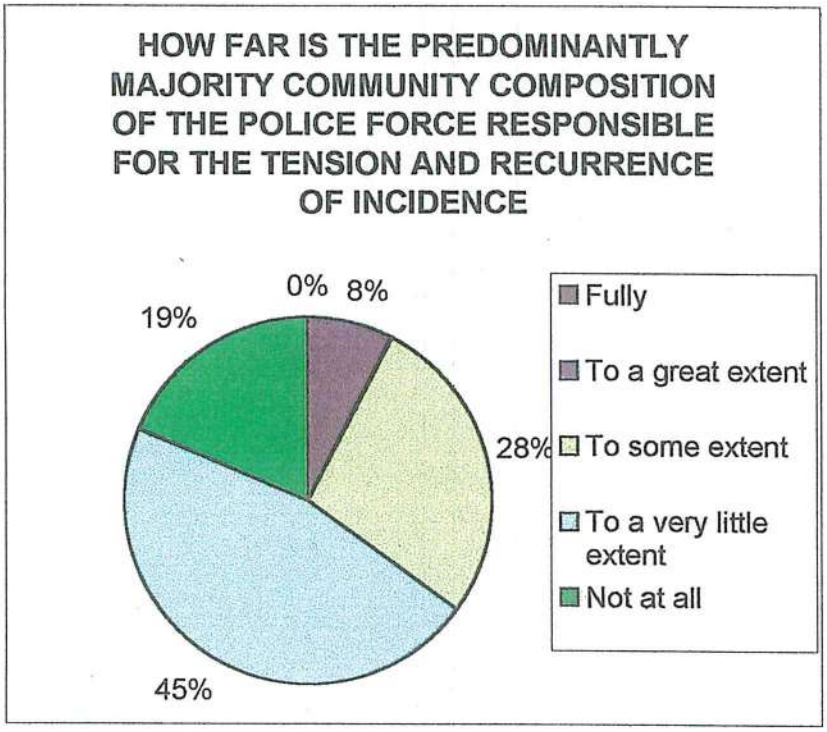


FIGURE – 16

The above data indicate that the predominantly majority community composition of the police force is responsible for the tention only to a very little extent or to some extent.

Q.4. How far will the suitable representation of the minority community in the police of the sensitive districts will help in controlling the tensions and incidents ?

. Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
-	20	32	22	5

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

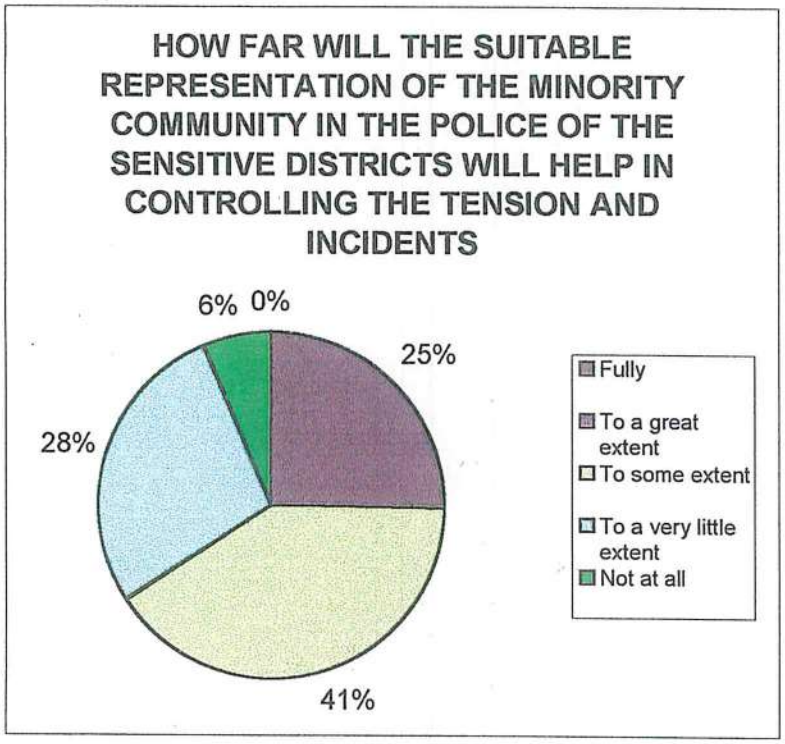


FIGURE – 17

The above data show that majority of the officers think that the suitable representation of the minority community in the police will help only to some extent in controlling the tensions.

Q.5. To what extent have the Christian and Hindu Organizations/Missionaries been responsible for the tensions and incidents ?

. Fully/ To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a very little extent/ Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
4	41	26	7	2

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

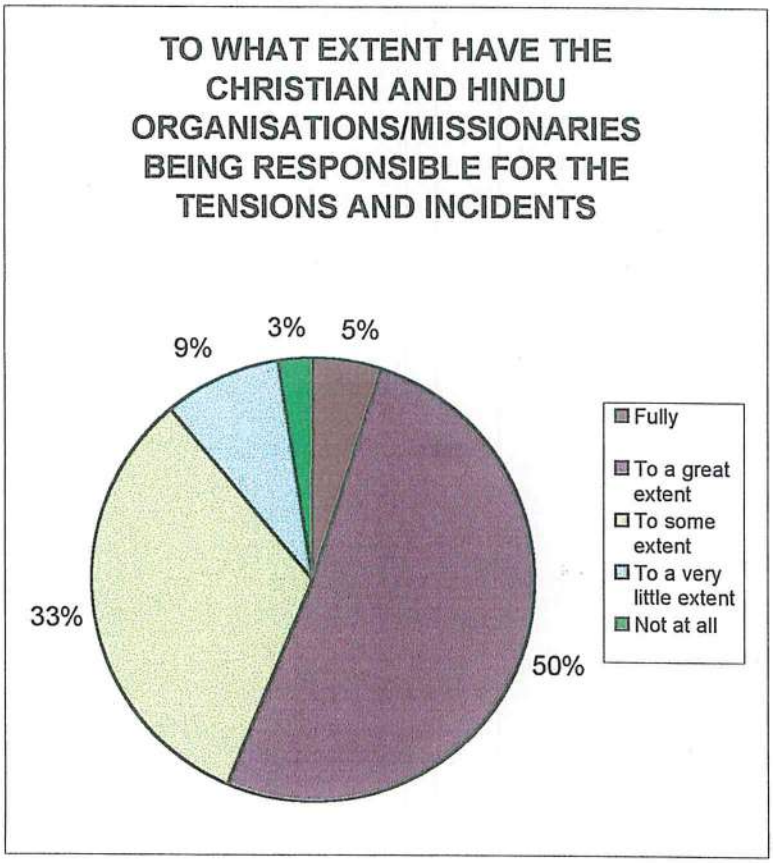


FIGURE – 18

The majority of the officers think that the Christian and Hindu organizations and Missionaries are responsible to a great extent for the tensions and the incidents.

Q.6. How far is the political interference in police working responsible for the problem ?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
10	30	26	11	3

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

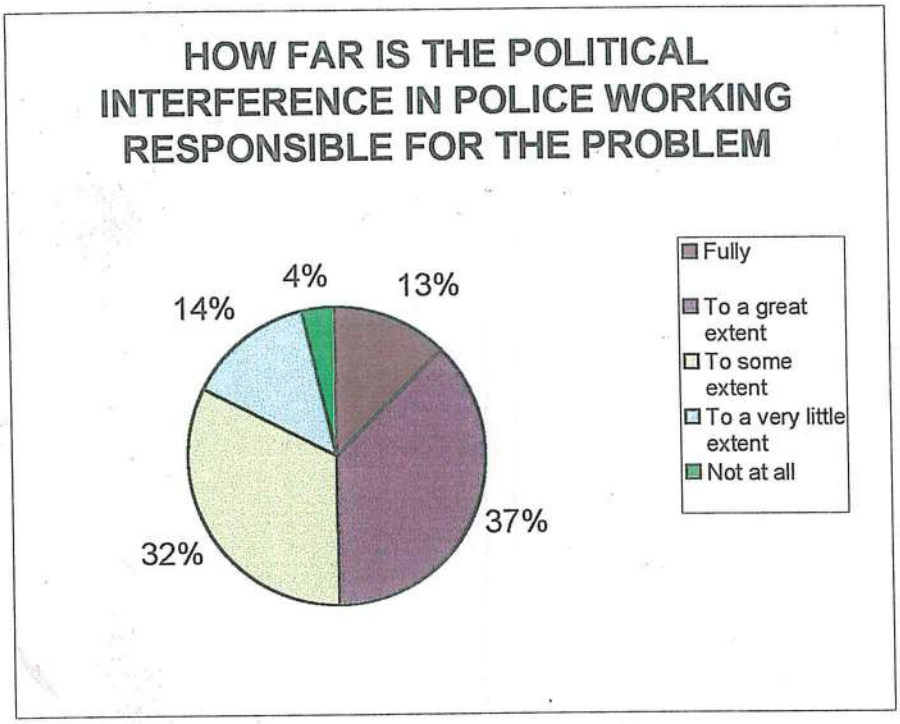


FIGURE – 19

The response to the above question was that 37% officers think that political interference is responsible for the problem to a great extent while 32% think that political interference is responsible only to some extent.

Q.7. How far will the posting and transfer of Officers on objective considerations in sensitive districts help in controlling such communal situations. ?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
6	51	21	2	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

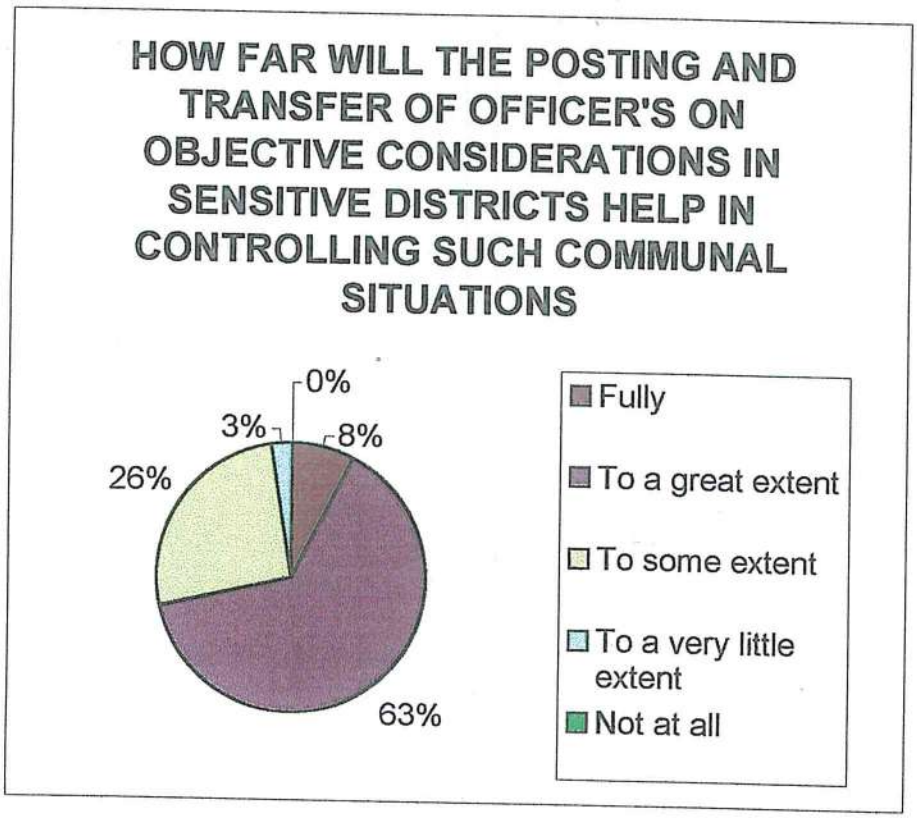


FIGURE – 20

Majority of the officers think that the posting and transfer of officers on objective consideration in sensitive districts will help to a great extent in controlling the communal situations.

Q.8. How far is a bad or good leader in the district police, responsible for the deterioration or improvement of such communal situations? In other words how far is the effectiveness of good leadership in the police at the district level, helpful in controlling such situations?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
9	66	4	1	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

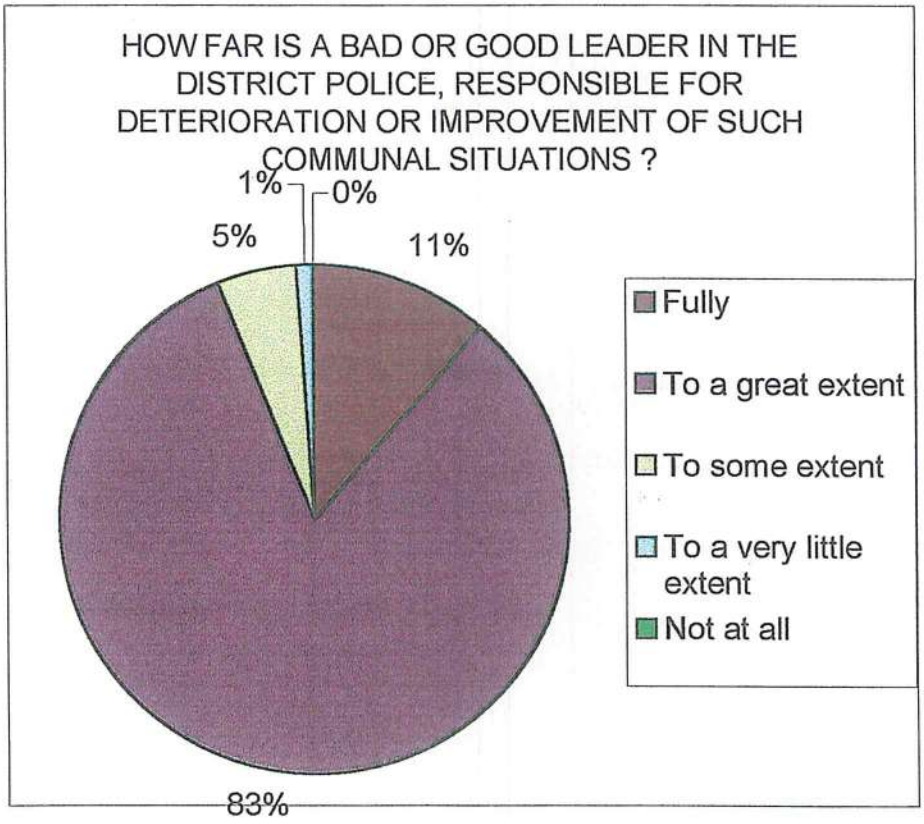


FIGURE – 21

Majority of the officers (83%) think that a bad or good leader in the district police is responsible for the deterioration or improvement in communal situations.

Q.9. If the incidents and tensions reflect the failure of the intelligence machinery of the police ?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
4	28	36	10	2

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

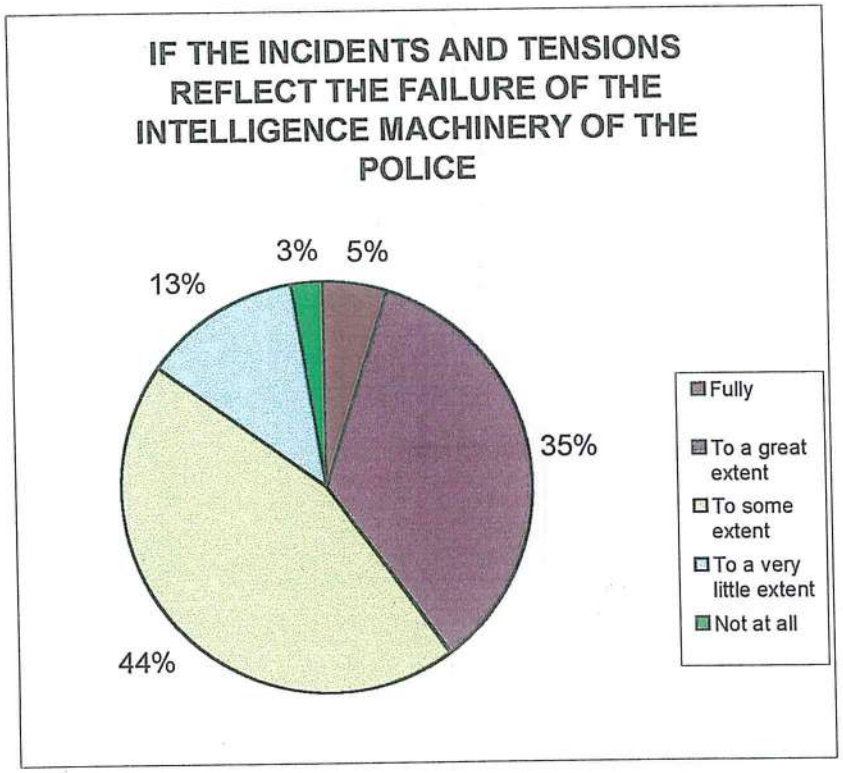


FIGURE - 22

The above data show that about 44% of the officers think that the tensions and incidents reflect the failure of intelligence machinery to some extent, while 35% of them feel intelligence machinery is responsible to a great extent.

Q.10. If much remains to be desired as regards the training of the police personnel for dealing more effectively with the problem. ?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
4	45	22	7	1

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

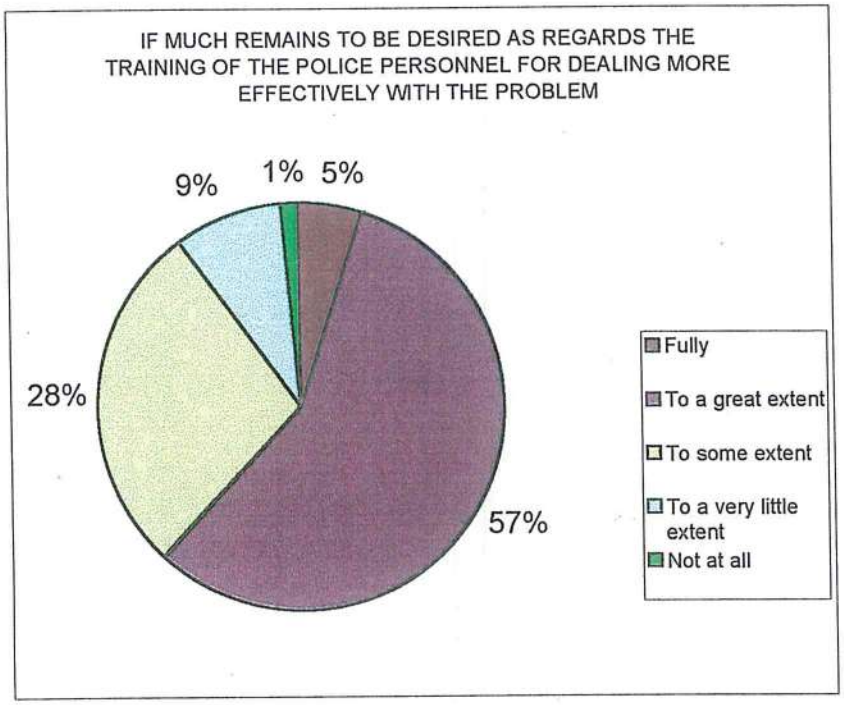


FIGURE – 23

The above data show that 57% officers think that training the police personnel is desirable to a great extent for dealing more effectively with the problem.

Q.11. How far is the enlisting of the public cooperation by the police helpful in dealing with the problem ?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
8	57	12	3	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

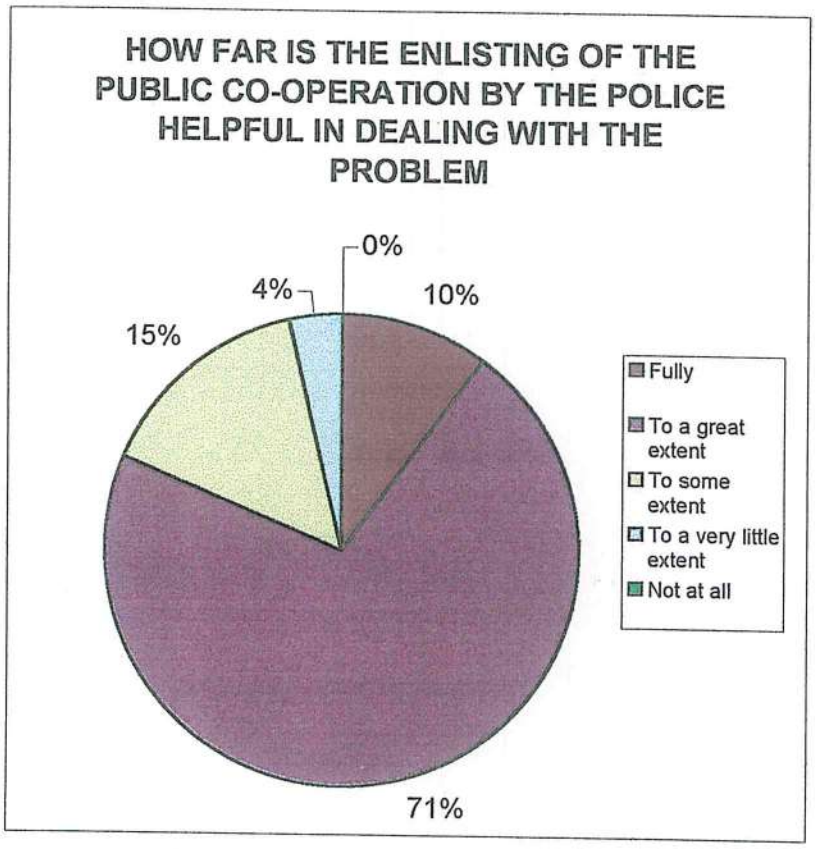


FIGURE – 24

The above data show that majority of the officers (71%) think that the enlisting of the public co-operation by the police will help in dealing with the problem to a great extent.

Q.12. To what extent are the preventive measures effective in controlling such communal situations ?

Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
6	54	18	2	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

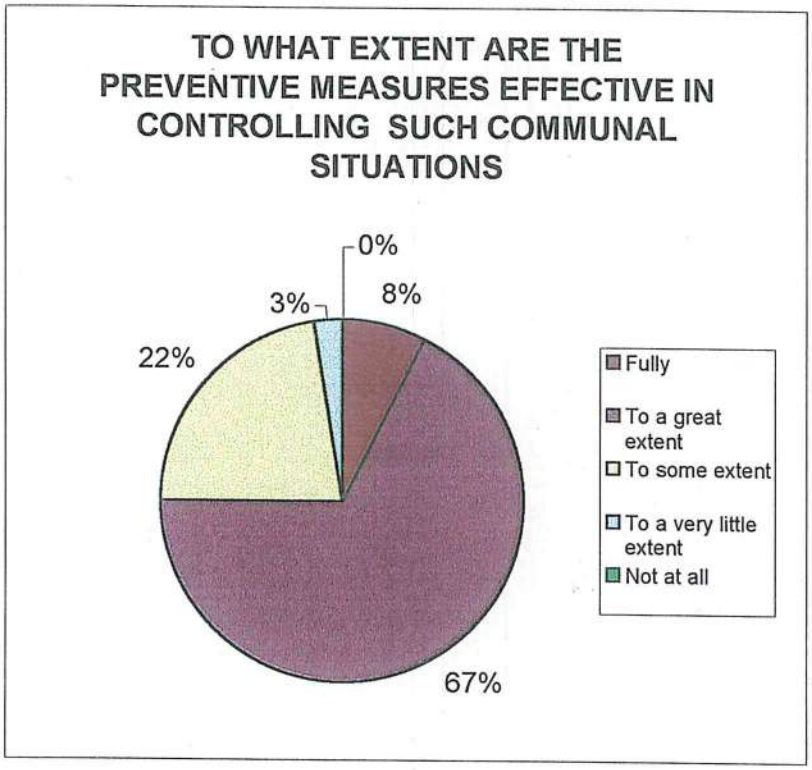


FIGURE – 25

The above data show that the majority of the officers (67%) think that the preventive measures are effective to a great extent in controlling such communal situations, while 22% of them think that they are effective only to some extent.

Q.13. How far is police professional and impartial in the investigation of such riot cases? Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
3	24	40	13	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

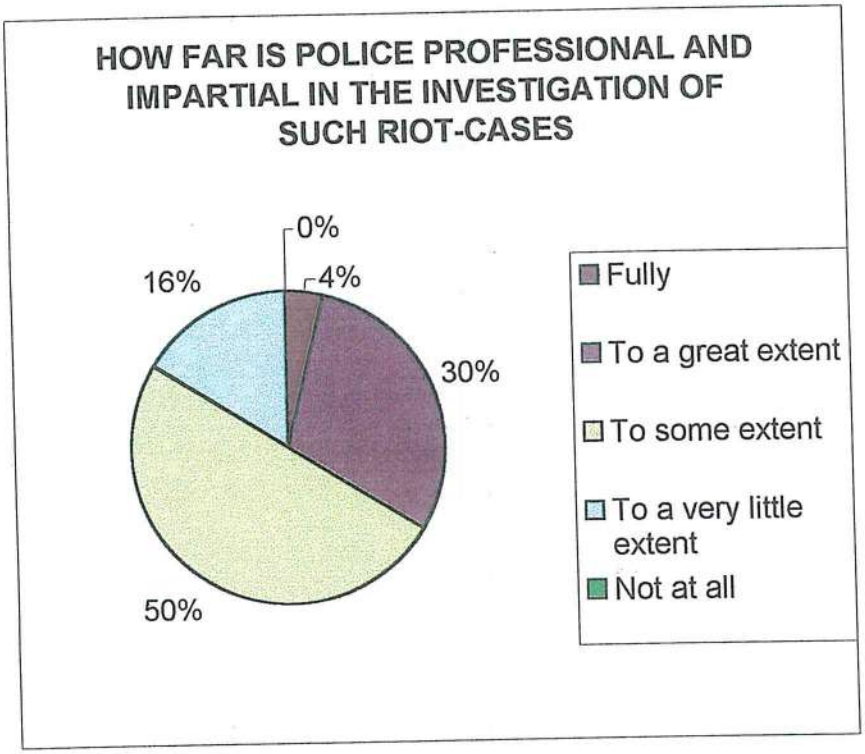


FIGURE – 26

Majority of the officers (50%) think that the police had been professional and impartial in the investigation of such riot cases only to some extent and 30% of them think that it has been professional and impartial to a great extent while 16% of them think that it has been professional and impartial only to a very little extent.

Q.14. How far are the arrests of ring leaders of riot-cases, effective in controlling situation ?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
8	58	13	1	-

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

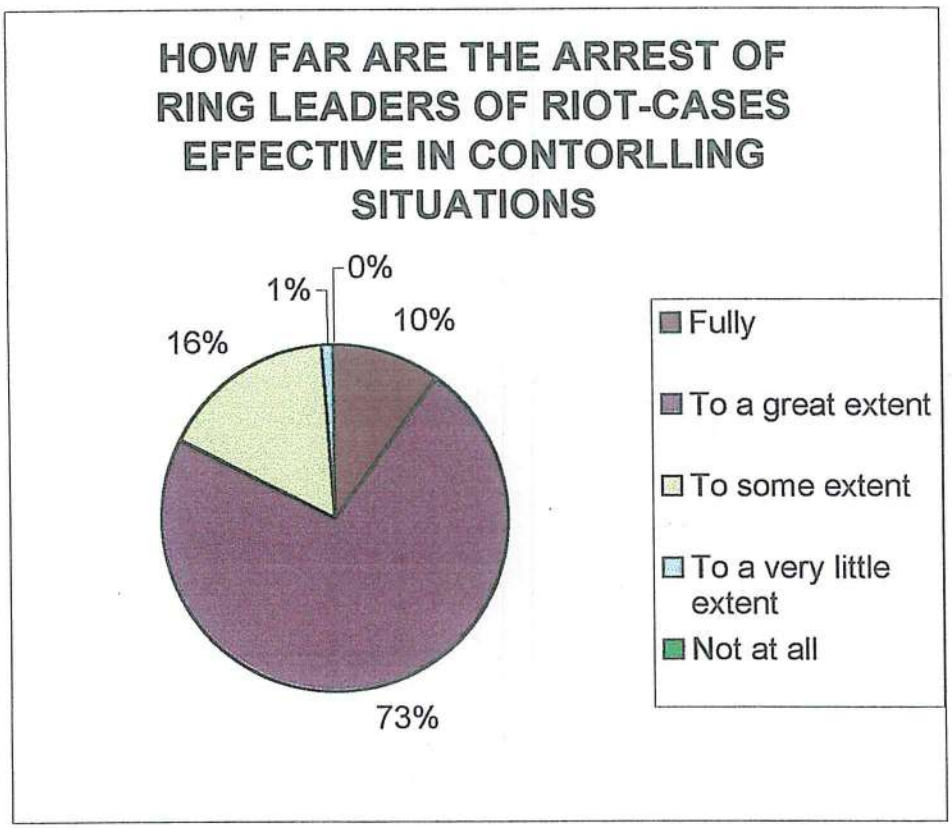


FIGURE – 27

The above data show that 73% officers think that the arrests of ring leaders of riot-cases are effective to a great extent in controlling the situation.

Q.15. How far is the police itself responsible for the tensions and the incidents ? Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
-	5	29	34	12

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

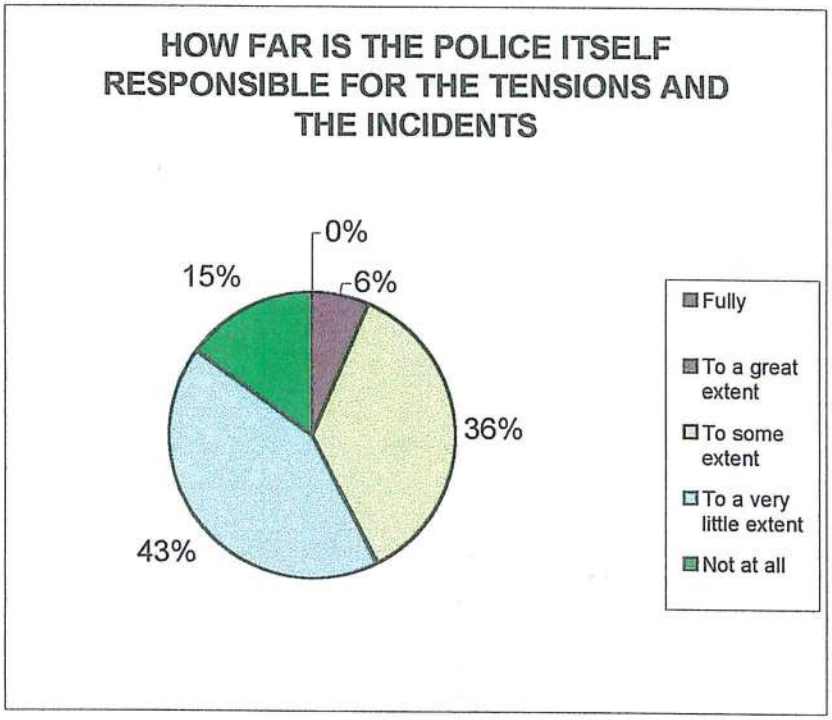


FIGURE – 28

The above data show that majority of the officers (43%) think that the police itself is responsible to a very little extent for the incidents and tensions, while 36% and 5% think that it has been responsible only to some extent and not at all respectively. Only 6% officers think that police has been responsible to a great extent for the tensions and the incidents.

About this questionnaire only 3.85% officers of the rank of SP and DIG (52 officers) held police responsible to a great extent for the incidents, while 13.33% officers of the rank of IG (13 officers) were of the view that police is responsible to a great extent. On the other hand 10% non-police officers (10 officers) thought that the police was responsible to a great

extent. One reason for the explanation of the difference of opinion between seniors police officers and non-police officers on the one hand and the rest of the police officers on the other hand may be that the young officers and officers of the rank of S.P. who are generally field officers and command the policemen directly and as such are more prone to act under the influence of *esprit de corps.*

Q.16. To what extent are socio-cultural and economic factors responsible for such communal situations ?
Fully / To a great extent / To some extent / To a very little extent / Not at all.

The response to the above question was as follows :

FULLY	TO A GREAT EXTENT	TO SOME EXTENT	TO A VERRY LITTLE EXTENT	NOT AT ALL
7	46	19	7	1

The above data may be represented in percentage as follows :

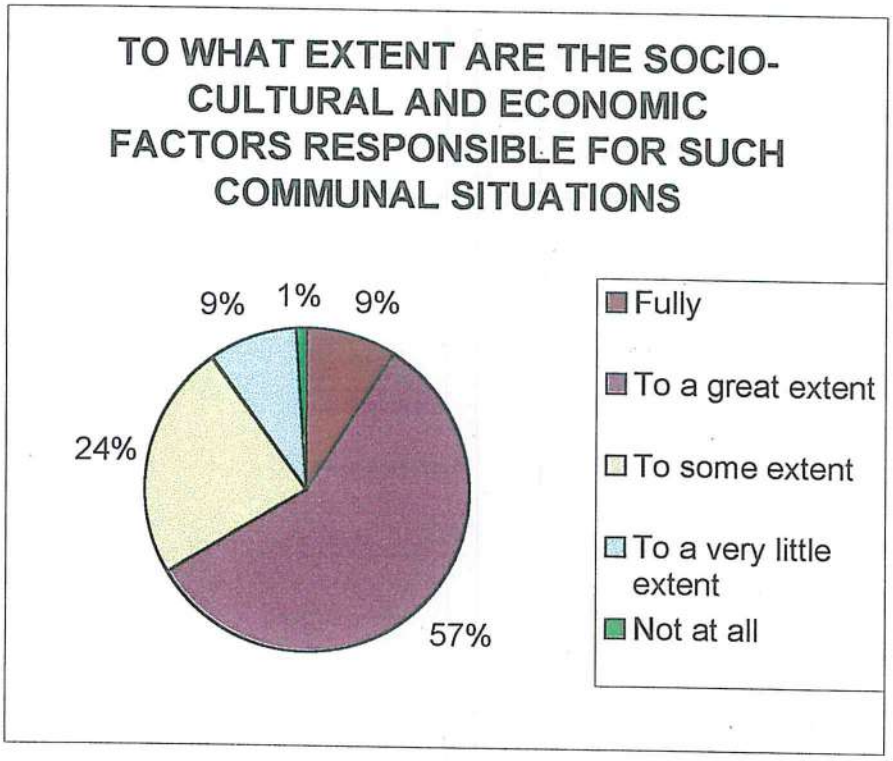


FIGURE – 29

The above data show that majority of the officers (57%) think that the socio-cultural and economic factors are responsible for such communal situations to a great extent.

Chapter – 2
Descriptive Questions

In all 7 descriptive questions were framed to have response about the causes of Hindu-Christian tensions, possible contentious issues in future, ways and means to tackle them, the agencies which can help police and the limitations and the constraints faced by police in dealing with the problem and the field experience. The response of the officers has been condensed question-wise and the Arabic numbers within brackets show the number of officers who gave a particular opinion. An effort has also been made to arrange the responses under different titles and topics. At the end of the question-wise response of the officers, some responses of selected officers are being given.

Q.1 What are the causes for tensions between Christians and Hindus or between converted and non-converted tribal people?

Religious

Conversions (12) by Christian missionaries; Conversions, and re-conversions; Mass conversions: Forcible conversions (4); Incentives offered for conversions- Propaganda of conversions; The opposition by Hindu missionaries to conversions by Christian missionaries; The use of the monetary powers by the Christian organizations for conversions; Allegations regarding forcible conversions and financial assistance by foreign missionaries to the tribal people (2); Propagating the thought that the conversions have been 'forcible' or based on monetary incentives, food grains etc; Proselytizing activities of some over-enthusiastic Christian missionaries; Conversions actual or perceived attempts; The Hindu organizations support the educated young men who value their traditions and object to the conversion activities of the Christian missionaries; Hindus feel that Christians have exploited the poverty and ignorance of the tribals for conversions; Lack of confidence among the Hindus in respect of control on conversions to Christianity; It is perceived that majority of conversions are not of voluntary nature and are induced by money, social service, medical facilities; Activities to spread their religion; Religious/communal Organizations (5); Fundamentalism; The rise of fundamentalism in both the religions; Issues raised by fundamentalists on either side; Religious leaders Christianity considered to be outside religion; Insecurity in the minds of Hindus; Ethnic religious sentiments; Departure from traditions and customs (2); Tribals are very attached to their traditions and customs and the converted tribals go away from them; Attack on religious beliefs of the tribal community because of the conversions; Re-conversions; Sangh Parivar; Hindu fundamentalists; Growth of local Hindu aggressive leadership; VHP; Bajrang Dal; Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad.

- The Christian Missionary activities (2) as against the over-enthusiastic Hindutva activists; Unethical preaching against Hinduism in Churches.
- Attempts by fundamental elements to foment trouble; Any offending statement by any group; Fundamentalist organization who want to stop conversions and reduce the role of Christianity in India; Hindu leaders allege that the Christians take the

advantage of poverty and illiteracy of the masses in conversions; Conversions for vested interest in the garb of welfare activities.

- Fundamentalist elements and their propaganda (5); Misunderstanding/ Incitement (2) by malicious elements; Division of society in religious groups.
- Frustration of Hindu community that they cannot convert member of any other religion to Hindu whereas others can do so.
- There are hardly any tensions between the communities; Recent tensions are the result of Pakistani based organizations.
- Abetment/mischief by foreign agencies/ enemies to our country
- Communal organizations (5); proliferation of communal organizations; Govt.'s failure in monitoring their activities
- Only religious; Religious issues; Disrespect for religious sentiments/institutions
- Religious intolerance
- Lack of religious teaching and lack of depth in religious teaching; False prestige and regard for religion (2); Places of worship; Uncontrolled use of amplifiers in the places of worship.

- Cow slaughter

Political

- Politics/Political leaders (6); Fanning of passions by local politicians; Political mobilization along community lines; politically motivated propaganda; Politicization of the whole issue for political gains (6); Political patronage and encouragement; For political mileage (abetted by politicians); Politics and elections.
-
- Diverting the attention from main issues.; The Hindu political parties/groups fearing loss of influence among the tribals if they are converted to Christianity;
- Non-acceptance of safe-guards provided under the Constitution for the minorities by Hindu fundamentalists

Economic

- Well being of converted tribals vis-à-vis non-converted tribal population and to some extent local Hindus (2); Improvement in economic status of converted Christians due to the financial help from the missionaries and viewed adversely by Hindus; Economic disparity causing social tensions (3).
- Poverty and economic factors (20)
- Contradictory economic interests.
- Commercial angle of promotion of religion.

Psychological

- Sense of insecurity among the Christians;
- Lack of mutual trust (2) and harmony; Mutual distrust.

- Lack of understanding /misunderstanding of each other's religion
- Prejudice (2).
- Narrow thinking
- Seeking of equal status with higher castes, after conversion, especially by Dalit/Tribal Christians; Untouchability.
- Ego problem.
- Superiority complex on the part of Hindus; Superiority and inferiority complex
- Jealousy; Change in social status; Non-converted tribals resent the facilities enjoyed by the converts.
- Mutual hatred (2).

Miscellaneous

- Communal support by the government; Slackness in the administration
- Partiality in the police department
- Land disputes (2)
- Anti-social elements that work for their selfish gains under such situations.
- Imbalance in education efforts among different people and in different regions; Illiteracy (2); Illiteracy among the tribals.
- Intolerance inculcated in the ranks by the individuals/groups for attaining their motives
- Loss of property/life of some Missionaries or some Christians; Assaults.
- Christians are God-fearing people and do not retaliate.
- So far the Christian community in India has not been known as hostile and their confidence in Law and Order of the country should be protected.
- Misleading reports.
- Socio-cultural factors (4).
- Historical reasons (2).
-

Q.2 What could be the possible contentious issues in future between Hindus and Christians (or between converted or non-converted tribals) that might give rise to tensions?

Role of Missionaries (4); Increase of Christian missionaries; Proselytizing Missions; Actions of the religious fanatics (3); Two different ideologies; The vested interest of leaders belonging to either community; As of today religious fundamentalism is on the rise, with the fundamentalist leaders of both of the communities becoming blatant in their words; Role of VHP/Sangh Parivar; The tensions and misunderstandings caused by the local Hindu Fundamentalists; The rise of Hindu fundamentalism (2); Religious issues.

- **Political issues** (4); Politicizing of any issue- Political concerns- Politicization of religions- Political affiliation; Issues for gaining political superiority; Insecurity of politico-religious groups- fear of losing out in numbers- Growth of communal parties
- **Conversions**(15); Forced conversions or conversions by way of inducements (7) from Christianity to Hinduism; Reports about financial assistance by foreign missionaries.- Forced conversions should be detected at the earliest and action should be taken regarding them; Demographic change by way of conversion
- Re-conversions-2

- **Economic interests**-2- Economic issues (3)-
- Caste issues
- Sale/purchase of real-estate

- The problem is social so the situation can be sought through social agencies. Their mutual co-ordination can be brought about by police and given due publicity.

- Reservation policy(2) - Demand for reservation for converted Dalits-Employment – Reservation for tribals whether converted or not (2). The converted SCs though claim the reservation facilities meant for non-converted SCs but go to Church and follow Christianity; Opportunities for employment and growth.
- Social inequalities.
- Conflicts over traditions etc., between converted and non-converted tribals
- Disregard for Hindu sentiments.
- Use of the so-called progressive NGOs to offend Hindu sentiments by criticizing the Hindu traditions or superstitions
- Lack of religious tolerance.
- Insecurity among the minorities (2) and superiority complex among the Hindus; Sense of insecurity and distrust among minorities.
- Building of Churches in tribal districts
- Dominance of non- converted tribals by converted tribals who have advanced economically and educationally.
- Acute ideological differences between the Hinduism and Christianity.
- Increasing hatred between two communities resulting in large-scale violence, arsons, and long-standing distrust affecting developmental processes adversely.

- Educational Institutions-Educational (3)
- Installing idols
- Temple entry
- Shrines
- Disputes about sharing of burial grounds in some places between the converted and non-converted tribals.
- Hindu Christian riots are basically rural based. It is due to conversion, re-conversion, desecration of religious places, and attack or assault on any group by the other groups.
- Vested interests of foreign agencies.
- Social or religious boycott.
- Rights over land.
- Indifferent attitude of the government authorities; Undue favour to one community by the administration
- Disparity in efforts to educate people
- Rise of regionalism

Q.3 What can be done for the prevention of these incidents?

- Avoiding the causes.
- Awareness.
- A policy at the national level to deal with the issues.
- By inculcating patriotism.
- Common Civil Code for 'Indians irrespective of their religion, or caste'. Enforcement of rule of law (3) as per Constitution; Strict enforcement of laws.
- **Firm administration**; Absolutely neutral and unbiased administration; Administration should be extremely careful and impartial in tackling communal clashes.
- Posting of officers belonging to neutral community; Post riot-tested officers in those areas.
- **Impartial police** (5); Professionalism in Police ensuring impartiality and conviction; Effective Policing (2); Promptness and impartiality (2); Strong and well-determined police force, which is ready to protect the rights of the citizens in religious practices; Improvement in the police leadership; Prompt and timely action by police as per law etc; The miscreants indulging in misinformation and promoting disharmony should be taken to task.

- **Strengthening of intelligence** (2); Effective intelligence network (5).

- **Quick investigation of cases to prevent further flare-up**

- **Even small problems must be attended to immediately and solved**; Any mischief brewing up in either community should be nipped in bud; Prompt redressal of small grievances; Information regarding tensions between the two communities should be colleted and immediate action should taken on such information; To sort out the problem at the grass-root level.
- **Problem areas and persons to be identified**; Identification of the leaders and their actions should be monitored; Identify the riot prone areas, on the basis of past history, present activity of any communal organization, incident or mixed locality; Monitor those areas regularly; Identify the troublemakers; Collect intelligence about the developing situations in the troubled areas and if those areas are far away from the P.S., then establish new police stations in those areas.

Proactive preventive measures (4); Proactive policing (2); Identify the anti-social and expose them to public; Preventive provisions of law may be invoked if needed, against the anti-social elements; Preventive action, which should be fair and impartial.

- Rumours mongers should be strongly dealt with; Countering effectively the false rumors.
- By making communal offences severely punishable.

- **Sharp watch on the fundamentalists** and their activities and stern action against them (8); Take timely local action against communal groups; Control on fanatics; Activities of Christian Missionary should be curtailed; Check on missionaries including Hindu and Christian; Govt. should ban all the activities of Christian Missionaries and Hindu fundamentalists; Keep the activities of Hindu fundamentalists under watch and take preventive action against them; The religious leaders should be guided; Constant interaction by the police with religious bodies; Dealing firmly with Hindu fundamentalists who neither respect the tribals and down-trodden nor allow them to be converted to Christianity (P.C. Chauhan, BSF, 7th BN, Jaisalmer); Code of conduct for religious preachers.

- **Media** has an important role to play to put things in a proper perspective; Press/ media to restrain itself from publishing/telecasting provocative news and biased opinion(2)

- **Intermixing of the communities;** Building up of trust and understanding between the communities; Mutual distrust should be avoided by joint activities like fairs and festivals; Maintenance of religious harmony; Open interaction and keeping political and religious leaders out of such interactions; Contact programmes with members of both religious groups. Members of both the communities should be called at the important social functions for understanding each other; Political and public cooperation (2); Police should bring the members of all the communities together so that they can have better understanding of each other and thus reduce tensions. Police should discuss their problems and solve them

  Peace committee meetings/Mohalla Committees consisting of members of both the communities should be constituted (5); Formation of peace committees and their active involvement; Comprehensive community policing; NGOs belonging to both the communities should be involved (2); Adequate representations in the peace committee meetings of police stations in accordance with the complexion of the population; Holding of peace committee meetings; Forming committees belonging to these communities and officials.

- **Strict action against any action of forcible conversions** (6) /re-conversion; Disincentives to conversions; Conversion should not be permitted; Ensuring that no conversions are done by way of money, greed or force (2); People who have obtained money for purposes of proselytizing activities should be identified and suitably dealt with; Early detection of the forced conversions and action on them; Ensuring that no conversions are done by way of money, greed or force (2); People who have obtained money for purposes of proselytizing activities should be identified and suitably dealt with; Early detection of the forced conversions

and action on them; Reservations in government services etc. for the creamy layer of the converted tribals should be stopped.

- **Check and Audit of Foreign Funds** flowing in the country(3).
- **Develop spirit of tolerance in the community;** Tolerance through education is the key (Watisangba Ao, Assam-Meghalaya Police, 1982 batch); Inculcating religious tolerance.
- Generate harmony by introducing various development works.
- The right to follow the faith of one's choice should be freely exercised by all.
- (That religion should not be given false and unreal importance) but each one should respect the human-soul behind each and every individual irrespective of one's religion. (C. Balasubramanian, 1979, IGP-Human Rights and Social Justice, Tamilnadu)
- Enactment to regulate building of Churches/temples.
- Restrict in regard installation of status.
- Development administration to be more committed
- Economic upliftment of the people- Hindus should extend their service towards the upliftment of the tribal people and towards their education which would help to improve their standards of living
- Plans of harassment or violence against the members of a community by members of other community should be known in advance.
- Protection to the minority.
- Creating confidence among the people by police.
- Representation of all the communities in the government and other services; Adequate representation of minorities in law enforcement agencies.;
- Giving maximum publicity to human values.
- **Minimizing political interference** (2); Preventing political leaders from taking advantage; Ignore political Interference; Maturity among politicians; Blacklisting of political parties furthering such tensions; Non-politicizing the issues; Religion based politics should be banned
- **Education** of masses (6), for example about human dignity; By educating people; Literacy should be enhanced and poverty be removed; Educating masses and both the communities(2).
- There should be no religious/communal preaching in the educational institutions.
- All the government agencies responsible for law and order should meet regularly.

Q.4 What agencies can help police in such communal situations?

NGOs (37); NGOs of both the communities; Organizations, which have done some work in that area and wield influence.

- Peace loving and influential elders of all the communities (2); Senior citizens;Genuine social leaders and workers.
- Local civil defense volunteers.
- **Media** (7).

- Intellectuals (3).
- Influential and responsible representatives of both the communities (2); Influential public persons (2); Important public figures of both the communities including political leaders (2);
- Religious heads/leaders of both the communities (18); Religious groups or leaders/Organizitations(4); Priests; Fathers; Non-religious charitable organizations; Community leaders; Tribal leaders who are not aligned with any one.

- Religiously neutral associations linked up with the welfare of human beings (2).
- Voluntary bodies (2); Social organizations (3); Rotary Clubs (2), Red Cross Societies; Lions Clubs (2); *Sai Baba Satsangs*; Bar Association; Indian Pharmaceutical Association; Indian Medical Association should be involved to educate the tribals on issues relating to health and medical services; Women organizations.
- Social forums/organizations (5); Women forums of all the religions.
- Heads of educational institutions of the locality (2); Educational Institutions; Teachers; Students; Various school/colleges/institution and the parents and heads meet at a common platform for solving the problem of reducing the tension.

Political leaders /parties (7); Political representatives; Politicians with good intensions; Liberal minded political leaders; Co-operation of political parties and their commitment levels to the cause of peace; Politicians of the local area provided they do not come out in favour of any particular community.

-
- Elected members of *Panchayats* (3); Village headmen; Elected representatives of local bodies.
- Officers of civil administration; Revenue department; District administration; Social welfare department; Forest department; Govt. representatives; Other departments of the Government; Other governmental agencies must work simultaneously.

  Members of peace committees/*Mohalla* committees at local/district levels (17); Community policing; Peace committees consisting of law-abiding citizens and social workers; local peace committees (if any) can be used to collect intelligence and pacify the angry/dissatisfied groups; Peace committee at the grass root level.
- Intelligence agencies (4); Intelligence agency in providing information of the discontent simmering in the communities and their future course of action so that rightful action can be taken in time and sufficient force can be mobilized/requisitioned
- Respective citizens of both the communities.
- Special police officers from both the communities.
- Youth with positive attitudes.
- Genuine social leaders and workers.

Q.5 If the police have any constraints and limitations in dealing with the problem?

Nil-2

- None if there is a will (A.Y.V. Krishna); Lack of will; Lack of political will
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- Sensitivity of the issue.
- Will of the leadership to meet the challenge is lacking.
- **Lack of professional (-ism) approach** (3); Commitment to the case and absence of long term planning; Hesitation on the part of field officers; Lack of adequate knowledge regarding the problem; Lack of proper intelligence; Lack of motivation among the subordinates; Police action usually attracts Human Rights issues and they are demoralized; Fear of victimization if action taken as per law etc.
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- **Communal bias in the local police**;

Lack of impartiality and objectivity in the police (2); At times biased attitude; The feelings of caste, clan or class among the Police officers; The policemen too are human beings with their personal faith and belief; Lack of the impartiality in the officers at the lower level; Proper training should be given to the lower level officers for tackling such situations, as they tend to show their biases in such situations. They should be asked to act impartially and should also appear to be doing so.

Sometimes the reporting of the cases is not done or done only when the incident assumes significance. In many cases the names reported are out of malice, while they might not have been at the scene of the incident. Reporting may also be out of proportion to the incident. All these, sometimes act as limitations leading to problems for police in the arrest or in the investigation.(**Vijay Kataria**, 1990- M.P., S.P., Jhabua, M.P.)

- Association of policemen with religious organizations; Lack of sensitivity at the cutting edge level due to lack of proper training (2) in human/ social behaviour; Lower ranks identify themselves with either community; Lower ranks S.I.s/ Inspectors not sensitized on social issues; workload; lack of time for their families make them irritable and ill suited to meet the challenge.
- Police gets involved only when situation turns into violent one.
- Senior officers not giving any positive lead to field officers.
- Socio-political problem having roots in history (2).
- Shortage of manpower, communication, equipment and other resources (8), which help in mobility and striking power of police; Lack of suitable equipment and trained man- power; Law and order staff must be earmarked for tackling such situations and should be trained accordingly.
- **The strength of the rural police stations is a major handicap to handle the rural riots(**

- As most of rural police stations are not provided with vehicles, police mobility is hampered.

The affected police stations must be supplied with riot drill equipments and cameras.G. Nayak G. Nayak, 1983-Chhatisgarh Cadre, Deputy Director (Administration.), SVP NPA.

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- Insufficient training; Police needs proper training and understanding of the problem.
- Difficulty faced in quick investigation of cases.
- Frequent transfers.
- Political constraints; Political interference (16); Political pressure; Police should be made an autonomous organization free from political control; Media (Negative role played by it); Excessive media coverage.
- Role of communal organizations
- Geographical locations or terrain; Lack of understanding due to distance
- Hilly terrain, difficult approach, remoteness from the police station and this too accounts for poor or inadequate intelligence in such regions.
- Possibility of repercussions in other areas; The fear of reaction in the form of ethnic riots.
- Lack of faith of locals

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Q.6 If you have worked or lived in any district/area with mixed Hindu-Christian population or dealt with or known any Hindu-Christian tension/incident in your state, kindly write a note about it.

- The change required in the System and we have to go back to the basics and restart/rebuild the system for its betterment (Ghanshyam Parswani)
- I have worked in 3 districts with mixed Hindu-Christian population. Constant vigil and liaison with the leaders. Prevention of spreading of rumors by giving publicity to the true facts of the case. (S. Gopinath, Kottayam Dt., Kerala)
- Yes. As SDPO/Addl.S.P. of district- maintained constant contact with the leaders of both the communities, frequent exchange of information , verification of the some – no incident – both communities lived in peace and had full trust and faith in each other. (R.S. Bajaj, DIG (Trg.), Tripura, Agartala)

Q.7. Any other comments

Police should take action as per law. Maintain constant contact with the leaders of both the communities. Be neutral and impartial and prompt in action. Keep sharp watch on the activities of fundamentalist elements. (R.S. Bajaj, DIG (Trg.))

Q.No7: It is only through deliberate National Educational Programme that communal harmony will be maintained. (P.C. Chauhan, Commdt., BSF)

Q.No.1: The tensions between Hindus and Christians are due to lack of understanding of the tenets of each other's religions. Q.No.3: The fact that all religions teach the same tenets of universal love and brotherhood should be re-iterated again and again. Police personnel should undergo training programmes periodically. Q.No.7: The tensions between Hindus and Christians were not heard of earlier and should be controlled otherwise it will have far-reaching consequence in our society, economy, internal security and communal harmony. (P.R.K. Naidu).

Q.No.7: It is political will and determined police officers that can make the difference (P.Mallana Goud, IPS 1984, Manipur).

Sanjay Arora 1988 Batch (Tamilnadu Cadre)- Lack of balance between the requirement of providing a sense of security and concessions to the minority and at the same time not to offend the majority community in the process. Real prevention can be achieved only through mature democracy. Police can only do temporary prevention by way of: 1) Good intelligence collection 2) Community Policing 3) Being more responsive towards the society.4) Impartial approach 5) Right message through quick and effective response in case of any incident. The media, judiciary, NGOs and developmental agencies can help police in dealing with communal situations. There is a need for training and change in attitude at the police station level.

T.B. Roy 1994 batch, Manipur and Tripura cadre- Forcible conversions of the tribals and reservations in Government services for the converted Christians might be the possible contentious issues in future between the Hindus and Christians or between converted or non-converted tribal people. Spreading the spirit of secularism, which is the essence of the Indian Constitution and formation of non-religious and impartial social bodies including people of all religions and making them functional, pro-active and decisive can help police in the prevention of communal tensions.

Abishek Trivedi 1996 batch, Himachal Pradesh Cadre- Q.No. 1) Causes:-Whipped up communal frenzy by political groups, especially Hindu right wing against the issue of conversion. Promotion of a recentful and hateful attitude towards the former culture of the converts by Christian Missionaries. Sustained campaign against multi-cultaralism and cosmopolitan values by certain political groups. Q. No.2) Contentious issues:- Issue of forcible conversions by monetary incentives, clash of lifestyles and cultural values, disputes related to ownership of Church properties and real estate. Q.No. 3) Prevention:- Reachaing out and establishing proper communication with the groups; sensitization and training of police force especially at the lower levels; minimizing political interference; posting of neutral and upright officers in such areas; effective countering of rumours; Q.No.5: Police has the constraints of lack of public co-operation and extreme political pressure by political parties and other religious groups. Q.No.6: In Shimla, there were some incidents of pelting of stones on Christian institutions and the harassment of Christians. In Saharanpur in Uttar

Pradesh where he served as A.S.P., there was a matter of encroachment of Church property and a case of fraudulent ownership.

Renuka Mishra 1990 batch, U.P Cadre, A.D., NPA- The basic concept of conversion to Christianity has instilled in Hindus (through politicians seeking for a diversion) a feeling of impurity and also the fact that the converts are poor, tribals with an otherwise very poor socio-economic status who were given some incentives to convert. More than religion, convenience was the cause. Tensions are due to fanaticism on both sides. Tribals are bearing the brunt of politics. The possible contentious issues could be the issue of forced re-conversions from Christianity to Hinduism, celebration of holidays as per English calendar, pressures of further conversions. The fight is between secularism, its interpretation by different groups, ethnicity, and notions of purity of race and violation of the freedom to choose one's religion.

Devesh Chandra Srivastva 1995 batch AGMUT, Goa- Q No. 1) Establishing the hegemony over each other- Self-interest of missionaries of both religions- The socio-economic differences in their status.
Q No. 2) Inclusion/exclusion in the Scheduled Tribe Category for reservation/economic benefits- Attempts of re-conversion by the religious institutions of both the religions- Political/administrative pampering of a particular group for vested interests- Increasing socio-economic difference between the two groups
Q No. 3) Developmental activities to improve the living standard of the people- Complete ban on conversion/re-conversions- Close watch over the movements of Missionaries' activities in tribal dominated regions- Impartial approach of district administration in matters relating to tribal- Sensitization of lower level functionaries of the government to the needs/customs of the tribals- Continuous interaction of the government with the representatives of both the groups.
Q No. 4: The impartial leaders of both religions having sincerity and integrity- Continuous interaction with leaders of both communities and strong preventive matters to nip in the bud, strong and committed government support, an impartial and well meaning media.
Q No.5) Lack of faith in police by the general public. They are considered as a tool of the ruling elites/party for taking a stand- Lack of sensitivity and appreciation of the issues involved- Political interference compelling them to have a biased approach- Personal prejudices/bias for/ against the groups.

C. Dothanga, 1975-AP, Hyderabad.
Q.1 The feeling on the part of Christians that they are in microscopic minority results in fears or persecution mania.

On the part of Hindu majority, the Christians are soft targets unlike the Muslims who are not so.
Q.2 Main issues are complete disregard to secularism and rights to religious protection and failure to protect such rights.
Q.3 Strong and well determined police force that is ready to protect the rights of its citizens in religious practices. The police force should show the qualities of impartiality and promptness.
Q.5 Political interference.

Padman Singh, 1976-UP, IG, Special Sector, CRPF, New Delhi.
Q.1 Economic factor;Cultural factors ;Traditions and prejudices; Conversions
Q.2 Employment; Availability of reservation in employment especially among tribals and tribals converted to Christianity.
Q.3 Overall improvement in the administrative efficiency.
Q.4 NGOs.
Peace Committees.
Village headmen
Q.5 Conversion takes place in remote areas. Taking undue advantage of Constitutional provisions about religious freedom, missionaries entice poor tribals to Christianity.
Q.6 I worked as I.G. of Investigation Team of Justice Wadhwa Commission enquiring into Stains murder case. (Orissa).

Mohd. Sulaiman Salaria, J & K:-Q.No.2: Cool attitude of the government authorities
Q.No.3: Forced conversions should be detected at an earliest and action taken, strict vigil be kept over the financial transactions by the Foreign Missionaries, there should be the involvement of NGO's belonging to both Hindu and Christian communities.
Q.No.5 Hilly terrain, difficult approach to the place of incident and incidents happening in the remote and far flung areas can be the constraints of police. Moreover if the situation flares up, such incidents can occur anywhere, about which police can't have any specific information.
Q.No.6: Members of both the communities are called in the important social functions; strict vigil and surveillance is kept over the expected trouble areas; peace committee are kept operative and alive; local press/electronic media is used to educate about peaceful co-existence.
Q.No.7: Apart from the rights given in the Constitution of India concerning fundamental right of Religion and belief, the Central and State governments should give directions in black and white for ensuring non-interference by any group or individual in the religion/belief of any other group or individual. It is further recommended that sufficient companies at police consisting and representing all religious sects of the country should be drawn and kept as reserve at the center. These companies should be flown to the effected areas in a short notice to control the situation. Commanders of these companies should not belong to the religious sects, which are affected. Violence should be curbed at the initial stage and strict action taken against the rioters. A special cell to monitor the situation in the communally affected areas of North-East should be established in the Ministry of Home Affairs which should be provided with quick information and developments regarding communal tension in the affected areas.

S.W. Deshpande, 1990 batch, Asst. Comm. FDA, Mumbai (Non-Police): Q.No.1: Basically it is a question of perception. Hindus feel that Christians have exploited the poverty and ignorance of the tribals for conversion. It is perceived that majority of the conversions are not voluntary and are induced. Money, social services, medical facilities are used as an inducement. Non-converted tribal resent the facilities enjoyed by the converts.

Q.No.2) Induced conversions; Disregard by Hindu sentiments' Use of so-called progressive NGOs to offend Hindu sentiments by criticizing the Hindu traditions or superstitions.
Q.No. 3): Open interaction between all persons from both communities on one to one basis; Keep political and religious leaders out of this interaction; Formation of Mohalla Committees to prevent communal riots on the lines of Bhivandi, Maharashtra. Q.No.4: Those social organizations, which are not associated with religious organizations.
Q.No.5: Will of leadership to meet the challenge is lacking; Lower ranks identify themselves with either community; work load.

Kamlendu Choudhury, Assam Judicial Service 1988 batch, Guwahati district Kamrup, Assam: Q.No.1: Attempt/eagerness for mass conversion to Christianity- It appears that converted Christians consider themselves as the more elite and also perhaps consider that they alone will be able to protect the ethnical interest and that can only be possible if their counterparts are converted to Christianity. - Perhaps the converted Christians may consider that this entire ethnic group may be politically and economically benefited if the entire community is converted.
Q.No.2: Newly converted Christians in future may have a tendency to occupy gradually the political power in their tribal block or belt. - Social discontent may increase due to inter-religious marriages without consent of parents/guardians of the couple. – There may be some sorts of inducement on the part of the newly converted tribals and vice versa for conversion of their counterpart.
Q.No.3: Government should provide necessary facilities for free education in remote areas.- Economic and health conditions of the tribal communities should be improved by the government. These along with all-round development can help tribals not to seek help of missionaries.- Education should be given from the childhood that no religion is inferior to any other religion.- No paper, booklets should be allowed to be published or distributed which undermines any other religion.
Q.No.4: Bar associations, Religious organizations and alike social institutions having grass root level influences.
Q.No.5: Political interference; Lack of political will; Police force having composite religious groups may also be affected by communal feelings and tension at the times of communal tension in public.
Q.No.7: Religious tolerance should be taught to all children.

R.C.S. Samant, 1985 batch, Chattisgarh Judicial Service, District Dhamtari, Chattisgarh: Q.No.1: The main cause of tension between Hindus and converted Christians is the monetary powers of the Christian agencies. They use the power of money, which is effective on especially lower economic class of Hindus. A Hindu being of lower caste is only a secondary factor. Thus the programme of conversion by use of money power by the Christian missions is the cause of tension.
Q.No.2: In general tribals are very attached to their traditions and custom. The converted tribals are going away from these traditions and custom by the inducements offered by the missionaries. This has been and would be very objectionable for the non-converted tribals regard their traditions and customs as above all. This has been the reason for Graham Staines murder.

Q.No.3: Problem is social, so the solution can be sought through social agencies. Their mutual co-ordination can be brought by the Police and publicized to keep peace in the society at large. But rumourmongers and troublemakers must be dealt with severely.
Q.No.4: Religious agencies, social service agencies can be helpful.
Q.No.7: Any incident or offence or breach of peace should be attended and action should be taken immediately. Sufficient force should be used. So far the Christian community in India has not been known as hostile, so their confidence in law and order of this country should be protected.

V.K. Gupta, District & Sessions Judge (Jammu) J & K: -
Q.No.7: It has been noticed that the conversions are mainly due to poverty and illiteracy. Police and all other administrative agencies should be vigilant and the government should do everything possible to improve the social and economic conditions of the tribal people. The political interference in the working of police should also go.

S.K. Gautam, 1989-AGMUT, DCP/Vigilance, PHQ, New Delhi.

Q.6 During the period of my posting as Additional DCP/West District, Delhi, I came across about an incident of disturbing the preaching activities of Christian missionaries, by local residents. This happened in the area of Police Station Tilak Nagar in the year 1998, when the preaching activities were going on in a tent as usual. The timely intervention by the police prevented any untoward incident and subsequent preventive action/patrolling/picket prevented any such incident in future.

S.S. Trivedi, 1995-(SPS) Gujarat, S.P., Junagadh
Q.1 The Hindus have a feeling that the Christians are converting the poor people to Christianity by taking advantage of their poverty i.e. they are given financial and other help if they embrace Christianity. The Hindus feel that the missionary work is having this hidden interest. So they (Hindus) have tensions on this important issue.
Q.2 The conversions from tribal to Christianity. The financial and other help given to converted people can be the contentious issue.
Q.3 The government should undertake development programmes and their implementation for the upliftment of the tribal areas and its people. It is a continuous process. Posting of impartial officers of revenue, police, forest etc. The involvement of peace committee at grass- root level.
Q.5. The police department with the help of revenue and forest department along with some peace committee can work together to attain the desired result.

G.U.G. Sastry, 1987-Tamil Nadu, AD, SVP NPA, Hyderabad.

Q.1 Broad causes are fueling of communal passions by Hindu/Christian religious organizations for increasing the domain of control as well as by political parties for getting the votes of the minorities. The local level causes for tensions include – conversions, construction of churches/temples particularly in an area where people of the other community are in equal proportion, pasting of posters and writing of slogans denigrating the other religion and speeches given by political/religious leaders.

Q.2. - Conversions.
- Construction of churches/temples in disputed areas.
- Attacks on the religious leaders of one religion.

Q.3 - Ensuring that no illegal or unauthorized churches/temples are constructed in a disputed area
- Ensuring that there is no organized effort on the part of any religion to convert or re-convert members of one religion to other religion.
- Ensuring that no speeches hurting the sentiments of other religions are given by the religious leaders, particularly during festivals
- Banning religious processions through disputed routes.
- Maintaining a preventive vigil for sale of books or pasting of posters, which may fuel community passion.
- Forming peace committees with members of different religions and conducting meetings regularly.

Q.4 - Citizens' committees consisting of neutral members.
- Peace committees having members from both the communities.
- Political leaders without any community bias can also be helpful in such situations.
- The District Collector and the entire machinery can play an important role.
- Schoolteachers can also play a role in such situations.

Q.5 Most important constraint for police is the political interference in dealing with such matters impartially and effectively. The other constraints include lack of resources, particularly time, prejudices and biases among some policemen, lack of clear-cut policy to deal with this issue.

Ajay Kumar, SPS-1985, Rudrapur (Uttaranchal)

Q.1 The Christians owing to socio-economic reasons still live, in isolation. At the social plane there hasn't been much interaction between the two communities.The Christians have a feeling of insecurity. Some of the Hindus especially those associated with BJP, Bajrang Dal etc. feel alienated with them.

Q.2 In the field of education.

The impact of Western civilization is more visible in the Christian society. On Christmas, New Year Eve they celebrate by fanfare and dancing. Bajrang Dal and a few other political parties pose a threat as they forcibly close down, clubs, discos etc.

Q.3 I think a conscious effort has to be made to bridge the gap between the two communities. I rarely finds Christians participating in Hindu functions and the vice versa. A better social interaction would go a long way to build better relations between the two communities.

There is an inherent apprehension in the minds of Hindus that the Christian Missionaries' aim is to convert the Hindus, especially of the poor class to Christianity.

Q.4 Committees should be formed in the districts, which are prone to have such tensions comprising of progressive Hindus and Christians. The committees should have the D.M. and

SSP as members. They should have periodic meeting and iron out differences if any, and should promote harmonious relations between the two communities.

Q.5 The inherent tendency of the Christian community to remain in isolation.
The rising tendency of Bajrang Dal and Shiv Sena is to take law in their hands. Often attacks have been made on the members of the Christian community.

Q.7 The missionary activities pertaining to conversion of Hindus through charitable acts such as opening of hospitals, running schools should be matched by Hindu Organizations, which should work in this direction. This would arrest the tendency of conversion and which in turn would be able to remove/lessen the tensions between the Hindus and Christians.

Vijay Kataria, 1990-M.P., S.P., Jhabua, M.P.

Q.7 Political will and impartial investigation/implementation of law is a must. Political will in the sense that there should be no politics on the incident and blowing it out of proporitions and no interference in the process.

Tripongse Sangtam, IPS, 1994-Nagaland, Commandant, Special Nagaland Armed Police, Bn. Kingsway Camp, Delhi.

Q.1 Rumours of alleged forced conversions and financial assistance from foreign Missionaries.
Killings of Christian believers and priests

Q.2 Cool attitude of the government.

Q.4 A hand out copy of the Indian Constitution containing the right to freedom of religion/belief to be distributed.

Q.7 Apart from the rights given in the constitution of India, the respective state governments/Central government to give directives in black and white for non-interference by any group or individual in respect to religion/belief of any group or individual. It is suggested that some companies of police drawn in equal representations from all the religious sects of the country should be kept in reserve at the center to be flown to the affected areas at short notice and the Commanders of the force should not be belong to the affected religious sects.

Taj Hassan, 1987-AGMUT, DCP/South West Distt., New Delhi.

Q.5 Police has no control on social and political development. Most of the conflicts are politically motivated. Social change is a continuous process and religious missionaries try to convert the people with religious zeal, causing social change and Constitution provides

freedom for the same. Police has a limited role in the whole game plan. Aspect of police 'training and the need for inculcating impartiality cannot be overlooked'.

S.K. Jha, 1989-M.P., Khandwa

Q.1 Christian missionaries generally work in far-flung rural, forested and predominantly tribal areas. Overtly they work in the field of health and education but some conversions are taking place. Converted tribals are generally better educated and economically better off. This has set in a sense of resentment amongst Hindu tribals and Hindu organizations are playing on their sentiments alleging receipt of huge foreign money by these missionaries for conversions.

Q.2 A wide gap exists in socio-economic conditions of converted and non-converted tribals. Converted tribals have cornered all govt. jobs and other benefits of govt. schemes. Hindu organizations like Bajrang Dal and VHP have become very active in these areas and incite local tribals to resort to violence. On some pretext these groups want to highlight these conversions whereas Christian missionaries can help their cause only by working discreetly and in a covert manner.

Q.3 Transparency and openness in the working of Christian Missionaries.
No religious teaching to be permitted in any school, Christian or non-Christian.
No converted person should be entitled of reservation benefits.

Q.4 Media, political parties and local peace committees consisting of respectable citizens of all communities. Media should restrain from sensationalizing even minor incidents. Political parties with their conflicting interests wish to take advantage of such situations. Basically local peace committees, *Zila Panchayat*, village *panchayat* are the agencies, which are most helpful during communal situations.

Q.5 Many. Police has no power to regulate proselytizing activities of missionary or any other group, whenever communal situations take place. It is only police, which deals with situations while all other agencies, political parties, and media either aggravate the situation or blame the enforcement agencies. Even judiciary views all police actions with suspicion. Police should be involved in development and other activities from the beginning and not only when situation turns violent.

Q.6 I have worked in Districts Surguja, Damoh and Khandwa with large tribal population and dominant presence of Christian missionaries.

Of late there has been a tendency to blow even minor incidents out of proportion. Even minor criminal incident of non-communal nature if occurs with any Christian person or organization is depicted as communal and media over plays it. Few months back in one church in Khandwa district, one statue of Mother Mariam was found in pieces on the ground. Immediately Church authorities and others saw mischief in it by some organization but on investigation it was found that the statue had fallen on the ground by careless handling of the *Chowkidar*.

Any overplaying of the incident aggravates and worsens the situation.

Dr. Rameswar Chander, Director, Health Services cum Drug Controller, Chandigrah, U.T. (Punjab Civil Medical Science)

Q.1 I belong to Punjab where Christians are almost negligible. The two dominant communities Hindus and Sikhs have no tension, though fanatics on both sides try to create tension but history is a witness to the fact that between 1980 and 1993 (the peak period of Sikh terrorism), no riots took place between the two communities in spite of maximum provocation.

Q.3 Political leaders should learn that there is no difference between saying and doing. Politician for pretty political games indulge in these nefarious doings.

Q.4 Opinion leaders in the community, who are well known. Neutral personalities can help a lot. They can act as mouthpieces of police and public at large. Religious personalities by way of true arguments i.e. God is one, all communities are having same blood can play a significant role. Our country is primarily a religious country anything can be done on the bases of religions.

Q.5 Police force in states is mainly political and political people to do wrong things for their benefit use them and in turn they protect police for their wrong and corrupt actions.

Central police forces in state, which are deployed to help the state, have to work under the guidance of state police officers and it should be independent.

Police force should be independent of political rulers to a great extent, so that they can take independent action.

Q.7 Indian police to a large extent except Bihar etc. is the best force, and it is trained in a very nice manner. But then working in states under corrupt and partial political leadership makes them partial and they start doing wrong things. Police should be people friendly.

Raghavendra Auradker, 1987-Karnataka, S.P., Shimoga.

Q.1 Socio-Economic disparity and historical reasons.
Attempts by fundamentalist elements to foment trouble.
Funding by foreign organizations for conversions.
Exploiting the situation by political parties.

Q.2 Conversion to Christianity by exploiting the poor economic conditions of the people and not on voluntary basis.
Political one-upmanship based on caste/community politics

Q.3 Most important thing economic upliftment
- Better sense must prevail upon upper caste Hindus to be more liberal and do away with inhuman practices.

Political exploitation – I am pessimistic about it.
Regulations of foreign funds in a better and effective way.

Q.4. Many secular voluntary agencies in educating the people.

Development administration to be more committed.

Q. 5 The police is asked to take care of the baby of communal problem after it is conceived, well fed and given birth to. This is the main constraint.

Muktesh Chander, 1988-AGMUT, Delhi.

Q.1 Most of the times they are engineered by anti-social elements with tacit or sometimes active supports connivances and indulgence of certain political party for political gains by making religious leaders play in their hands.

Q.2 Sense of insecurity amongst Christians.

Q.3. Religion and politics should not be mixed. Religion must be a matter of private and personal nature. This should not be on the agenda of any political party.

Q.4 Impartial religious leaders and organizations.
Impartial media
Politicians having good intentions.

Q.5 Police plays in the hands of politicians and takes biased approach

B.K.Kaushik, I. B. Hqrs, New Delhi.: Q.No.1: Missionaries first provide social and economic assistance to the lower strata of the Hindu society and then try to convert them to Christianity. This causes conflict between the members of the two religions. The leaders of the two religions play the role of further flaring up the tensions.
Q.No.3: this is mainly a social problem. Social organizations should come forward to help the poor and provide education and employment to the tribals.

Part – V

Chapter – 1

Causes of Hindu-Christian Tensions:

1) Conversions and Re-conversions:

According to the census reports the population of Christians in India has declined from 2.6% in 1961 to 2.34% in 1991. But some would argue that in certain areas, the Christians show themselves as Hindus to take advantage of reservations in government services and actually their percentage to the total population of India is higher than what the Census figures show. Though Chiristians might not have increased as regards their percentage to the population of India but they have larger and more strategic areas (from the point of view of security of the India) under their control, as their population in certain sparsely populated areas of North-East like Nagaland and Meghalaya have almost doubled since Independence the certain areas of the North-East.

The districts of North and South Orissa, a few districts of Jharkhand and the Dangs in Gujarat have witnessed many incidents during the last three-four years. In the districts of South Orissa inhabited mostly by the Kandhas and Saoras and in the district the Dangs in Gujarat, there has been growth of Christianity among the tribal people. The Christian population of the Saoras in South Orissa increased from 0.55% in 1961 to 7% in 1981 to the total population of the tribe.[1] Similarly, the Christian population of the Kandhas has increased from 0.77% in 1961 to 3.20% in 1981[2]. There was tremendous growth of Christianity in the district Dangs of Gujarat. The Christian population of the Oraons in North Orissa also increased from 23.84% in 1961 to 37.41% in 1981 [3] while in Chhattisgarh their population increased from 32.87% in 1961 to 40.84% in 1981. [4] The population of Santhals in Jharkhand also witnessed increase from 0.65% in 1961 to 3.13% in 1981.[5] The population of Christians was 21.05% to the total population of the Oraon community in Jharkhand in 1981. The population of the Christians among the Mundas in Jharkhand has increased from 14.79% in 1961 to 28% in 1981. All the above areas where the population of Christians increased among the tribal societies, we have seen lots of incidents between Hindu tribals and Christian tribals or between tribal people following their religions and customs and the tribal people who have been converted to Christianity. Hinduism has not been a proselytizing religion. The tribes retained the principal elements of their faith and practice, though these were modified to a greater or less extent. In addition, they shared some of gods and goddesses. In these areas, the conversions by the Christian Missionaries had been going on since long and the entry of the Hindu Missionaries and their activities started only a few decades after the Independence. Now the Hindu Missionaries have also started their re-conversion programmes. There were re-conversions of 76 tribals to Hinduism in Manoharpur where Staines was murdered during the visit of Shankaracharya Puri.

The conversions and re-conversion activities focus on imposing one's ideology on others. About this Verrier Elwin recalls the words of Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru, "I am alarmed, when I see how anxious people are to shape others according to their own image or likeness, and to impose on them their particular way of living. We are welcome to our way

of life, but why impose it on others? There would be more peace in the world if people were to desist from imposing their way of living on other people and countries'. Verrier Elwin writes that this was the first and fundamental cause of his conflict with the Church and that is why he refused to make converts.

The activities of both the Hindu and Christian Missionaries among the tribal people and the reassertion of the tribal people to their identity have led to lot of tensions. The states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh enacted laws to discourage conversions on ground of inducement, fraud, or force as they lead to tensions.

Anti-Conversion Laws

Most of the region till recently part of undivided Madhya Pradesh (now divided into two states of Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh) was earlier during the British times roughly in the region covered by, Central Provinces and Berar and several princely states.

Princely states of Sarguja, Udaipur and Rajgarh enacted laws to prohibit preaching by Christian Missionaries in their regions. Rajgarh State Conversion Act of 1936 prohibited the entry of Christian Missionaries in to the former Kingdom of Rajgarh, Jashpur, Sarguja and other areas of Chotanagpur region. The reason for the enactment of the above Act was that the preaching by Christian missionaries and conversions might lead to communal riots in the region. Earlier the Christian Missionaries could visit the region four times a year and the period of stay of each visit was never to exceed 48 hours.

The Sarguja State Hindu Apostasy Act of 1945 described Christianity as an alien religion and conversion from Hinduism to Christianity was to be done only with the permission of the Durbar of the Rajahas.

These are anti-conversion laws were enacted in view of the tensions, which the activities of Christian Missionaries caused in the society.

To put a check on the unfair activities of the Roman Catholic priests, the then political Agent had passed an order in 1941 permitting the entry of Roman Catholic Priests to Udaipur State only on the following conditions: -

1. Priests could be allowed to enter the State to the bedside of a dying or dangerously ill person.
2. Priests may be permitted to enter the state once every quarter to celebrate Mass at some village near the border.
3. A priest should not stay more than 48 hours in the State on any occasion
4. Only Ordained Priests and not lay Preachers from out-side should be allowed to enter the State.

The Udaipur State Conversion Act of 1946 stated in its preamble that conversion activity among tribals to Christianity was creating an atmosphere, which might disturb the public peace. According to the Act, all conversions to Christianity were to be registered officially. After Independence, the missionary activity in the district Sarguja was intensified resulting in many conversions to Christianity. This was resented to by the Hindus. At the time of re-

organization of states, there was a movement supported by some Christian missionaries for inclusion of the areas of the earlier princely states of Raigarh, Jashpur, Sarguja, Changbhasker and Korea into the Bihar state. This further deteriorated the relations between the Hindus and Christians in the region. There were complaints and counter-complaints of missionary propaganda of alienating the Christians from the Indian mainstream and of the harassments of Christians by government officials. A Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, Ex-Chairman, Public Service Commission, and Retired Chief Justice of High Court of Judicature at Nagpur was constituted to look into the activities of the Christian Missionaries in Madhya Pradesh and other complaints in April 1954. The Committee submitted its report after two years in April 1956 and made the following important observations and recommendations:

1) Those Missionaries whose primary object is proselytization should be asked to withdraw. The large influx of foreign missionaries is undesirable and should be checked.
2) Since the adoption of the Constitution of India, which provides for freedom to all religions, there has been an appreciable increase in the number of American Missionaries in India. Enormous sums of foreign money flow into India for evangelistic and other missionaries work in the field of education and medical activities in the tribal and other backward areas where there is awful shortage of such facilities. This is done with the ulterior political motive of re-establishing Western supremacy. It was through such funds that the Lutherans and other missionaries converted about 4,000 tribal people in district Surguja (now in Chattisgarh). Christian minority pockets are created with the purpose of demolishing the non-Christian societies and thus paving the way for mass conversions to Christianity among the tribal people and Harijans Schools, Hospitals and orphanages are used as a means to facilitate proselytization. Such proselytizing activities are fraught with danger to the security of the state as the convert's sense of unity and solidarity with the society and his loyalty to the country is undermined.

3) Educational facilities such as free gifts of books and education and money lending facility are used as a mild form of pressure to induce conversions. There have been cases of the use of coercion by converts for putting pressure for proselytization on other members of the family or for the purpose of securing girls in marriage. Conversions are mostly brought about by undue influence, misrepresentation, etc. or in other words not by conviction but by various inducements offered for proselytization in various forms.

4) A vile propaganda against the religion of the majority community is being systematically and deliberately carried on so as to create an apprehension of breach of public peace.

The fact that subsequently Shri. Niyogi adopted Buddhism may suggest that he took an impartial approach and that his findings were not anti-Christian or Pro-Hindu.

On the recommendations of Niyogi Committee, the Madhya Pradesh Prevention of Religious Conversion Bill was placed in the State Legislative Assembly in 1958, but was rejected.

But later on, the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act was passed in 1967. The draft of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act was based on the report of Mr. Senapati Retd. DGP, Orissa. The Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swantantraya Adhiniyam 1968(Madhya Pradesh Freedom of

Religion Act 1968) was passed by the alliance Government SVD, of which Jan Sangh (now BJP) was a member.

The Christian missionaries challenged both the Acts in the High Courts of their respective states. Father Fernando and three other catechists of the Roman Catholic Church filed the petition in the Orissa High Court against their prosecution under the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act in the Court of Magistrate at Gunupur (now in district Rayagada and earlier in district Koraput). The Orissa High Court struck down the Act on the ground that it was beyond the legislative competence of the State Assembly as the subject matter of the impugned Act was in regard to religion about which the Parliament alone could legislate under the residual powers of Entry 97 of List 1(central list) and did not relate to 'criminal law' (which is given in the state list as well as the central list) and 'public order' (which is given in the state list). The Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swantantraya Adhiniyam 1968 was however upheld by the Madhya Pradesh High Court. This should be made clear here that the seventh Schedule to the Constitution contains three lists regarding legislative powers of the Parliament and the Sate Assemblies. In list-I or central list are contained the matters regarding which the Parliament alone has power to frame laws. According to entry 97 of list –I, the Parliament can legislate on any other matter not enumerated in list – II or list – III and thus confers on the Parliament all the residual powers of legislation. In regard to the matters in list- II or state list, only the state assemblies has power to legislate in respect of their respective jurisdiction. List – III or concurrent list contains matters regarding which both the Parliament and the State Assemblies can legislate. Entry one of list – III is about the Criminal Law.

The Constitutional validity of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act 1967 and the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swantatraya Adhiniyam 1968 was challenged in a petition before the Supreme Court in Rev. Stainislaus vs. State of Madhya Pradesh [Air 1977 SC 908].
The Supreme Court had the following issues before it:
(i) Whether the above two Acts infringed the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 25(1) of the Constitution, and
(ii) Whether the State Legislatures had competence to enact them?'

It was contended on behalf of the petitioners that the State governments did not have the competence to legislate on matters relating to religion as it falls within the legislative competence of the central government under residual powers as given in entry 97 of list – I. On behalf of the State governments, it was pleaded that the above laws were not ultra vires because the State Assemblies had legislative competence to frame laws regulating the freedom of religion if it affects the public order, morality, and health and conversions by way of inducement, fraud or force may lead to breach of public order.

The Supreme Court delivered the Judgement during the Emergency Period in 1977 and held that "We have no doubt that it is in this sense that the word "propagate' has been used in Article 25(1), for what the Article grants is not the right to convert another person to one's own religion, but to transmit or spread one's religion by an exposition of its tenets. It has to be remembered that Article25 (1) guarantees "freedom of conscience' to every citizen, and not merely to the followers of one particular religion, and that, in turn, postulates that there is no

fundamental right to convert another person to one's own religion because if a person purposely undertakes the conversion of another person to his religion, as distinguished from his effort to transmit or spread the tenets of his religion, that would impinge on the 'freedom of conscience' guaranteed to all the citizens of the country alike."

About the Freedom of Religion guaranteed under Article 25 of the Constitution, the Supreme Court made a reference to Ratilal Panachand Gandhi vs. The State of Bombay [AIR 1954 SC 388]:

"It has to be appreciated that the freedom of religion enshrined in the Article is not guaranteed in respect of one religion only, but covers all religions alike, and it can be properly enjoyed by a person if he exercises his right in a manner commensurate with the like freedom of persons following the other religions. What is freedom for one, is freedom for the other, in equal measure and there can, therefore, be no such thing as a fundamental right to convert any person to one's own religion."

Section 3 of the Orissa Act prohibits forcible conversion by the use of force or by inducement or by any fraudulent means, and section 4 penalizes such forcible conversion. The Acts therefore clearly provide for the maintenance of public order for, if forcible conversion had not been prohibited that would have created public disorder in the States.

Supreme Court negatived the contention that the legislatures of Madhya Pradesh and the Orissa State did not have legislative competence to enact these laws under Entry 1 (relating to public order) List II of Seventh Schedule of Constitution and said that the expression 'public order' is of wide connotation and again referred to its earlier two decisions in Ramesh Thapar vs. The State of Madras [AIR 1950 SC 124] and Ramjillal Modi vs. State of U.P. [AIR 1957 SC 620].

"In Ramjilal Modi's case, the Court " 'Public Order' an expression of wide connotation and signifies state of tranquility which prevails among the members of a political society as a result of maternal regulations enforced by the Government which they have established."
The Supreme Court made a reference to the Ramjilal Modi case, where the Court held that:-
"The right of freedom of religion guaranteed by Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution is expressly made subject to public order, morality and health, and that it cannot be predicated that freedom of religion can have no bearing whatever on the maintenance of public order or that a law creating an offence relating to religion cannot under any circumstances be said to have been enacted in the interests of public order." It has been held that these two Articles in terms contemplate that restrictions may be imposed on the rights guaranteed by them in the interests of public order.

While making a reference to the decision in Arun Ghosh v. State of West Bengal [(1966) 1 SCR 709], the Supreme Court held:

"If a thing disturbs the current of the life of the community and does not merely affect an individual, it would amount to disturbance of the public order. Thus, if an attempt is made to raise communal passions, e.g., on the ground that some one has been "forcibly" converted to another religion, it would, in all probability, give rise to an apprehension of a breach of the

public order, affecting the community at large. The impugned Acts therefore fall within the purview of Entry 1 of List II of the Seventh Schedule as they are meant to avoid disturbances to the public order by prohibiting conversion from one religion to another in a manner reprehensible to the conscience of the community. The two Acts do not provide for the regulation of religion and we do not find any justification for the argument that they fall under Entry 97 of List 1 of the Seventh Schedule."

Article 25 recognizes and confers right of a person to freedom of conscience and freedom to profess, practice and propagate his religion and that right is not absolute. It is subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of Part III of the Constitution.
In 1978, the Arunanchal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act was passed.

According to Abdulrahim P. Vijapur, Christians and the Muslims perceived the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion of Act as directed against them as it ruled against converting but not against re-conversion to Hinduism[6]

Comparisons between the Anti Conversions Laws of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh: -

According to the Rule 3 of the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swantantrya Rules, 1969 the intimation about the ceremony necessary for conversion is to be sent to the District Magistrate within seven days after the date of such ceremony, while according Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, the prescribed time for giving such intimation to the District Magistrate is fifteen days before the date of such ceremony.

In addition to the provisions contained in the M.P Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969, the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989 require the maintenance of a list of religious institutions or organizations propagating religious faith in his district and the District Magistrate may call for a list of persons of the religious faith receiving benefits either in cash or in kind from his religious organizations or in institutions or from a person connected therewith.

By Rule 5 (3) of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989 as added by the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1999, the District Magistrate on receiving the intimation of the ceremony for conversion, shall inform the Superintendent of Police who shall pass on the information to the police station. The officer in charge of the police station shall ascertain objection if any, to the proposed conversion by local inquiry and intimate the same to the District Magistrate. There is no such provision of police inquiry of ascertaining any objections to conversions in the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969.

Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act 1978.

Section 2 (c): "Indigenous faith" means such religions, beliefs and practices including rites, rituals, festivals, observances, performances, abstinence, customs as have been found sanctioned, approved, performed by the indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh from the time these communities have been known and includes Buddhism as prevalent among the

Monpas, Membas, Sherdukpens, Khambas, Khamptis and Singphos, Vaishnavism as practiced by Noctes, Akas and Nature worships, including worships of Doni-Polo, as prevalent among other indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

There is no such provision of "indigenous faith" in the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam Act, 1968 and in the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967.

The Orissa and Madhya Pradesh Acts provide for punishment which may extend to one year or with the fine which may extent to rupees five thousand or with both and if the offence is committed in respect of a minor a woman or a person belonging to S.C or S.T the punishment shall be to the extent of two years and fine up to ten thousand rupees. On the other hand the Arunachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act 1978 provides for a punishment extending to two years or fine of rupees ten thousand.

The Freedom of Religion Acts of the States of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh contain almost similar provisions as regards the definitions of fraud, force, allurement or inducement etc. and they all require the previous sanction of District Magistrate or a Sub Divisional Officers as authorized by him in that behalf for prosecution. These offences are cognizable and shall not be investigated by an officer below the rank of an Inspector of Police. They all contain the requirement of intimation of the ceremony of conversions to the District Magistrate and make it punishable if the priest etc. fails to do so. These Acts also empower the respective State Governments to frame rules for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.

There were some unsuccessful attempts by introducing Bills in the Parliament restricting conversions from one religion to another. The Indian Converts (Regulation and Registration) Bill of 1954 proposed to empower the Deputy Commissioners to issue a license for converting people but it was rejected. Similarly, the Backward Communities (Religious Protection) Bill was rejected in the Parliament in 1960.

Shri O.P Tyagi introduced in December 1978 Freedom of Religion Bill about restrictions on conversions in the Parliament, which was later on withdrawn.

In May 1979 Rani Gaidinliu of Nagaland wrote a long letter to the Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, and President of India N.S.Reddy, expressing her overall support to the Freedom of Religion Bill, and requesting them to stop the flow of Christian missionaries and foreign money into the North-East India for enhancing foreign interests in the name of Christianity.

By 1978,the states of M.P, Orissa & Arunachal Pradesh had enacted legislation to regulate conversions, which prohibit conversions from one religion to another by the use of force or inducement or fraudulent means. The Gujarat Government tried to pass an anti-conversion law, The Gujarat Freedom of Religion Bill in the State in 1999, but it was said that Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee prevailed on the Gujarat government to withdraw it. &&&&&

The position of actions taken under these acts in different states was found as follows:

The Venugopal Commission which inquired into the Hindu-Christian riots of Kanyakumari in 1982, observed that the minority communities should always abide by the will of the majority community and that the future safety, security, rights and privileges of the minority community are dependent on a large measure on the goodwill, understanding and sympathy of the majority community viz., Hindus. The Commission further observed that conversion of Hindus to other religious has given rise to problems of law and order and disturbs social structure and existing inter-communal harmony and fans the flames of communal passion, justly or unjustly. The Commission recommended that the State Government should either request the Central Government to pass a law covering the whole of India banning conversions or enact a State law, prohibiting mass-conversions and conversions by foul and fraudulent means.

Orissa

The status of 10 cases that were put before the Wadhwa Commission registered under the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act 1967 is as follows:

Status	No. of cases	District
Accused discharged	1	Nawrangpur
Acquitted	1	Nawrangpur
Final report submitted	2	Phalbani/Gajpati
Pending trial	6	Nawrangpur --- 3 Koraput --- 1 Rayagada --- 1 Gajpati --- 1

Table : 07

The Wadhwa Commission was of the view that although the Freedom of Religion Act does not define re-conversion, conversion would include re-conversion.

Wadhwa Commission recorded that though there were conversions to Christianity in the districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj, the provisions of the Freedom of Religion Act and the rules made in the State at least in the above two districts were never applied and nobody including District Magistrates of the above two districts seemed to be aware of this Act and the rules framed thereunder. The Wadhwa Commission opined that if the provisions of law are strictly followed, no one could have any grievance to contend that gullible and innocent tribals are being converted. The Wadhwa Commission recommended that there should be proper understanding of the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967 and the Rules made thereunder.

Madhya Pradesh

Uday Mahurkar and Sheela Raval reported in India today (25th January 1999 issue) that in Madhya Pradesh, convictions under the Freedom of Religion Act are few. Between 1980-82,

there were 17 complaints and only one conviction. A tribal nun was convicted for not informing the authorities of the conversion of 19 families.

About Madhya Pradesh, Teesta Stelvad reported in "Communalism Combat" (April, 1998 issue) that in 40 cases registered with the courts in the region during 1968 – 1998, the courts have dismissed 37 after reaching the final stages. Three have not yet come up for trial".

According to the details given to me, a total of 91 arrests were made in 28 cases under the M.P Dharma Swatantraya Adhiniyam 1968:

Sl.	District	Number of crimes	Number of persons arrested under the Act
1	Sehore	1	6
2	Panna	1	8
3	Chhaturpur	1	1
4	Raigarh	15	56
5	Rajnandgaon	1	2
6	Mandla	1	1
7	Bastar	8	17
Total		28	91

Table : 08

District Sarguja, Madhya Pradesh (Now Chattisgarh):

The Madhya Pradesh Dharam Swatantraya Adhiniyam was enacted in view of the large-scale conversions and the tensions it led to after Independence. The cases registered under the Act indicate that there have been very few convictions, though there has been a check on the large-scale conversions of tribal people to Christianity after the passing of the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantra Adhiniyam 1968. The details of the cases registered under the above Act are as follows: -

In 1973, a case relating to conversions of 17 villagers of Gumgara in police station Lakhanpur was registered but no prosecution was done, as it became time barred. In 1975, a case relating to 33 conversions in village Dhakuam in police station Dhaurpur resulted in acquittal of the accused. In 1975, similarly in village Jarhadits falling in police station Shankargarh, the case relating to 13 conversions against Mr. Kindo resulted in his acquittal. In 1978, Rev. Kindo of G.E.L Church was convicted with a fine of Rs.50/- for conversions of 17 people in village Amgaon in police station Baikundpur. Similarly case registered in 1979 relating to conversions of 67 villagers of Paprakhand in police station Baikunalpur resulted in conviction in 1980 with a fine of Rs.100/- or one month imprisonment.

In 1981, a case about the conversions of 7 villagers of Jamri/Asgaona in police station. Mainpathe resulted in acquittal. In 1982 only one case was registered which resulted in acquittal.

In 1983, three cases were registered against 12 accused resulting in conviction in all the three cases and six accused were convicted.

In 1984, 11 cases were registered against 29 accused with no convictions. Out of these, three cases ended in acquittal and the results in regard to the remaining eight cases are not known. In 1986, two accused were discharged for want of District Magistrate's sanction required for prosecution.

In 1987, two cases were registered and in both the cases there was not enough evidence against the accused during the police investigation, which resulted in final report.
In 1988, three cases were registered against four accused. Out of these, one case was discharged and the result of the remaining two is not known.

In 1989, three cases were registered against four accused, resulting in conviction of two accused in a case and the acquittal of the remaining two cases.

In 1990, two cases were registered against two accused. The result of investigation in both the cases is not known.

In 1993, there was conversion of 1019 persons to Christianity but no case was registered.
No case under the Act was registered from 1991 to 1997.

In 1998, a Canadian Foreign national, James Martin, was charged with converting people to Christianity with inducements for curing disease. He was convicted with two years imprisonment. He was holding a business/trade visa and was based in Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. He used to come to village Dangguda in police station Sitapur and got a Church constructed there. He was found to have been involved in the missionary activities and converted a few Oraons to Christianity by giving them inducements of medical facilities etc. A case under sections 4 & 5 of the M.P Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam was registered against him in May 1998.

The above data show that there has not been uniformity in the registration of cases in the past under the Act. While in 1984, twelve cases were registered between 1991 and 1997 no case was registered.

Between 1973and 1990, a total of 32 cases relating to conversions of over 500 people were registered against about 60 accused under the Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act. Out of these cases, only six resulted in conviction of 13 accused.

Though Wadhwa in its finding has said that conversion under such Act includes re-conversion under but in practice, perhaps all the cases have been in regard to conversions to Christianity and none to conversion or re-conversion to Hinduism.

2)Ritual Causes

Apart from conversions, the non-observance of tribal rituals was the main cause behind the murders of Staines and Arul Doss. In case of Arul Doss, the converted tribals Christians were celebrating *Nuakhali* festival in their own way and which was different from the tribal

custom and some people from the nearby villages have threatened the Christians against this departure from the tribal ritual. In case of Staines murder, according to a tribal custom, earth was not to be tilled during the Raja festival as during this time, the goddess earth is said to be in menstruation.

The converted tribals generally don't observe rituals, which vary from one tribe to another tribe, which is resented to by the non-converted tribals. There has been a re-assertion of tribal identity in the southern districts of Jharkhand and in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. As we have already seen in the case study of Jharkhand, there were many cases of frictions between converted tribals and non-converted tribals over observance of tribal rituals peculiar to the particular tribe and area. The village Manoharpur where the Staines and his two sons were murdered though falls in district Keonjhar but it is very near to the areas of district Mayurbhanj and the accused came from the side of district Mayurbhanj and the complainant also went to police station Thakurmunda which is in district Mayurbhanj. The accused of the Staines murder case belong to both the districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj. The village Jamuvani (in police station Mahuldiha), the scene of murder of Arul Doss is also in district Mayurbhanj. In the districts of Paschimi Singhbhum, Gumla, Purvi Singhbhum, Ranchi in Jharkhand and of Mayurbhanj in Orissa, about 37.5%, 21.5%, 14.8%, 10.3% and 19.1% population of the total population of the district follows their tribal religions. The description of the social and cultural changes taking place in these areas and of the tribal festivals and rituals in the "Encyclopedia of India –Bihar" (1994 edition) edited by Majid Hussain is quite apt: [7]

"Christianity in tribal villages has too often brought not peace but a sword, dividing father against son and the household against itself.--- The first psycho- logical reaction to the changes from influence and authority of the hereditary social functionaries to the 'new rich' was one of frustration. The tribal peoples lost faith in their own values and drifted either to the Christian or the Hindu folds, though the latter alternative was a slow process, which involved no sudden break with the traditional mode of life. The 'Birsa movement' was originally the result "of such conditions. So 'also was the 'Tana Bhagat' movement among the Oraons. --The wider dissemination of education and cultural contacts with others led to the second psychological phase viz. the rediscovery of their own culture. The reawakening of pride in certain aspects of tribal culture marked this re-assertion of tribal identity. Advanced sections of the tribal community had taken part in the fight for freedom. Now that freedom has been attained, they have become conscious of their rights and have be- gun to demand active participation in the administration and the end of exploitation.—The religious enthusiasms of tribal people is expressed in the number of festivals, which mark different stages of the agricultural calendar. The most important of these are *Sarhul, Naukhi, Parab, Karma, Tusu, Sohrai* and so on. *Sarhul*, observed on the last day of the month of Baisakh, is one of the most popular festivals in Chotanagpur. The festival is so widely prevalent in South Bihar that it has been declared a public holiday. It is the spring festival of the aboriginals. On this occasion, village priests offer flowers and sacrifices such as cocks, goats or sheep in the *Sarna*. It is an occasion of great rejoicing and festivity. Men and women dance all night to the accompaniment of music. The Naukhia Parab is held on the last day of the month of Asarh, when the first fruits of the new crop are offered to the presiding deity of the village. The cultivators abstain from work on that day. The Karma festival is observed by

both aboriginals and non-aboriginals. In the month of *Bhado*, a branch of the *Sal* tree is planted in the *Akhara* and offerings are made to it. Twenty-four hour's fasting precedes this and the night is spent in dancing and singing round the branch planted in the *Akhara*. Singers narrate the long legend of Karma and Dharma. The day following Diwali, the *Sohrai* festival is celebrated. This is an occasion for the worship of domestic animals, which are cleaned and decorated. In the areas of close contact with Hindus, the Adivasis celebrated the festivals of Holi and Dussehra with great enthusiasm and fairs are held at those times. Among the *Hos*, the *Mage Parab,* which lasts for several days, is an occasion for great festivity and enjoyment. In the *Munda* areas, just after the harvest in December and January a number of fairs known as *Buru,* are held at various places. They take the form of very big bazaars where business is combined with entertainment.

Among the *Santhals, Sohrai* is celebrated after the paddy harvest in December-January. The festival lasts for five days and the gods who preside over cattle-sheds, as well as the ancestral spirits are worshipped."

Festivals:

According to Verrier Elwin, most of the tribal societies outside the North-East in India have been Hinduized to a great extent. But in the North-East or in some most interior parts of South Orissa etc., some of the tribes like Langias Saoras or Kuttia Kondhs are still primitives or in some areas only semi-Hinduized. In 1893, the Old Maharashtrian Ganapati festival was reorganized by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, giving it a political character by including lectures, singing parties and processions. Similarly the Sarhul/Sarna ritual, which symbolizes the blossoming of Sal-tree, has been made a festival in the areas of the Chota Nagapur plateau.
Festivals have a Sanskritizing or Christianizing effects on the tribal people. Non-converted tribals may emulate in celebration of such Hindu or Christian festivals and may thus themselves get Hinduized or Christianized by assimilation of such cultural traditions of Hindus or Christians respectively. Apart from this, the faith and loyalties of the new converts become stronger if they participate in such religious festivities. For these reasons, both the Christian and Hindu Missionaries try to encourage the celebration of the festivals and discourage their followers from participating in festivals of other religions.

In the Dangs it were the Christians who were being stopped from celebrating Christmas and in Tripura, these were the tribals converted or unconverted to Hinduism who were threatened with dire consequences if they celebrated the Hindu festivals. In the Dangs it was the Christianity, which was thus being prevented from expanding to other tribals. And in Tripura it was the Sanskritization, which was being forestalled by threats of insurgent organizations to the tribals for not celebrating Hindu festivals.

Apart from this Hindu- Christian tensions may develop out of festivals in the following situations: -
When one group among the converted tribal people does not celebrate the tribal /Hindu festival or does anything in disregard to the traditions of the festivals. One of the reasons for

the murder of Arul Doss was that the converted tribals were celebrating the tribal Nuakhali festival in advance to the actual date.

* India Today Millenium Series.
When Hindus or Tribals or converted Christians demand contributions (*CHANDA*) from the followers of other religious groups. If the opposite is also true and they refuse to do so. Whosoever is in majority in a particular area and is thus dominant, starts demanding collection from others and this might lead to problems and tensions. The communal incidents in Peth in Maharashtra had its origins in the refusal of 16 Christian families to contribute to the annual Mawli Puja. In the Dangs in Gujarat, according to Father Vaghela " The refusal of Christians to contribute to the tribal festivals was a cause of the communal troubles." In Meghalaya about a decade back, there was tension when tribal people objected to celebration of Puja by Hindus.

The Christian Missionaries generally insist the converts not to participate in the Hindu or tribal rituals and festivals and this may lead to tensions.

Apart from this, many of the attacks on Christians took place on Hindu or Christian festivals. "*The Week*" Magazine in its September 5 and September 19, 1999 issues reported that in North Orissa districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj, Hindu festivals are turning out to be catastrophic for non-Hindus. Staines murder took place on *Besant Panchami while* Muslim trader Sheikh Rehman was killed in Padiabeda on Rakhi *Purnima* i.e. on August 26. On *Janmashtami, i.e. on* the night of1st September 1999 Arul Doss was murdered.

Earlier on the *Janmashtami* day on 15th August 1998, there was attack by Hindus on Muslims and a Christian Father was also assaulted in Sanjeli in police station Jhalod, district Dahod in Gujarat because his Akhandvani Ashram happen to be on the route of the frenzied mob. The Kanyakumari riots of March 1982 broke out during the festival at Bhagawati Amma temple in Mandaikadu.

The Christians of district Dangs and nearby areas could not celebrate the Christmas festival for two years in 1998 and 1999 and there were lot of incidents on the Christmas day and a week after that in 1998. On the eve of Christmas festival in 1999, the foundation ceremony of a Hindu temple on a disputed land was performed in Halmodi. One reason for attack on Christians during the Hindu festivals might be the over-zealousness of the Hindus during this time, while the reason for attacks on Christians during the Christmas celebrations might be to counteract the spread of Christian religion and conversions by the Hindu Missionaries. All this shows that the district administration and police should be very careful during both the Hindu and Christian festivals as well as during the tribal festivals and should make *Bandobast* and police arrangements accordingly.

3)Economic Factors:

The issue of conversions and re-conversions is the biggest single factor for Hindu-Christian tensions. During the British period many conversions took place during the period of

famines. The Niyogi Committee found that the Christian Missionaries have been indulging in such means as inducements in the nature of economic benefits for converting the poor tribals to Christianity. The various anti-conversion laws were enacted in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Arunachal Pradesh to stop such conversions. It was reported that VHP re-converted Christian Dalits of Jamua in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh and the villagers were promised that their backward village would be connected with a road and a school and a hospital would be established.

The Role of Co-operative Credit Societies

Niyogi Committee comments in its report: - "Among the various devices employed for proselytization one is *money-lending* carried on by the Roman Catholic Missions. In our exploratory tour, there was everywhere the complaint in the districts of Surguja and Raigarh that the Roman Catholic Missionaries advanced loans on condition that the debtor agreed to chop off his top-knot (choti). Those who did not accept the condition, had to repay the loan with interest. Referring to Chota Nagpur, Rev. Pickett says 'Roman Catholic Missions are aggressively seeking to win converts from Protestant Christian groups and are accused of offering financial inducements through Co-operative Societies loans, employment's, fee or reduced tuition in schools, financing of court cases, etc.' "[8]

The Niyogi Committee found that the advancement of loans was used by the Missionaries for conversions of the tribal people during the 1930s in the Udaipur and Raigarh State.

The role of Foreign Money

Niyogi Committee observed in its report that "Large amounts were received for evangelistic work in Surguja after it was thrown open for Missionary enterprise as a result of promulgation of the Constitution in January 1950. The Gossner Lutheran Mission opened a new mission field in Surguja and employed a large number of preachers to go over the countryside for conversions. In the year 1952 the United Lutheran Church Mission gave a grant of 8,000 Dollars and in the year 1953 20,000 Dollars i.e. Rs.90, 000.

According to the report of the Committee there were about 5,000 Foreign Missionaries in 1954-55 and 480 of them were working in Madhya Pradesh and most of them were Americans. According to the Niyogi Committee, from January 1950 to June 1954, a sum of Rs.29.27 crores was received in India out of which 20.68 crores came from America.

According to the recommendations and conclusions of DGPs'/IGPs' Conference 1999, "Fundamentalist activity is financed to a large extent by hawala, transfers. To check this illegal activity an active interface between the various agencies, directly involved in intelligence generation in the field, such as the CBI, DRI enforcement directions R & AW & IB would be necessary to exchange intelligence & take follow-up action. The Conference also recommended for the strengthening of FCRA to ensure that foreign funds are not misutilized for proposes other than those for which the permission has been granted.

The Government is empowered to ban a religious organization if it has violated the FCRA, or has provoked intercommunity friction, or has been involved in terrorism or sedition. Speaking publicly against other beliefs is considered dangerous to public order, and may thus lead to the banning of a religious or non-religious foreign organization.

* DGPs/IGPs Conference

4) Reactive Causes:

In February 1986, Pope had visited India. At the time of the Pope's visit, the Roman Catholic Christians become enthusiastic and exhibit supra-national loyalties. The Hindu Missionaries on the other hand, resent this and there might be reaction in certain sections of Hindu community during such visits. There were many incidents in Chhota Nagpur region in August and September 1986 consequent to the rumours of poisoning of wells of Christian villages by Hindus and three Hindus were killed in district Gumla. In the district Kandhmals of South Orissa, there were many cases of destruction of prayer halls during the same year. The Pope again visited India in November 1999 and this along with the Hindu religious meetings and conventions in Brindavan, Mathura and Agra etc., vitiated the communal harmony between the two communities in the areas around Agra and Mathura and there were lot of incidents against Christians in the region. Agra and Mathura are quite close to Delhi.

There were protest against the Bomb blast in the State of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Goa in the year 2000. There was protest by Muslims in Guntur following a Bomb blast in a Mosque. There were lot of demonstrations and protests in the Christian dominated areas in Hubli in July 2000 after the incident of bomb blasts in St. John's Lutheran Church, Hubli in North Kannada. The mob turned violent and damaged a few buses. The police used *lathi* charge to disperse the mob. There was a blast in a temple in Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. All these incidents had local reactions in the communities whose religious places were attacked. But later on, it was found that an organization Deendar Anjuman was behind these attacks and the main accused was residing in Pakistan.

In July 2000, the Inter-Church Committee in Andhra Pradesh representing about 36 denominations staged a protest in Nizam College grounds against the attacks on Christian Institutions. Police may sometimes face law and order problems when a particular community observes a protest day or a *bandh* against atrocities on them or for pressing some of their demands. On December 4, 1998 the Christians staged a nationwide protest against the recent wave of attacks.

During communal riots in areas and especially in cities which have around 40-60% population of rival communities, it generally becomes a pattern that when one community strikes, the other takes revenge and then there is counter revenge and so on. It becomes a pernicious and dangerous cycle, which is very difficult for the administration/police to break.

There were demonstrations at the district Head quarters of Hill districts of Manipur after killing of Staines. The killing of a Christian in 1995 in village Latboura in Jashpur in Chattisgarh was as a reaction to the destruction/desecration of a temple in the village. Among

the Christians, reaction is an exception rather than a rule. The Christians generally don't take revenge because, being a minuscule minority in most of the areas except certain hill states of Northeast and Kanyakumari, Goa, and certain Tehsils of certain districts of Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh etc, they are not in a position to do so.

5) Psychological Causes:

Some individuals are capable of uncontrolled violent behavior and thus are potentially dangerous if they happen to be members of a mob. During riots, the society gets divided into two rival religious Camps. The distinctions of normal times about criminals and law–abiding citizens no longer has appeal in the divided societies. As everything and everybody is seen first in the context/light of its belonging to this group or that group- or in the light of "us" and "they" the criminal or abnormal behaviour becomes secondary and is sometimes encouraged against a group by the people belonging to the rival group.

During the times of communal riots, each individual seems to be performing the social roles of defending one's religion.

These days even during the normal times also, the social roles sometimes play important part in society in shaping the behaviour of the members of the group they belong to. Some of the Christian missionaries and their followers generally play the roles of spreading Christianity, while some of the Hindu missionaries and their followers may be playing the role of vainguards against attacks on Hindu religion and indigenous culture.

Arnold Toynbee says in "A Study of History" (page 227): "Biblical tradition prophesies a paroxysm of frenzied violence before the establishment on Earth of Christ's eternal kingdom of peace".

Such beliefs and propaganda result in tensions in society.

Erich Fromm in his book, 'The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness,' writes A Penguin books, 1973 Group narcissism is one of the most important sources of human aggression, and yet this, like all other forms of defensive aggression, is a reaction to an attack on vital interest. It differs from other forms of defensive aggression in that intense narcissism in itself is a semi-pathological phenomenon.[9] He further writes about vengegul destructiveness in the Christianity in the past, 'One example of thirst for revenge that has lasted almost two thousand years is the reaction to the execution of Jesus allegedly by the Jews; the cry 'Christ-killers' has traditionally been one of the major sources of violent anti-Semitism.[10]

Certain queries about religion have been put forward in the book, The faber Book of Madness, edited by Roy Porter like, Why the history of religion and the history of madness have been so closely interlinked in Western culture where Christianity set faith (or what Freud called 'wish-fulfillment') above reason, and does intense exposure to religion often provoke mental disorder?[11]

The doctinres of the Methodists, which have a greater tendency than those of any other sect, to produce the most deplorable effects on the human understandings, have also been narrated in the book.[12]

Sujata Mary writes in her book, 'Religion is a social discipline of mind, the more we insist on religion, the narrower becomes our scientific outlook'.[13]

Some religious leaders may have mistaken perceptions of real religion, while some of them may have delusions of the greatness of their religions and gods etc. There have been some cases in which some religious leaders were found to be under demoniac possession and claimed to be hearing the divine voices. Some religious leaders take the self-appointed roles of modeling the society in a particular fashion etc.

The behavior of the people changes fast during such abnormal times. Group behavior during the period of riots depend on so many factors, on the beliefs and customs of group (caste, community or tribe---), on the interpretation given by the leaders of the groups to such beliefs etc., and to the incidents, on the Government and police machinery meant for the enforcement of the laws, on the personality and attitude of the policemen and on the actions they take, on the actions and speech of leaders of rival groups. How these actions are viewed socially, and politically become quite important. The condemnation or approval they get by the community after such actions act as positive or negative reinforcement for their future actions and thus when even criminal behaviour is applauded, it brings about more violence as a consequence. Psychological factors such as fears, hatred, insecurity mutual suspicion and destruction play a great role during the times of riots and only mediation from a third party like police or administration can put a check on this. Police should do the work of counter conditioning through their just actions, impartiality and attitude of toughness etc.:

We have seen that jealousy has also played a great role in generating tensions between converted and non-converted tribals. The converted tribals get better off and thus lead to friction with the non-converted tribals if they do not mix up with them or do not observe the tribal rituals etc.

Erich Fromm in his book "The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness"(Page 386) has described the situations for sadistic satisfaction of the superiors or more powerful and of the members belonging to the minority group by the members of the majority community:

"Yet in most social systems, including ours, even those on lower social levels can have control over somebody who is subject to their power. There are always children, wives, or dogs available; or there are helpless people, such as inmates of prisons, patients in hospitals, if they are not well-to-do (especially the mentally sick), pupils in schools, members of civilian bureaucracies. It depends on the social structure to what degree the factual power of superiors in each of these instances is controlled or restricted and, hence, how much possibility for sadistic satisfaction these situations offer. Aside from all these situations,

religious and racial minorities, as far as they are powerless, offer a vast opportunity for sadistic satisfaction for even the poorest member of the majority".[14]

6) Pedophilia and Sexual Assaults

There were some speculations about the practice of pedophilia among some of the Missionaries during their relationship with the Indian converts. Antony Copley in the book "Religions in Conflict" writes:

"There is a suggestion of a of sublimated pedophilia in Noble's relationship with his pupils. Any celibate teacher, as the Catholic Church has learnt to its cost, is open to such suspicion. The English may always have look on Empire as an escape from intolerable sexual constraints at home, and pedophilia was not unknown among the civilians. Mission could not hope to escape such aspersion. There had been a serious case at the SPG Sawyerpuram seminary in 1852, when the principal, Mr. Ross, had been obliged to flee the country to escape arrest. All the boys had been sent home, and Caldwell, invariably called on to sort out such troubling occasions, had been dispatched, to talk to the boys and to find out how far the problem had spread. The local secretary, Symonds, wrote home: 'though some grounds of dissatisfaction was apprehended nothing serious was suspected and no one dreamt of so enormous an evil as that discovered.' But he then went on to make a surprising admission: 'We have had in this affair to go through a calamity that almost every educational establishment in India at one time or another has been afflicted with'." [15]

As we know, the Noble's school at Machilipatnam was involved in many scandals of conversions of students.

Father Christo Das of St. Josephs High School, Guhiajori in district Dumka was paraded naked in September 1997 by a group of tribal students because he was allegedly involved in a case of unnatural offence with a tribal student. There were cross cases from both sides, which are pending trial

In the year 1999 – 2000, there were complaints by some Hindus of the sexual assault on a *Vanvasi* Sister at Anandpur village of Ucchal Taluka by a priest.

VHP President of district Kandhmals told that a Swami was implicated in a case of sexual assault on a tribal girl.

Quite recently, in the month of August 2001, a scandal came to notice in Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh regarding the sexual abuse of the children by Mr. P.Parvi Raj alias Allen Paul, the organizer of the New Hope Trust. It was reported in the newspapers that 59 of the 60 children of the Vizag unit of the Trust where sexually abused and made to pose for pedophile videos. Many of the units of the New Hope Trust are working in Orissa and the organization wanted to build the houses of the Christians in Ranalai in District Gagapati, which were torched by the Hindus in March 1999. The Australian Consulate was reported as

reacting immediately by deciding to extend legal help to the accused, while there was news about the statement of the Mr. A.K. Khan, Commissioner Visakhapatnam that the accused would be charged with sexual abuse of the children and under the Foreigners Act, as he did not possess valid documents.[16]

7) The Role of Outsiders in Communal Incidents

We have seen that in the incidents of attack on Christians in Latboura in Jashpur in 1995 and in the communal flare-up and arson to houses of Christians in Ranalai in 1999, there was involvement and instigation of outsiders.

The problem in most of the tribal areas are because of the Missionaries whether Christian or Hindu who come from outside and settle in these areas for the Missionary activities. Staines came from Australia and Dara Singh came from district Etawah (now Oraiya) in Uttar Pradesh. The Oraiya district belongs to the region where in certain sections of society brigandage is still held in high esteem. This region near the Chambal and Yamuna ravines has been notorious for dacoities and kidnappings, while the district Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar of Orissa are not criminal districts. The kind of incidents Dara Singh committed in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar were unknown to the region.

The present ethnic divide between the tribal and Schedule Caste people of Orissa also owes its origin to the fact that the Panos, the Scheduled Caste people came from the plains and took possession of the lands of the tribal people. Most of the tribal societies resent the interference by outsiders in their culture and rituals. According to the Santhals, the world is divided into two groups the Hors (i.e. the Santhales) and the Dikhu (i.e. the outsiders). The areas inhabited by tribal people are full of forests and natural beauty. But when the religious missionaries whether Christian a Hindu make these areas their field of work, it results only in generating tensions in previously calm and serene places. These are at these places that one feels and finds himself closest to God and that is why most of the Hindu temples have come up at such places whether in the hills in Badrinath, Kedarnath etc. or on the coastal areas where rivers meet the ocean or on the banks of the rivers. If the outsiders, whether missionaries or government officials have to serve these people, they should treat them with sympathy and should not try to reform or improve their lot rather by imposing their ideology. They should first completely identify themselves with them and then try to give them something, which is compatible with their inherent goodness.

8) Inept Handling by Police

In the Latboura incident, a Christian was killed in 1995 by the Hindu mob after the damage to a temple in the village in district Jashpur, in Chattisgarh State and the information about the incident was received at the outpost Tapkara in the evening a few hours after the incident but the policemen did not react and no policeman from the outpost Tapkara or its police station Pharsabahar reached the spot till the incident of attacking the Christians and their houses had taken place at about 9 to 10 am on the next day. This shows how negligence on the part of police can lead to a serious problem. The police should immediately attend the

incidents of communal nature even if very trivial. This may be the most important principle for policing the communal situations but some officers or policemen for fear of a future indictment in a inquiry either do not go to the spot or when already present at the spot slip away from there. Apart from this, some policemen who have not been sensitized enough, take such incidents in a routine manner and do not respond by reaching the spot or by informing the senior officers etc. Those who run from the scene of a communal incident or avoid going there just to minimize the possibility of any future censure entry, leave the people defenseless or leave them to settle the score between them. It can be imagined what a great loss and damage they cause to the society in this manner just for avoiding some uncertain harm to their career.

A couple of days before the assassination of Mr. Staines and his two sons, Dara Singh was found in a drunken state by a police party in a vehicle and they helped by lifting him. It is strange that though by that time Dara Singh had been involved in many incidents of violence and was wanted in many crimes, nobody from the police party recognized him.

Secret sources revealed that the cause of the Mandaikadu firing on 1st March 1982 was over the issue of simultaneous playing of *bhajans* and music etc. in Bhagawatiamma temple as well as in the shrine only at a small distance away from the temple. The two probationary Sub Inspectors had gone to the shrine for the purpose of stopping the music or removing the loudspeakers of the shrine, as it was the occasion of the Hindu festival. It is said that the Christians in the shrine slapped them and they returned to their camp. In the moments of anger they told the armed policemen to open fire on the Christians, which they complied with immediately killing six people. Subsequently, the officer in-charge of the post got an FIR registered justifying the incident of firing which was not based on the facts. A policeman should be free of the emotions of fear, anger, lust, greed and prejudice while they are performing official duties and for achieving these qualities, they should be suitably and intensively conditioned in their training institutions. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel stressed this point when he said that a police officer who loses his temper is no longer a police officer. The incident of firing of Mandaikadu led to large-scale communal violence in district for 15 days and 15 more people were killed and 484 cases of murder, rioting, man-missing etc. were registered in the district. The Venugopal Commission observed, "After the Mandaikadu police-firing, the entire atmosphere in Kanniyakumari District became surcharged with emotion, anger, hatred and all the reasoning faculty was lost''.

On 16th March Mr. Param Vir Singh, S.P. Kanyakumari opened fire on a violent mob of Christians, which was bent upon setting fire to a Hindu village. S.P. ordered the firing killing two Christians and after that there were only a very few incidents. Does it not look strange that within a period of 16 days in Kanyakumari, one police firing gave rise to large scale communal riots and the other police firing controlled the situation, though on both the occasions the firing was done on the Christians? These two police firings in Kanyakumari just within a space of 16 days amply illustrate the point that the police firing may lead to communal riots if it is on innocent persons or far exceeds than what the situation at that moment demands and police firing if just and done in a cool and composed manner to avoid a greater loss of lives can control a communally explosive situation.

In most of the cases in which the police party is the complainant, the First Information Report is very seldom according to the incidents. Quite often it is thought to be necessary to show some firing from the public as to justify the police firing. Police may show the use of firearms by some members of the public or mob for the purpose that if some inquiry is ordered into the incident, then some Commission, or Committee or inquiry officer might not have the chance to draw adverse inferences against them even if the firing had been just and necessary.

Shri Joginder Singh, former CBI Director made the following observations in the Communalism Combat July 1999 issue:
" Minority Rights – A Global Concern--- Constant consultation and seeking of instructions in riot situations is a totally impractical procedure. Time generally works against the administration, and initial hesitation in dealing firmly with a riotous situation soon results in its escalation in size and intensity. The result is that later effective control over the situation can only be achieved with heavier causalities and by a more indiscriminate use of force. At some places, the leadership not only failed to act decisively, but also was unable to control the force. In the absence of their officers, the force at times retaliated more like a mob in anger. In some incidents some police officers and men appear to have shown unmistakable bias against a particular community while dealing with communal situations. Serious allegations of high-handedness, including criminal activities, as arson and looting molestation of women etc. have been leveled against the police deployed to protect the citizens. There is evidence to suggest that in one recent riot the police resorted to uncontrolled firing, killing many people of the congregation; they later indulged in looting and arson when the crowd assaulted some of their colleagues. In another incident, it was alleged that a group of anti-social elements was able to brutally kill many persons, including men and children, while the police was present in the vicinity. In yet another incident, it has been alleged that the force ran amuck. All these are only symptoms of the underlying malaise. The failure of leadership coupled with the low morale of the force leads to such undisciplined reaction from the force. There is a tendency amongst the officers to avoid taking responsibility for dealing with a certain situation."

There is a great need for sensitization of policemen particularly of the rank of Constables, Head Constables and Sub Inspectors

Political Causes

After Mrs. Indira Gandhi's assassination on 30th October 1984, there were severe riots in Delhi and areas around Delhi in which hundreds of Sikhs lost their lives. It was only after about five days of violence that the then Home Minister Shri P.V Narsimha Rao announced in a Television interview that the government would not tolerate violence any longer and after that there were only a very few incidents. One can easily draw the inference from this statement that the Congress government tolerated violence for about five days till the Home Minister made the above announcement. It seems that in India whenever government is determined to control riots particularly the attacks on minorities, it could always do so. In the Dangs in Gujarat also, a similar sort of situation existed during a week after 25th December 1998 and the attacks on prayer halls of Christians were controlled when the

government and administration showed its determination and intention to do so. If in the Dangs, the arrests of important accused had been made earlier, if Sashidhar had been posted earlier and in the case of anti-Sikh riots after Mrs. Gandhi's assassination, if the then Home Minister Sri Narsimha Rao, had made the decision earlier that the attack on the Sikhs wouldn't be tolerated any longer, the destruction of prayer halls in the Dangs and the massacre of Sikhs under the very nose of the seat of the Govt. of India in Delhi could've been prevented. In the Dangs, Ms. Neerja Gotru, SP was transferred in July 1998 because she had taken action against the prominent members of the Hindu Jagran Munch and the post of S.P. of the district Dangs remained vacant till January 1999 and this also contributed to a great extent to the communal incidents on the Christmas day 1998 and for a week after that.

The reasons are political or failure on the part of police leadership in the district or a combination of both.

The Wadhwa Commission has observed in its report that the visits of VIPs need drastic curtailing as their visits hamper investigation and there is every chance of important evidence being lost by delay in investigation. The Commission further observed, "There should be a Code of Conduct for the political parties when their leaders make statements without verification in a situation like the present one. Leaders cannot make statements merely for gaining political mileage. Their statements should be subdued and not to fan the fire when the atmosphere is communally surcharged. It is the duty of everyone to have regard to each other's faith and to spread a message of love, peace and kindness. Murderer is a murderer to whichever faith he may belong. A criminal is a criminal. Religion need not be brought in such matters. Allow the police to make independent investigation of the crime uninfluenced by politics or religion or caste."

There have been many examples in the past when notorious criminals became heroes of one or the other community and were garlanded in the jails after they had indulged in violence during the communal riots and subsequently keep on winning elections from one or the other political parties.

10) Over Trivial Issues

There have been tensions and incidents of communal nature between Hindus and Christians over trivial issues. The Ranalai communal flare-up in district Gajapati in March 1999 was over the religious symbols. Some miscreant had changed a cross over a hillock into a *trishul* and this developed into a communal tension leading to arson to the houses of Christian *basti* in the village. The trouble was essentially over trivial. Similarly, there was a clash in the district in Serang over a religious symbol.

Police should attend immediately all incidents of communal nature however trivial they might look. Sometimes a dangerous communal situation develops over petty and trivial matters or sometimes even over personal fights between members of rival communities. A dispute between two neighbours belonging to different communities or the assault on a member of one community by a member of another community even if both are criminals

may precipitate a communal situation. If police and the district administration immediately attend to such incidents, a serious communal situation may be averted.

11) Other Causes

One of the other causes for the Hindu-Christian tensions might be the activity of the Missionaries regarding the Social Gospel when they involve themselves with matters, which are not strictly religious and are of the nature of social welfare. A priest in Tamilnadu was killed in 1957, as he was member of a group, which clashed with another group. This incident was of the nature of caste conflict between Thevars on the one hand and the Nadars and the Harijans on the other hand. In another incident, Father Murmu was killed in Sahebganj district in Jharkhand in the 1980s as he was leading a movement of the tribal people for the communal (community) ownership of a fishing pond. Similarly, the Kandhas in district Kandhmals killed in an attack Achutya Nayak, a Pastor leading and advising the Scheduled Caste people over a dispute in the year 1994. In all the above cases, the incidents were not of communal nature as the people the priests were leading, were mostly non-Christians. But as there were casualties of Missionaries in the above incidents, some people tried to give it a communal tinge.

Notes:

1. Scheduled Tribes, National Series Vol.III by K.S Singh, Page 1053, Oxford University Press, 1994.
2. Ibid Page 591-92.
3. Ibid Page 954.
4. Ibid Page 953.
5. Ibid Page 1045
6. Minority Identities and the Nation-State – edited by D.L. Sheth and Gurpreet Mahajan, Page 256.
7. The "Encyclopedia of India –Bihar" (1994 edition) edited by Majid Hussain is quite apt.
8. Niyogi Committee Report, Page 117.
9. Fromm Erich – 'The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness', Page 276 Penguin Books, 1973.
10. Ibid. 364
11. The Faber Book of Madness, page 154 edited by Roy Porter, Faber and Faber, London, Boston, 1993 paperback edition
12. Ibid. Page 179
13. Communalism in Assam: A Civilizational Approach by Sujata Miri, Har-Anand Publications, Chirag Delhi, New Delhi, 1993.
14. Fromm Erich – 'The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness', Page 386, Penguin Books, 1973.
15. Page 120 & 201, Copley Antony – 'Religions in Conflict – Ideology, Cultural Contact and Conversion in Late Colonial India', Oxford India Paperbacks, 1999.
16. Deccan Chronicle News Paper, Hyderabad Edition, 24th, 26th, and 28th Auugust 2001.

Chapter – 2

The Role of Rumours

Rumours pre-dispose the rival religious communities to animosity against each other and then some trivial incident may trigger off serious incidents and confrontations. Rumours can be the cause for serious incidents of communal nature. Following incidents illustrate how rumours can flare up communal frenzy between the two communities.

a) Lota Incident

In 1834, at Calcutta's Alipur Jail, the European magistrate was brained by a brass *lota* and situation was brought under control with lot of difficulty in 1855 Bengal's Inspector of Jails perhaps in view of the above incident ordered the confiscation of all unauthorized possessions including *lotas* from prisoners. Consequently, there were rampant rumours by reports that the seizure of *lotas* was an attempt to break caste and force conversion to Christianity. There was lot of resistance to the regulation in several jails, notably Muzaffarpur and Arrah in Bihar and the District Magistrate had to agree to return the confiscated *lotas*. The provincial government approved the magistrate's decision and annulled the Inspector of Jails "injudicious, inconsiderate and improper order."

(The Colonial Prison: Power, Knowledge and Penology in Nineteenth-Century India – David Arnold).

b) In 1850s, in one village panic set in that the CMS (Church Missionary Society) Missionary J.E. Sharkey of Masulipatnam mission would impregnate the wells of the village with a medical ingredient calculated to win over the villages to Christ.

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c) During the famine of 1876-78 in Madras Presidency, rumors circulated in Madurai in 1877 that people had been brought together in such large number so that they could be converted to Christianity or sacrificed to the Christian god. For many years, it was also believed in Noth Arcot that the famine camps of 1876-8 had been set up deliberately to poison the the inmates otherwise for what other reason so many people had died in them.[1]

d) The Indian plague epidemic, which began in 1896 claimed by 1930 more than 12 million lives and six-million deaths had been recorded by 1908.For combating the challenge of plague epidemic the British Government adopted certain plague measures like compulsory inoculations, evacuation of villages, removing the infected people to segregation camps, compulsory hospitalization, house searches and inspection of rail passengers etc. Tilak had condemned the elite of Pune who had fled the city at the first signs of plague and exhorted them for educating the people out of their worst prejudices and superstitions. But Tilak's Maratha reported that nothing done by the British had interfered so much and in such a systematic way with the domestic, social and religious customs of the people as the plague administration. There were rumours that the intention of the government was to interfere with the religion and caste of the people and it wanted to force Christianity on the natives of

India. Apart from this, Plague Commissioner Rand's deployment of European troops for compulsory plague measures became very unpopular. There were riots in Bombay city in October 1896 and March 1898 and disturbances in Nasik and rioting against house-searches, segregation and hospitalization at Jabalpur. In 1897 Rand and Ayerest, the District Magistrate, Pune were assassinated by Damodar Hari Chapekar. This was the first terrorist act in India. Chapekar was hanged in 1898. At the time of Kanpur riots in 1900 it was said that wildest rumours of impending danger to Hindus and Muslims alike had been in circulation. During Calcutta plague disturbances of 1898, some rumours were circulated by anti-social elements with the object of frightening people and thus getting an opportunity of looting them.

e) There were at least three casualties of Hindus in district Gumla and there was panic in many areas of district Ranchi and other adjoining areas during the 1986 because of rumours of poisoning of wells of Christian villages by Hindus.

f) Quite recently during 1998 & 1999, the people stopped drinking water in some villages of Sundergarh District for fear of alleged poisoning and people stopped going to hospitals in certain parts of district Bolangir for fear of sterilization.

In Bargarh, Hindus stopped drawing water from the village well on the suspicion that it was poisoned.

g) Tamilnadu incident
A section of Hindu Munnani activists of Sathyamangalam unit released pamphlet alleging that Prakash (Hindu-Naicker), a student of St. Joseph Hr.Sec School, Periakodiveri (Eride district) had died of the beating received from Roopan (Christian) a teacher of the school on 17.7.2000. Enquiry and autopsy report revealed that the student had been suffering from "Blood Cancer" and died of the disease.

All this shows that a close watch should be kept on rumour mongering and it should be contradicted and counter acted by all the means the moment police and the administration come to know about it. We can make use of the television and other media for this purpose.

The National Police Commission has stressed the need for counteracting the rumours in its sixth report of March 1981, "We are aware that in a riot situation all kinds of rumors are set afloat by interested parties and sometimes even by well meaning persons acting under fear and tension. The administration should, therefore, take steps to disseminate correct and proper information to the public through all available means. In this connection we would emphasize the use of the radio and loudspeakers as an effective communication media. The Commissions of Inquiry---- have repeatedly advocated the need for prompt and effective control and contradiction of rumors".

The district and police administration can use the media including Television and Radio to disseminate the correct picture about an incident etc., regarding which some rumours have been circulated. In Kanyakumari district, Superintendent of Police, Shri Param Vir Singh

used to collect the villagers and address them through portable loudspeakers and thus used to inspire in them the feelings of confidence in the police and district administration.

Most of the tribal people are simple and gullible who can be made to believe in anything. There is a strong hold of superstitions, evil spirits, and magic over the minds of the tribal people, and among people with such a mindset, rumours can be spread easily. Rumours were also spread about supernatural powers of Dara Singh which made the task of arresting him a bit more difficult for the police because of non-cooperation of the people among whom he was having his hideouts and who regarded him as a sort of a hero.

We can take action against the rumour mongers under section 505 IPC and also under sections such as section 153A, 153B IPC or section 7 Criminal Laws Amendment Act or depending on the nature of rumours and its impact on the people.

Notes:

1) Page –107 Subaltern Studies III – Writings on South Asian History and Society edited by Ranajit Guha –Famine in Peasant Consciousness and Peasant Action Madras, 1876-8 By David Arnold. - Oxford India Paperbacks 1994- Oxford University Press 1984, Delhi.

Chapter – 3

The Role of Pamphlets and Hand Bills etc.

A pamphlet issued by Southern Baptist missionary publishers in 1999 condemned Hinduism, calling it a faith of "hopeless darkness".

The Niyogi Committee narrates the role of pamphlets/handbills as used by the Christian Missionaries in the Chhota Nagpur region at the time of Independence of India. In the front page of the issue of Nishkalank (the official organ of the Catholics) of October 1947, there is a picture of Madonna with the child and facing her is the map of Chhota Nagpur. At page 148, there is given the explanation of the picture in these words: "When will the Ranchi Holy land be dedicated to the Mother Maria? ---"Oh, the Queen of Chhota Nagpur, by your grace Christ-king entered this land with splendour and established his residence here. Oh, thou Virgin of the Resurrection, at this moment, when false prophets are trying to appropriate Chhota Nagpur, enter thy kingdom with triumph and invite the Hindus (unconverted) Lutherans, Anglicans and others to be with you and your son"

The Venugopal Commission has also highlighted the role of pamphlets and handbills by both the Christian and Hindu Missionaries in disturbing the communal harmony between the two communities. According to the Commission there was a war of posters, handbills and posters by both Hindu and Christian Missionaries, which vitiated the environment and seriously disturb the communal harmony between the two communities.
During the years 1998 – 2000, in the Dangs district in Gujarat, there were cases of distribution of pamphlets against the Christian Religion especially before the Hindu rallies.

It was reported in the magazine 'Communalism Combat' that a few Hindu Missionaries asserted that Banswara in Rajasthan would be cleansed of all Christian presence by 2000 AD

In January 1999, a new Hindu militant group, the Hindu Dharma Raksha Samiti, held its second convention in Peth, Maharashtra. Among other demands issued by its leaders was an ultimatum to missionaries to close their offices in tribal districts in certain parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra by March 31, 1999, or be held responsible for any ensuing conflicts.

Section 153B of the Indian Penal Code makes imputations, assertions etc., prejudicial to national integration, an offence punishable with imprisonment which may extend up to three years or with the fine or with both.

The National Police Commission in its sixth report of March 1981 has observed;

"The poor action taken up to now can only be attributed to the inhibitions on the part of the State Governments, whatever may be the reason. We would strongly recommend that in this important and sensitive matter, the State Governments and local administrations should act

impartially and use every weapon in their armoury to flight obnoxious propaganda, which may be prejudicial to the maintenance of communal harmony".

All the efforts should be made by the district administration and the police to prevent the publication of alarming and communally provocative news, which tend to disturb the communal harmony and spread communal hatred. Hate campaign can acts as a pre-disposing cause for a communal flare-up. In a communally surcharged environment, even a trivial incident has the potential of serious riot.

Chapter – 4

Religious Conventions and Meetings

Before giving permission for religious conventions, the district authorities and police should make sure that no untoward incident takes place when the conventions are held.
Many religious conventions and meetings were held by both the Hindu and Christian communities in Kanyakumari from 1980 to 1982. This vitiated the communal harmony between the two communities and subsequently culminated in the serious riots in March 1982 between the two communities.
There were many incidents of attacks on Christian Institutions and Priests in Agra and Mathura in the 1st half of the year 2000. Earlier, the Pope had visited Delhi in November 1999 and released the Document of Ecclesia in Asia (Church of Asia) and later on Bajrang Dal convention was held in March 2000. Religious conventions and meetings pose problems for police in three different ways: -

1) Before the religious conventions and meetings, there is generally some communal propaganda, which may disturb the communal harmony between the two communities in the area.

2) Security arrangements during the conventions and meetings

3) The hate campaign during the conventions may result in serious law and order problems or in attacks on members of rival communities and this may require intensive policing so that no untoward incident takes place after the convention or meeting.

In November 1997, a: Christian convention at Lal Bahadur Shastri Stadium, Gujarat was disturbed. In April 1998, the members of Hindu Organizations disturbed Christian conventions in Polo Ground in Baroda and Palanpur, Gujarat. In October 1998, members of a Christian Conference in Baroda, Gujarat were attacked.

Chapter – 5

Rallies and Processions

The National Police Commission has recommended in its sixth report of March 1981, "In dealing with processions likely to generate communal trouble, there is much greater scope for the police to be prepared in advance. Police should, collect information about the mood and intentions of the precisionists and the attitude and preparedness of those who oppose the processions. Trouble spots should be identified and places of worship should be protected and cordoned off. In extreme cases, if the situation so demands, such processions should even be prohibited under the law. Several communal riots in recent years have been allowed to escalate and to continue for several days because of lack of decisive action on the part of the authorities. A communal riot is different from any other law and order situation because it has its origin in deep seated passions and jealousies".

If religious processions are of a customary nature and have been a regular feature over the years, all the precautions should be taken when they pass in the localities inhabited by the members of rival religious community or when they pass near a place of worship of the rival community. Many incidents have taken place in the past when such processions were in front of the places of worship of the other community and the members of both the communities had violent confrontations after slogan shouting and abusive language leading to widespread riots in the area.

In the Dangs district in Gujarat, there were many processions and rallies by Hindu Missionaries during the years 1998 – 2000. In June and December 1998, Hindu Jagaran Manch took out rallies during which slogans were shouted against Christians hurting their religious sentiments. Before the rally, the leaflets were distributed hurting the religious feelings of the Christians. After the rally on Christmas Day 1998, many prayer halls in district Dangs were damaged or destroyed. It was a great administrative mistake on part of the D.S.P In-charge district Dangs to recommend the holding of the HJM rally on the Christmas day and on the part of the District Magistrate to give permission for the rally when the atmosphere of the district was already communally surcharged. He not only gave the permission, he was even present at the meeting of the H.J.M where slogans like "*Padri Bhago Hindu Jage*" were shouted.

In 1986, after a Rath *Yatra* by Swami Lakhanand Saraswati in district Kandhmals, many prayer halls were destroyed. Earlier in 1986, the Pope had visited India in February.

Chapter – 6

The Use of Loudspeakers and Microphones

Installation of loudspeakers at close proximity by two rival religious groups is bound to create tension, which can spill over into violence. Indiscriminate use of loudspeakers in places of public worship without any control exercised by the police and revenue authorities tends to create communal tension and disharmony. The main cause for the Mandaikadu incident of police firing in Kanyakuamri on March 1st 1982, which triggered off the worst ever Hindu-Christian communal riots in India was the excessive use of the loudspeakers both by the Church as well as the Bhagawatiamma temple. The use of 22 loudspeakers by the temple during the Mandaikadu festival and by the Shrine in the close vicinity of each other vitiated the communal harmony between the two communities. The loudspeakers around the temple were said to have made offensive remarks against Christianity. The Venugopal Commission recommended for statutory recognition of the following guidelines by amending the Police Act. The Commission recommended for the following measures in regard to the use of loudspeakers in the places of public worship: -

1) The use of loudspeakers during the festival times should be regulated both with regard to duration of time and also with reference to the number of loudspeakers to be used.

2) Simultaneous use of loudspeakers by rival religious groups in close proximity should be avoided.

3) Use of loudspeakers should be strictly confined within the precincts of the place of worship.

In the case of Om Birangana Religious Society v. State of West Bengal, Justice Bhagabati Prosad Banerjee of the of the High Court of Calcutta in April 1996 held that though the Police Act, 1861 gives power to DM or the SDO to grant permission for use of microphone but according to section 34A of the Police Act, 1963 (West Bengal Amendment) they could prohibit or restrict for preventing annoyance to or injury to health, for maintaining public peace etc. Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution guarantees every citizen freedom of speech and expression which right includes right not to listen or to remain silent. This Article includes the right to read, write, leisure, sleep, rest, and worship. His freedom of speech and expression could not be suspended by use of microphone and he cannot be compelled to be a captive listener. Everyone has a right but his right comes to an end when it tends to interfere with the rights of the others. It cannot be said that Police can grant permission to suspend the rights of the citizens guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution. The right to religion guaranteed under Article 25(1) of the Constitution is subject to or is subordinate to Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution. Apart from this, the right to religion under Article 25(1) is also subject to public order, health, morality and other rights in Part – III of the Constitution. So, there could not be any right to religion, which affects health or interferes

with the rights guaranteed in Article 19-(1) (a) of the Constitution of India. Total ban was imposed on the use of Microphone between 9 PM and 7 AM. But it could be used between 7 AM and 9 PM following the decibel limits fixed for daytime and nighttime depending on the area, excepting that the Police and Public authorities can use it for discharging their statutory duties[1].

In the case of Moulana Mufti Sayed Md. Noonur Rehman Barkati & Others v. State of West Bengal and Others by Justice Bhagabati Prosad Banerjee and Justice Ronojit Kumar Mitra of Calcutta High Court held in March 1998 that out of the five Azans, only one Azan in the early hours of the day before 7 'O' clock has to be given without microphone. Four other Azans could be given as in the case of others through microphone on the basis of decibel limit fixed in this behalf for the daytime and nighttime.

In the case of Church of God (Full Gospel) in India v. K.K.R Majestic Colony Welfare Association, Justice M.B Shah and Justice S.N Phukan, of the Supreme Court of India held on 30th August 2000 that no religion prescribes that prayers should be performed by disturbing the peace of others nor does it preach that they should be through voice amplifiers or beating of drums. In any case, if there is such practice, it should not adversely affect the rights of others including that of being not disturbed in their activities. In a civilized society in the name of religion, activities, which disturb old or infirm persons students or children having their sleep in the early hours or during daytime or other persons carrying on other activities cannot be permitted. Aged, sick people afflicted with psychic disturbances as well as children up to 6 years of age are considered to be very sensitive to noise. Their rights are also required to be honoured[2].

While the first case of Calcutta High Court related to regulating the use of loudspeakers by Hindu Religious Societies, the second case was in regard to Azan by Muslims and in the Supreme Court case, one of the parties was a Church from the state of Tamil Nadu.
It is now thus clear that the district and police administration can regulate the use of loudspeakers in religious places etc. on the grounds of public order, morality and health and other provisions of the Constitution of India.

It should made clear here that there are laws, which cover many situations, which lead to law and order problems, but they are seldom used. It is the responsibility of the district and police administration to have a fair knowledge of these laws and to use them for the maintence of law and order.

Notes:

1. 1) Source: Extracts from the book "Noise Pollution, Laws & Remedies" by Justice Bhagabati Prosad Banerjee (Former Judge, Calcutta High Court): NITI Publishers, Calcutta. First Edition: March 2000.
2. 2) (2000) 7 SCC 282: 2000 SCC (Cri) 1350: AIR 2000 SC 2773.

Chapter – 7

The Role of Media

There is a strong need for effective mass media management by the Police. Ours is a media age in which news gets flashed throughout the world in a few moments through Newspapers, Video, Television and Internet. It has happened sometimes that the district officials come to know about an incident in their jurisdiction from somebody outside the district and apart from other things, this may put them in an embarrassing situation.

In the past few years, there have been many incidents of attacks on the institutions and prayer halls of the Christians. But sometimes some incidents get undue publicity as the media for the sake of sensationalism publishes them without verifying the truth. Even the purely criminal acts are sometimes blown up or projected as communal and trivial incidents are blown up as instances of persecution of the minority communities. In some cases, just out of a persecution mania or fear complex or because of the vitiated environment between the two communities, the trivial incidents or incidents with no communal overtones have been flashed by members of Christian community which the media has given undue publicity. While the English Media might be projecting some incidents of attacks on Christians or their institutions out of proportion, the vernacular press according to some has shown itself to be slightly pro-Hindu.

A case of alleged rape of Sister Jacqueline Mary was registered in February 1999 at police station Baripada town against two unknown persons in district Mayurbhanj, Orissa. The Sister belongs to the K.C. Pur Convent. The incident got undue and very wide publicity worldwide through television and news media. The investigation found that there was no rape but it was projected and highlighted as an attack on Christians.

The case of murder of two Christians, a tribal girl and a boy, after alleged rape on the tribal girl in village Mandasaru in police station Raikia, district Kandhmals in February 1999 was also projected as an incident of atrocity on Christians, while the investigation found that the accused was also a Christian.

Ruben Banerjee in the March 1999 issue of the India Today reported that the incident of arson to the houses of Christians in village Ranalai in district Gajapati was blown out of proportion. He wrote, "Normally the incident would have been ignored as a local skirmish. But following a string of reported atrocities against minorities--some of them baseless--and more so after the murder of the missionary Graham Staines and his two sons in January, many see an orchestrated pogrom behind every allegation of outrage in the state. Ranalai was no different. Though Chief Minister Giridhar Gomang has declared there is nothing to panic about, no one believes him. And the media's role in pressing the panic button has only made matters worse. Early this month, a Christian prayer hall in Jagannathpur in South Orissa was destroyed by fire. Though an electrical short circuit was the cause, the media went to town with reports that a church had been burnt down. Yet there was another

sensational story about the alleged gang rape of a nun in Baripada. Subsequent medical reports discounted rape as the nun was clinically found to have had a history of sexual activity. But the reports disproving the rape were largely ignored. 'The damage was never undone'. Says an agitated Kharavela Swain, BJP MP. Such unfounded allegations are clearly adding to the existing bitterness. While the clergy is convinced it is under attack, many among the Hindus believe the theory of a conspiracy is undermining the country's secularity. Police reports suggest that on the day the tribal girl was murdered in a village in police station Raikia, about 60 faxes were sent to newspapers and agencies from Raikia though the accused was also a Christian".

The English press exaggerated the Halmodi incident. On the eve of Christmas 1999, a foundation ceremony for a Hindu temple was laid down. The incident was covered in bold headings on the front page of English Newspapers. I went to the village and found that there was not much tension and the incident did not deserve such great publicity as it did. One reason why Halmodi incident got so much coverage as to occupy the entire space of the top of the front page and that too in bold and big headings was perhaps due to the incidents of damage to prayer halls on the Xmas day a year before in the Dangs near Halmodi. Such coverage itself creates panic or attracts undue attention.

Arun Shourie has highlighted the nature of swiftness of communication about incidents of alleged harassment of Christians in the opening Chapter 'An Echo Chamber' of his book 'Harvesting Our Souls'. The reasons for this are that being a minority, they are better organized, more cohesive and have more solidarity as compared to Hindus in general on the one hand and the Police department on the other hand. Apart from this the Christian leaders are more conversant with the importance and the technical know-how of communication etc. of the modern information technologies and are more educated.

In the Stains murder case also, a Bengali Christian flashed the news within 4-5 hours at about 4 AM from Thakur Munda. Police should vie with the information network and the fastness of communication among the Missionaries or converted Christians. This can be achieved if the communally sensitive police stations and the police mobiles are equipped with latest communication gadgets etc.

The sensationalism of such incidents of communal nature, which the media reports create rightly or wrongly, puts the government and the senior police officials under lot of pressure to work out the case immediately. Police do not have a magic wand and because of the pressure from senior officers for action in the case, the local police go for immediate action, which generally means arrests of accused whether involved, or not in the incident. Police arrested about 49 innocent accused in the Staines murder case. Similarly the Gajraula nuns' rape case was falsely worked out. Police does it to show results to satisfy the senior officers and the public. It is thus apparent that in some cases because of pressure, which the sensationalism of such incident entails through media, police may take hasty action in the form of arrest and charge sheeting them, which may spoil a few cases forever.

The Wadhwa Commission has also stressed the importance of restraint on part of media. According to the Commission, that sensational reporting in regard to the incidents of

communal nature have the effect of misleading the public and of creating more tension and suspicion among different communities and more damage to the polity and reporting in such situations should not be done without proper verification and an ordinary crime should not be given a communal twist.

In the D.G.P.s/I.G.P.s Conference 1999, it was stressed that quick dissemination of information about communal disturbances by the electronic media had enhanced possibilities of simultaneous outbreak of violence in different parts of the country, over a single act of provocation.

The following recommendations of the DGP's/IGP's Conference 2000 September (27th to 29th) are very relevant;
"Police and press have the important "watchdog" function to perform, the former backed by law and the latter armed with the instrument of freedom of expression. However, fueled by alleged elements of lack of trust and wariness to share information by the police, the mass media reflects a certain degree of animosity to the police. A gap between what the media needs and what the police feed. The primary need of the media is quickness and correctness of reliable and credible information. Perhaps, owing to elements of secrecy and the pattern of ongoing criminal investigation, it is not felt desirable by the Police to furnish details of all the information sought. On its part, the media also sometimes tends to perhaps sensationalize events. The President himself has, in his address to the Nation on August 14, 2000, remarked, "Criminals are being glamorized by the media as though they are the new heroes of our society". One aspect that emerges succinctly and clamours for notice is that 'truth' is sacred and must be 'shared'. The free flow of information connotes the essence of good Police governance. However, it needs analysis and introspection whether established norms for investigative journalism remain compatible and viable with the primary objective of effective Police functioning. Any fruitful exercise in effective communication can be achieved through proper training methods and the appropriate emphasis on the need to effectively interact with the media. At every stage in a policeman's career, there exists a fervent need to emphasize the importance of good Media Relations. The Police Training Institutions all over the country need to take note of this vital aspect. The Police and the media can and must work together towards the goal of informing the public of newsworthy events".

Chapter - 8

Assault on Nuns

In 1990, two nuns of St. Mary's Convent School, Gajraula in district Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh were raped. In September 1998, four nuns of Preeti Sharan Ashram in district Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh were raped. Mainstream magazine in its issue of 10th October 1998, published about the news of a rape of a woman in a convent in Bandel in West Bengal. In September 1999, a nun from St. Joseph Health Centre, Jalalpur in district Chapra, in Bihar was assaulted and made to drink her urine. In July 2000, there was an attempt to abduct a nun in Sahibabad, district Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. A case of loot and assault was committed in Christ Jyoti Convent School, run by Sisters in Baghpat, Uttar Pradesh. A case of assault was said to have been committed in the same school in the year 1989. Two separate cases of loot/ attempt to loot were committed in the school/institutions run by Sisters in the jurisdiction of police stations Bargaon, and Sipri Bazar in district Jhansi in the first half of the year 2000. In both the cases, the miscreants ran away when people from nearby places had started gathering at the scenes of offences and therefore, it is very difficult to know whether the accused had the intentions of assaulting the nuns or not on both the occasions. All the above incidents of assault on nuns took place in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar. It is thus clear that most of these incidents of assault or rape on nuns were committed in rural areas of North India.

The crime figures for the year 1998 for Jhabua for important crimes were: 185 murders, 138 attempts to murder, 32 rapes, 76 kidnappings out of which 69 were of women and girls, 25 dacoities and 55 robberies, 71 cases of riots, 64 cases of arson and total IPC crime of 3,425. The district ranks among the most criminal districts among the rural areas of India. It's figures of murders, dacoities and kidnappings were highest in all the districts of undivided Madhya Pradesh and second only to Gwalior (140 cases) in cases of attempts to murder and second to only Shivpuri (75 cases) in cases of arson. Similarly, the districts of Western U.P like Meerut, Aligarh, Agra, Mathura, Ghaziabad, Muzaffarnagar, and Moradabad are one of the most criminal districts of not only of U.P but also of entire India[1].

According to a survey done by BPR&D, New Delhi by Surat Misra and J.C Arora as published in the book "Crime against women", during the years 1971 to 1977 U.P with an average of 698 cases of rapes per year and Madhya Pradesh with similar figure of 555 accounted for almost 40% of the total annual average number of 3184 crimes of rape in the whole of India. If we take into consideration, the corresponding figures of the other prominent states like Bihar 279, Maharashtra 287, and Rajasthan 174, these five states of North India i.e. U.P, M.P, Bihar, Maharashtra and Rajasthan contributed to about 63% of the total crimes of rape recorded in India during the above period. On the other hand the four states of Karnataka (with an average of 39.1 cases of rapes per year during the above period), Kerala (with similar figures of 47.3), Tamilnadu 66.1 and Goa 2, the average annual contribution of these four states towards the total number of rapes in India was only 4.8% during the above period of 1971 to 1977.

Following are the state wise figures of the percentage to total cases of rapes in India during the year 1998 as published by NCRB in the book "Crime in India 1998": Madhya Pradesh 22.3% of the total number of cases recorded in India; Uttar Pradesh 10.7%; Bihar 9.5%; Rajasthan 8.4%; Maharashtra 7.7%; Andhra Pradesh 5.8%; West Bengal 5%; Assam 4.9%; Kerala 3.9%; Tamilnadu 2.4%; Karnataka 1.6%. The similar figures for the year 1997 for Madhya Pradesh were 22.9%; Uttar Pradesh 9.5%; Bihar 9.5%; Rajasthan 8.2%; Maharashtra 8.1%. The five states of M.P, U.P, Bihar, Maharashtra & Rajasthan accounted for 64.2% in 1996, 58.2% in 1997, and 58.6% in 1998 to the total number of the cases of rapes recorded in India. According to the census figures of 1991, these five states account for about 49% of the total population of India. In case of Madhya Pradesh the incidence of the crime of rape with over 22% to the total cases of rapes in India is quite high as its population is only 7.9% to the total population of India. The population of the southern states of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Goa in 1991 was more than 15.6% to the total population of India but these together accounted for only 6.4% in 1996, 7.6% in 1997 and 8% cases in 1998 to the total number of cases of rapes in India. If we compare the figures of 1996, 1997 and 1998 with those of 1971 to 1977, it is clear that even after a period of almost 30 years, the complexion of the crime against women has not changed much and the North-South divide is clearly reflected in this regard; the states of North India recording majority of the crimes against women. The actual figures of the incidents of rape in North India should be higher than what the above figures for the five states show because the society in North India is more conservative and rigid and rape brings lot of disgrace and humiliation to the women in the society and as such a large number of cases go unreported. This is to be highlighted here that most of the nuns working in north India are from these four states of Kerala, Tamilnadu, Goa and Karnataka and as such they are not acquainted with the culture of north India and thus may not be taking the security precautions which are required for women in such a society.

This shows that North India is more vulnerable from the point of view of crimes against women. Most of the cases of assault or rape of nuns have been reported from the states of M.P, U.P, and Bihar etc.

The Christian zeal may put them in a hazardous situation.

The situation is further complicated by the Missionary zeal of the Christianity.

If allowed they would go to any hostile region, full of dangers whether from natives or unhealthy environment and thus risk their lives. The reason for the Missionary zeal among the Christianity is perhaps because Jesus Christ was martyred.

The sex ratio in India is quite low in respect of women. In none of the major religious communities Hindu, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists & Jains, it is higher than men. The sex ratio (females per 1,000 male) is highest among Christians with 994 and lowest among Hindus with 925 and Sikhs with 888. Though, the number of women in the Christian community is almost equal to men in India, in certain rural areas, the females outnumber the males in quite a disproportionate manner and such situations might be quite dangerous from

the point of view of security of nuns especially in the rural areas of north India. In the rural areas of the following districts of north India, the Christian females outnumber their male counterparts in a big way according to the 1991 Census of India.

Rajasthan	Males	Females		Punjab	Males	Females
Churu	22	40		Bhatinda	331	380
Bharatpur	14	34		**Madhya Pradesh**		
Dhaulpur	16	25		Rajgarh	31	49
Sawai Madhopur	53	85		**Uttar Pradesh**		
Tonk	60	169		Sultanpur	145	192
Nagaur	49	92				
Pali	90	160				
Jalor	48	119				
Jhalawar	28	48				

[2]

Table : 08

Where the total Christian rural population of district is meager i.e. at the most as above in hundreds, then the disparity in male-female rural Christian population suggests that this heavy tipping of balance in favour of females is because of the sisters and Nuns working in Missionary Schools/convents etc., in rural areas. It looks improvable that such a situation could be because of more number of Christian women than men among the laity of rural areas, especially of North India.

It can be inferred from the above figures that in some of the Missionaries institutions in rural areas run by nuns / Sisters, there might be only a few male members. Rajasthan also records high incidence of rape cases. Though, in the Christian community of U.P, Haryana, M.P and Punjab, the number of females as compared to males in rural population (district-wise) is generally lower, but in many districts in Rajasthan, there are more Christian females as compared to Christian males in rural areas.

The zeal of Christian Missionaries might create lot of problems for police and administration as many of the Christian females (Nuns/Sisters etc.) live un-protected in rural areas with a few Christian males as has been shown above.

Notes:

1. Crime in India 1998 –NCRB—MHA-- (Page No.75 to 78)
2. 1991 Census

Chapter – 9

Attacks on Prayer Halls

There was an unprecedented increase in the attacks on prayer halls of Christians during the last few years. Such attacks generally took place in the States of Tamilnadu, Gujarat, Orissa etc. There were several attacks on prayer halls in district Kandhmals even during the 1980s. Police should make their best efforts to control such incidents. This can be done through Peace Committee Meetings and by tough action by way of arrests etc., against those who indulge in such acts. The police officers should not yield to any political pressure while dealing with communal situations and should show themselves as totally impartial. At the most, they will be transferred out if they do not yield to political pressure. Mr.Manoj Sashidhar, then S.P. of the Dangs district did a commendable job in the year 1999 in controlling the attacks on prayer halls in the district.

One of the reasons for the attacks on the prayer halls seems to be the purpose of checking conversions. Most of the prayer halls, which had been damaged or destroyed, were of thatched roofs etc. St. Francis in the Sixteenth Century used to make such type of prayer halls for the people of the coastal areas of South India when he converted them in mass-scale.

George Fernandes, the then Defence Minister remarked that there were 60 attacks on Churches in Orissa between 1986 and 1998.

The fact that such attacks have happened in the largest number in the State of Orissa, which had already enacted Freedom of Religion Act in 1967, indicates that with the kind of awareness of and implementation by the officers of the State of the provisions of the Act, there is no point for pressing for a legislation on national level regarding check on anti-conversions which are effected through inducement, fraud or force. Wadhwa Commission in its report mentioned that the District Magistrates and the Police Officers were not aware about the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act. The provisions of the Act are not being followed and the people take law into their hands and attack the minorities or their religious places. A great responsibility lies on the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police to stop conversions which are done through inducement, force, or fraudulent means and thus reduce tensions and at the same time protect the minorities and take strong action against those who attack prayer halls.

In the year 2000, there were several cases of bomb blasts in the Churches of Vikarabad, Medak, Ongole, and Tadepalligudem in Andhra Pradesh, of Hubli, Wadi and Bangalore in Karnataka and of Goa in the month of May, June and July 2000. There was a blast in the Christian Gospel Meeting in Machilipatnam, in a Mosque in Guntur and in a temple in Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh in May-June 2000. The involvement of Deendar Anjuman Organization at the behest of Pakistan ISI agency was found in these blasts.

Chapter – 10

Conviction Rate

Conviction rate (no. of cases convicted x 100 / no. of cases acquitted) for All India for total cognizable crimes under IPC in 1998 was 37.42, while similar figure in respect of total cognizable crimes under special laws was 86.7.

In respect of the crimes of rioting etc. the conviction rate was still lower with 25.84 and in case of arson with 23.93 it was lowest for all the IPC cases shown in the NCRB Chart. It is thus apparent that conviction rate for cases under special laws is quite high as compared to cases of IPC. But the bulk of the cases of communal nature between Hindus and Christians were of Indian Penal Code and generally of rioting and arson etc. This shows that if the present trends continue only one case out of three will end in conviction in respect of IPC cases but in case of offences relating to communal nature for example of rioting etc. only one case out of four will end in conviction. During the year 1998, only 5.9% cases of the total IPC cases for trial were convicted and 9.9% cases were acquitted and 3.2% cases were compounded or withdrawn and 81% cases remained pending trial. In case of riots, arson and rape, the percentage of conviction to total number of corresponding cases was still lower with 3.2%, 4.3% and 4.4% respectively[1].

The above figures of conviction rates are about the cases, which after collection of adequate evidence during investigation are charge sheeted in the Courts. Many of the cases of rioting and arson particularly of communal nature go undetected and result in the submission of final reports during the investigation and never come up for trials in the Courts. In view of the above fact, this is evident that in reality the above figures of conviction rate are only in respect of the case charge sheeted in the Court and do not give a clear picture and that in the cases of riots and arson etc, the conviction rate is much lower if we calculate this ratio on the basis of number of cases convicted and the cases registered in the police stations. It is thus clear that the convictions do not have that great a deterrent effect as it was intended to have by the law-framers.

Notes:

1. Page No.147, 149 & 151 of NCRB –Book "Crime In India 1998"

Chapter - 11

Places of worship

The places of worship have sometimes led to tensions either because of disputed ownership of the lands where they are situated or because of encroachments on the lands where they are situated or because of construction of religious places of rival communities or erection of symbols of rival communities adjacent to the places of worship of a community. We have seen many such disputes and tensions of this nature in the Southern and Eastern districts of Jharkhand and in district Sundergarh in Orissa. There were lots of incidents in district Kandhmals during the year 2000 about the construction of an orphanage in Bandapipli and about the disputed ownership of the land under the possession of Christian Missionaries in Bettikola.

There are many disputed places like Halmodi in district, Surat Rural, Vaydun, in the Dangs, Atul in district Valsad where policemen are deployed round the clock. In Atul only 5 km from the district headquarters Valsad, the VHP and Bajarang Dal activists have been organizing Bhajans etc., parallel to the weekly prayer in front of a Christian prayer hall. The likely motive for this confrontational strategy is that they do not want a Christian prayer hall in the Hindu locality. Police *bandobast* is done from around 9 am to 10.15 am on Sundays.

Tension was reported to brewing up in the Kendpukur area of Habibpur in district Malda in West Bengal over the ownership of a plot of land presently belonging to the Rahutara Roman Catholic Mission. The plot is being claimed by a tribal of the area alleging that Missionaries had cheated the tribals of their lands. His claim is being backed up by VHP. The Mission took possession of the land in 1952.[1]

About the places of worship,[2] T.N Madan writes that for the Hindu, too, the earth and all that stands on it bears divine signature: yet there are special holy places, like the *tirtha* where rivers meet. Sacred places are never chosen but discovered by man. He further says that as sociologists, we are however committed to the view that not only society but also even the sacred is socially constructed.

In the short story 'Mandir, Masjid'[3], the famous Hindi writer Munshi Premchand gives the message that all should respect the sanctity of the religious places. In the story Choudhry Itrat Ali, a prominent landowner of the district defends his strongman Thakur Bhajan Singh even though he killed his son-in-law because the Muslim mob stoned a temple and attacked the Hindus inside it during the Janmashtami festival celebrations. Choudhary Itrat Ali gets alienated from the Muslim community as he fights successfully the case of Thakur in the courts. In the meantime, Thakur becomes a hero of the local Hindus and on the day of Janmashtami in the following year, a serious tension develops between the two communities when the drum beats during the Hindu procession became louder and louder when it reached in front of the Mosque. During the commotion Thakur steps out of the procession and caught hold of a Muslim's beard and the pandemonium broke out. Choudhary's anger at this knew

no bounds. In another short story, No Music Before The Mosque' written by a Pakistani writer Zebun-nisa Hamidullah, a brilliant Muslim youth and the brightest boy of the village who innocently played flute on some occasions at the time of *namaz* is found dead hanging from a tree.[4]

Attacks on religious places have great and lasting political consequences especially in India. Many attempts to loot and destroy the Somnath Temple had a great demoralizing effect on the Hindu minds and ushered in an era of about 1,000 years of alien rules. Destruction of temples or their conversions into mosques continued during Moghal period especially at the time of Aurangzeb's regime.

Damage or destruction of religious places leads to strong reactions. We have seen this in regard to Babri Masjid and Akal Takht. The attack on the Akal Takht in the Golden Temple at Amritsar seriously wounded the Sikh psyche and their religious feelings. The Akal Takht symbolizes the temporal authority of God, while the Golden Temple itself symbolizes his spiritual power. Blue Star operation was undertaken by the government to flush out the Sikh militants from the Golden Temple and resulted in bloodshed in its premises and damage to the Akal Takt.

During the incident of attack on Christians in Latboura, district Jashpur in Chhatisgarh State (then Madhya Pradesh) in 1995 after the damage to a Shiva temple, there was one casualty of a Christian and the brother of the deceased was left at the site for dead.

During of British period illustrious religious and social reformers like Raja Rammohan Rai and Maharshi Devendranath Tagore gave lands to Missionaries, but at present many lands where Churches and prayer halls are situated, are being challenged as cases of disputed ownerships. In some cases, even the lands already under their position and title (lease), the Christian institutions are facing either eviction from government or litigation or claim by Hindus or tribals or by their religious organizations etc. Apart from this many prayer halls mostly of thatched roofs have been damaged or destroyed during the recent past.

Though hundreds of incidents of damage or destruction to prayer halls have taken place during the last two decades, there has hardly been any revenge from the Christian community. This is more because of the reason that they are in a minuscule minority and are not in a position to take revenge. Wherever they are in a majority or around 40% of the total population, revenge has followed after such attacks. During the March 1982 Kanyakumari riots, the religious places of both the communities of Hindus and Christians were damaged and destroyed. The damage to prayer halls as in the case of the Dangs cannot be measured in terms of money, which ran only in a few lakhs, but the hurt to religious feelings in such cases is always great. In Hindus it might be more so because for them it is not just a place for prayers but also the god/God itself or an abode of their god/God.

The consequences of attack on Hindu temples are disastrous especially in Hindu dominated areas.

The places of worship should not be used for holding meetings as this may lead to heightened religiosity, which may further culminating in some frenzied violence.

Notes:

1. The Statesman, Delhi 22nd June 2000.
2. 'Religion In India by T.N. Madan, Pages 97 – 98.
3. Indian literature, Sahitya Academy's Literary Bi-monthly No.142: March-April 1991, Vol.XXXIV, No.2, Bharati Printers, K-16, Navin Shahdara, Delhi.
4. Pakistani Short Stories – Edited by Waqas Ahmad Khwaja UBSPD, 5 Assari Road, New Delhi. First Indian Edition 1992.

Chapter – 12

Graveyards

Somebody said that when a Muslim dies, a part of the land of India is taken away and becomes alien. Such a fundamentalist approach is very harmful for the health and unity of the country. Among the Hindu, there is a belief of the transmigration of souls and the body is not given significance and that's why the Hindus cremate their dead.

According to the Christian, and the Muslim Ideology, the bodies of the dead people will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment. That is why they bury their dead. Such faiths existed even before the birth of these religions among certain societies, for example, the Egyptian pyramids were made for the preservation of the mummies of their Kings and the Queens etc. It is because of these reasons that when damage is done, the feelings of the Christians or the Muslims are hurt and a provision has been made in the Indian Penal Code to punish such acts. There have been some cases of damage to the graveyards of the Christians in the recent past.

In Feb 1998, a graveyard belonging to the Christina community was desecrated in Hansi in Haryana.

In July 1998, the body of Samuel, a Methodist Christian, was exhumed allegedly by V HP activists from the cemetery at Kapadvanj and dumped near the Methodist Church. A group of *Vaghris,* an OBC community, had encroached on the Cemetery-land.

In July 1998, it was alleged that the Hindu activists exhumed a buried body of a Christian in Gandhinagar. A case of the exhuming of 45 graves in Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh was reported in the magazine "Frontline". [1].

Section 297 IPC deals with the cases when trespass on burial places is done with the intention of wounding the feelings of any person, or of insulting the religion of any person.

Notes:

1. Frontline, July 21, 2000 issue.

Chapter – 13

Schools

A study undertaken by Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi in 1992-93 recorded that the curriculum followed in minority –managed educational institutions was oriented to a culture of isolation of the community.

According to Prof. S.G. Kashikar, President of Bharatiya Vichar Manch, Nagpur and Chairman of Nagpur Branch of IIPA, New Delhi, to give religious minorities the right to establish educational institutions and to give them greater autonomy in their administration than permissible to the majority community, which is what Article 30 (1) does, is against the ideal of secularism and when these educational institutions are used, overtly or covertly, to convert people of other faiths, it is bound to become a serious cause of inter-religious conflicts.

Quite recently, there were attacks on Christian schools and institutions. In April 1998, the St. Mary's School run by the Jacobites was attacked because Sanskrit was not taught there. There were attacks on Mission schools in Mysore, Mandya, Hubli and Bangalore in Karnataka. Some members of VHP burnt about 300 copies of the Holy Bible in Rajkot in Gujarat. It was alleged that the I.P. Mission School management handed over copies of the *New Testament* to students and asked them to sign a proforma on the last page which stated: "I have decided to accept Jesus Christ as my deliverer."

Government schools under the Tribal Welfare Department were opened up in the tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh. Roman Catholic Missionaries had carried on persistent propaganda against such schools in Jashpur and other places as they asserted that there was no need of opening the schools side by side with the Missionary run schools. Various Ashram schools have also been opened in the tribal areas of Orissa State.

In southern parts of Orissa, NGOs like PREM dominated by Christians have opened some schools in the tribal areas. There are only a very few missionary run schools in Kandhmals, and other districts of the region. The Christian Missionaries have instead started opening hostels and orphanages in southern Orissa. According to the Niyogi Committee, the orphanages are a fertile field for proselytization of minors and it recommended that orphanages should be under government control. In a poor country like India, we may have thousands of orphans after such calamities as cyclones or earthquakes.

The Christian Missionaries especially in Kerala vehemently opposed any move of the government to take-over the administration of Missionary schools. As in the state of Kerala, the Christian schools and colleges have a strong hold in the social life of such towns as Tirunelveli etc., in Tamilnadu.

The VHP feels that Christian missionaries have been able to spread their influence amongst the tribals and other backward classes only through education and, therefore, has decided to

embark on imparting education to the hitherto neglected section of society and on bringing them into the mainstream of Hindu society. Besides providing an alternative to missionary schools, the theme of single-teacher schools or the Ekal Vidyalayas (EVs) would be 'back to tradition'. In a press conference in Karnavati in February 2000, Praveen Bhai Togadia, General Secretary, AIVHP claimed that the VHP had already opened 1,100 single teacher schools in tribal areas, without any help from the Government and 10,000 EVs would be established within the next 3 years.

Many Christian educational institutions and their Fathers and members of the staff were attacked in the first half of the year 2000 in Agra and Mathura in Uttar Pradesh and in other cities of Maharastra, Gujarat etc. There were conversions in some of the schools during the British Raj. Though, some conversions might be taking place in schools or hostels in the interior tribal areas of Orissa, the possibility of such conversions during the present times in the schools in Uttar Pradesh and other neighbouring states is quite remote. About two hundred policemen were deployed in the year 2000 in the different Missionary institutions of districts of Agra range in western Uttar Pradesh.

The role of Missionary schools in spreading education in India has been commendable, and even at present, the standard of education imparted there is of the highest order. Hindus though send their children to these Christian Missionary schools, but none send their children to *madarsas* run by Islamic missionaries. At the time of Independence, most of the teachers in Tamilnadu were drawn from Kanyakumari and Tirunelveli.

Chapter – 14

Language

There is a great need for police for establishing a communication with the local tribal people. The Missionaries learned their language and that was also one of reasons why they succeeded in converting tribal people to Christianity as this bridged the communication gap between them. The police too will have to give great importance for having regular and effective communication with the tribal people. The policemen who know the local language should be posted in such areas. This problem is not there in certain parts of Chota Nagpur where tribals are bi-lingual and they know Hindi in addition to their own language and where there is adequate representation of the local tribals in the police force in the region, but in interior areas of Southern Orissa etc., or among the tribal societies speaking dialects of Austro-Asiatic language group, this problem may be felt acutely as not many among the police are conversant with the local dialects which is said to be difficult. We have language classes for I.P.S. in the National Police Academy but that is only the language of the state they are allotted to and in that State there might be several dialects spoken by different tribal societies. The problem of communication gap between police and people can be over come by adequate representation of local tribal people in police and their posting in such areas. Presently the representation of tribal people in the police or for that matter in any government department is quite lopsided. Only people of certain tribes who live in areas where there are lots of schools or who have socio-cultural traditions which give importance to education get recruited; for example we have many Oraons in Police department of Chotanagpur and Chattisgarh but perhaps very few of other tribes. Similarly there are very few Kandhas and Saoras in police department of Orissa, though the areas inhabited by them have lot of problems whether in the form of Hindu-Christian tensions or of agrarian nature. In the state of Chattisgarh, the large chunk of the reservation quota is taken by Oraons, belonging to both Hindu and Christian communities.

This sort of imbalance has got to be corrected by recruitment of local tribes at least in the police departments of the districts, which have recurrent law and order problems.

About 78% people of India belong to the Indo-European language family and about 19% belong to the Dravidian language family, while about 1% each belongs to the Austro-Asiatic and Sino-Tibetan language families. Most conversions to Christianity have taken place among the Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic or Sino-Tibetan dialect. One of the notable exceptions to this is the conversion to Christianity in the past few decades among the Bhils of the Dangs who speak an Indo-European dialect.

In 1829, the British Government made English the medium for its diplomatic correspondence, and in 1835 made English the medium for higher education in its dominions. But the Indian Governments have not been able to adopt a language for the whole of India for example Hindi. At present we don't have a national language and there is no common feature among the Indians inhabiting the different parts of India. Such a step could

have gone a long way towards creating a national identity of all the people who live in India. Certain Christian Missionaries like Father Kunnakal of St. Xavier's is also of the view that the medium of instruction should be changed from English to Hindi in all the schools so that it can help in developing national feelings in each of us[1]

The demand for a certain language or script or opposition to such demands can sometimes lead to communal problems. There was a communal riot in Budaun in U.P. in 1989 when the supporters and the opponents of the Urdu Language Bill had confrontation. There have been some language agitations in different parts of India. There was a language agitation in Assam against the Bengali language.

In the North-East, the Baptist Missionaries have been trying to shape a separate nationality among the tribal people in Tripura and among the tribal people of Assam for example the Bodos by substituting the Roman script for the Bengali or Assamese script.

Notes:

1. No Full Stops in India by Mark Tully, Penguin Book Publication, 1992.

Chapter – 15

Police Professionalism

For one week in Dangs in December 1998 and for two weeks in Kanyakumari in March 1982, there was collapse of police administration and policemen were just helpless spectators.

The reasons why such a situation happens are political or failure of police leadership in the district or a combination of both. The failure of police leadership may be due to indecisiveness to take action and in some cases to take action against a particular individual or a group of people for some political or religious reasons etc.

In the police department, the post of S.P. is very crucial. All the subordinate officers look up towards him and mould accordingly. If he gets indecisive or takes a wrong decision during a communal situation, the consequences are disastrous for the peace of the district and for the morale of the force.

There is a tendency amongst the officers to avoid taking responsibility for dealing with a certain situation. They either avoid going to the trouble spot, or when they happen to be present there, they try not to order the use of force when the situation so demands, or better still slip away from the scene leaving the force leaderless.

The National Police Commission observed," Several communal riots in recent years have been allowed to escalate and to continue for several days because of lack of decisive action on the part of the authorities. A communal riot is different from any other law and order situation because it has its origin in deep seated passions and jealousies. Luke-warm measures at the early stages of any communal trouble may push the situation beyond a point of no return[1].

About the arrests, the National Police Commission has noted; "In one town, where a serious communal riot was raging for a very long period and where curfew was imposed continuously, for days, the district officers could not even decide on the arrest of the anti-social elements, as there was continuous unwarranted interference with their discretion by the political executives."[2]

Shri Joginder Singh, former CBI Director writes in the Communalism Combat - July 1999 issue:

"It has been alleged that anti-social elements have the protection of influential politicians. Any interference from any quarter in the preparation of lists of anti-social elements and in the initiation of action against them needs to be deprecated. If the police officers themselves prepare a defective list, then the blame for such omission should be laid squarely upon them. If a person whose antecedents are such as to lead to the inference that he is an anti-social element, prompt action should be taken against him. "[3]

The role of police during such times is to establish effective relationship and rapport with the public and win its confidence and work it for the restoration of normalcy.

If police is as service-oriented as some of the Hindu and Christian missionaries as those belonging to Ram Krishna Mission or the Mother Theresa Organization are, then half of the job of the police is done.

We cannot post the Police in each and every corner of the population or human settlements. The best way for police is to earn a reputation of impartiality and toughness and win their confidence so that they come to police or the district administration instead of settling things themselves through violent means and taking law into their hands.

There are no rules for each and every situation. Two factors play an important part. (1) Local situations of the case. (2) The angle from which it is viewed, and tackled. To the same situation, different Police Officers/men may have different perceptions and different strategies to deal with it. It is a matter of attitude. There might be many angles but just one professional angle. It is as if there are thousand ways of doing a thing but just one right way. When the Policemen see it from the professional angle they can deal with it most competently. There might be many castes, communities, in the jurisdiction of a Police Officer but if a Police Officer is himself above the bias of caste and community etc. when it relates to performance of his duties and is objective, he can perform in the most efficient manner.

Each case is to be seen as a new one. There can be no rules for all situations/cases. Much will depend on the particular circumstances of each case available on the spot or in the area at that time.

In a group or mob they might be Hindus or Christians, but in isolation they can be tackled and then reason may appeal to them. In isolation they are more than Hindus or Christians etc. Separately they might be belonging to some caste or clan and they might be having some specific interests. They may have their own priorities in life in some order or the other. They may have some traits etc and all of these and many other factors will make them what they are. As no two Christians or no two Hindus are alike even in regard to their religious feelings /concepts apart from other things. A Police Officer should be conversant with the life styles, means of livelihood, the history, value systems, social norms, customs, their Gods, religious practices etc of the people of his jurisdiction. The knowledge of all this information helps a Police Officer in dealing with the problem/tension in a more effective manner. What are their festivals, and rituals should be known to a Police Officer, since sometimes their observance in respect of time and space or departure from the established custom or practice leads to tensions.

A Policeman has got to put his ego at the backstage. The nature of the police job in the field demands that a policeman should never allow the ego to interfere with the performance of his duties. Police personnel dealing with the problem in the field might precipitate problems because of their egos. An egoist Officers cannot have better professional communication with his force either and cannot have co-operation of all the political leaders etc., and people

of his district. An ego-centered Officer may not also have a correct understanding and perception of the situation and he might be led to wrong decisions by people who happen to be near him to pamper his ego. Ego should never be a barrier for policemen in regard to their communication with the law-abiding leaders of rival groups and if some misunderstanding develops, it should be removed immediately as the political or religious or caste leaders tend to have great influence over people in India. They should have good relations with all the sections of the society and as far as possible with their prominent and influential men and leaders who don't have any criminal propensities or criminal record. Police officers who are known for their professionalism and integrity should be posted to the communally sensitive districts. They should not lack in initiative to take decision and should have unfailing foresight and vision and should have determination with which they can implement their decisions. They should have leadership qualities and should be capable to select a right person for the right place at the right moment. They should be known for integrity, moral, emotional as well as intellectual, which means absence of prejudice, partiality when they are acting in their official capacities and that they do not take any advantage of the official position they occupy for themselves or for any person associated with them. The administration and the police have to impress upon each citizen of its jurisdiction that it exists for all of them and that it is impartial. A particular political party or a particular religious or political leader may stand for a particular group of people but a Police Officer stands for each and every section of the population of his area and if he has the traits of impartiality and compassion for all irrespective of what caste, religion etc., they belong to, he can successfully handle even a serious communal situation. A Police Officer should be committed not only towards the maintenance of law and order but also towards the protection of susceptible and defenseless population of his area. A good Police Officer has to identify and know about the susceptible and defenseless population of his jurisdiction/area during a particular area and time, though some population may always be defenseless irrespective of the fact that what party is in power in the State.

The present tendency is to collect intelligence of a general nature. The intelligence agencies should provide concrete and specific intelligence regarding the environment in the district and about the incidents, which might have communal fall-out. Most of the areas in which the communal problem between the Hindus and the Christians arose were the tribal areas with dense forests and sparse human population. In such areas the task of intelligence collection becomes very tough. These areas are mostly inaccessible and having a poor infrastructure as regards road communication etc. The District Magistrates and the Superintendents of Police in these areas must sensitize all the men under them to report to them immediately any matter of communal nature. The D.M.s and the S.P.s should have close coordination with the forest officers and the forest guards as they are better aware about the topography of the district etc. and keep moving in the interior areas and thus can apprise of any development or incident of communal nature. For this, the D.M.s and S.P.s should have regular meetings with Divisional Forest Officers during the periods of communal sensitivity. There is a need for effective coordination of all the intelligence agencies. In many situations members of the police force react in an emotional manner. On many occasions they act under the emotions of anger or of insecurity or vindictiveness. Sometimes they show partiality towards one group and don't try to have an objective assessment of the situation. They have to think of nothing else but as to how their actions, words, and conduct are going to control the situation. The Officers of the

rank of at least Company Commander or Assistant Commandant should be present near at hand with the force along with the field officers of the district during critical situations. Police should act on all the non-Cognizable complaints of communal nature.

The collapse of the morale of the police force is generally accompanied by the boost of the morale of the anti-social and communal elements. There are three possible situations in which it might happen. One is that in which in the face of wide spread and large scale riots of serious proportions, the members of the police force find themselves as helpless spectators and look to themselves as weak and incapable of controlling the situation. For them the problems look to be too big to be tackled. The second situation in which the morale of the police force collapses is when senior officers do not support or back up their juniors even for their right actions. If they are convinced that senior officers are going to support them for their right actions, they start getting serious about their business of maintaining law and order. The third situation arises when an officer, for example, the S.P. of the district who has taken strong action and tough stand in the interests of maintaining law and order, is transferred from the district and is given an inferior posting elsewhere. The district police force then starts thinking that when a good officer of the rank of S.P. is transferred in this humiliating fashion, how they as junior officers can protect themselves and they start believing in taking no action and in just passing their time or playing to the tune of political leaders or party who can get them transferred as it happened in the case of transfer of Ms Neerja Gotru in July 1998 in the Dangs, in Gujarat we have seen increasing politicization of police and bureaucracy during the last decade. Unfortunately as Police is increasingly and gradually becoming an extension/arm or the ruling party, the Police angle is becoming secondary in importance. Since the late 1980s, there has been an increasing politicization of government machinery and particularly of police.

Notes:

1. National Police Commission Report, Page 30
2. Ibid, Page 26.
3. Communalism Combat, July 1999.

Chapter – 16

Sensitization of Policemen

In England and in many Western countries, every officer has to start his career as a constable. But in India we generally have four level entries into the police service 1. Constable 2. Sub Inspector 3. State Police Officers 4. IPS and the lines are drawn between the leaders of the force and the followers. We are a poor country may not be able to follow these systems immediately in which the posts of constables are manned by well –paid and much civilized citizens. The Constables and Head Constables make about 90% of the police force and they are the ones who are posted in the field and are in constant and direct touch with the people and the problems that arise in their beats.

The lower ranks of the police force, the Constable and the Head Constables etc. are trained and drilled into the habit of obedience of the orders of the senior officers. This quite often results in making them incapable of using their discretion and taking independent decisions on their own men. The subordinate officers constitute the bulk of the police force and they often are the first to face an incident or a communal problem when it is in its initial stages. Posting the Constables and Head Constables to some beats etc. and then forgetting about them is a criminal wastage of the vast energies which each of us has and can utilize at each moment. Instead of being reactive in their approach and attitude, they have to be made pro-active. This problem can be overcome to a great extent firstly by training and developing in them the powers of correct assessment and right decision and secondly by briefing them whenever senior officers visit the police stations, out-posts or their beats etc. and such visits by senior officers should be frequent. They can be told during the course of such briefings as to what situations they might have to face and how they should deal with them. On such occasions, they can also be told about the importance of education of their children and how they can do that better and that they should have some interests or pursuits which would make their life more meaningful and happier. In this way, the policemen would not only be making the quality of their lives better, but they would also be convinced that the senior officers are really concerned about their welfare and at the same time the message regarding police professionalism would be more easily and effectively assimilated. During such briefings there should also be stressed as to how police had more problems and more damage or loss of lives, when they acted under emotions of fear, panic or anger than when they face the situations with cool and composed mind and in an objective manner.

The policemen generally deal situations in a routine and casual manner and don't generally follow the principles which police professionalism require. Seeing the importance of the nature of job, they are supposed to perform, they have to be free of the emotions of fear, panic, anger and vindictiveness. If they are not so, they can cause much greater harm to the social and national fabric. If armed policemen when insulted or injured by a stone etc., by a member of the public, tend to retaliate by opening fire indiscreetly, we can imagine that they

are not performing the role of protecting society but they are rather themselves causing damage to it.

Impartiality:

Shri. S.K. Ghosh, Retd. I.P., in his book "The Light of Other Days" writes about an incident while he was posted in district Ganjam and was called by Mr. R.P Ward, District Magistrate in his office, " On arrival I found that he had before him a land dispute case in which two parties, tribals and tribal Christians, were on opposite sides. A Canadian missionary, to whose flock the Christians belonged, endeavoured to drop in the District Magistrate's ears arguments in their favour. The District Magistrate told him that he could not listen to him, and the missionary exclaimed angrily, "My good Sir, do you call this a Christian Government?" "No" the District Magistrate replied, "We do not, if we did we should not be here. This Government as such, a has no religion."[2]

Whether all the District Magistrate/Administrators or Political Agents had the same attitude of religious neutrality during the company/British Raj is doubtful and some showed their leanings towards, Mission and even encouraged & helped it in the evangelization efforts.
But in a country like India where we are committed to a secular ideal as enjoined in the Constitution of India, we are not supposed to have any partiality for any religion. Apart from this, impartiality and toughness is the key for successfully tackling the communal situations.

Notes:

1. Subaltern Studies IV edited by Ranji Guha, Oxford India Paperbacks:- p.32:David Arnold writes in a paper, 'Bureaucratic Recruitment and Subordination in Colonial India: The Madras Constabulary, 1859-1947'

2.' The Light of other days' by S.K. Ghosh.

Chapter – 17

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY POLICING IN TRIBAL AREAS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FEATURES OF DIFFERENT DISTRICTS OF ORISSA STATE ON THE BASIS OF 1991 CENSUS

Sl. No.	District	Density of population per Sq.Kms (No),	Percentage of S.C. population to the district total population	Percentage S.T. population to the district total population	Percentage districts S.T. population to the State's S.T. population	Literacy Rate, Census Total	Percentage of Forest area of the district to state Forest area	Average number of telephone- one connections Per lakh of population
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)		(8)
1.	Balasore	458	18.57	10.57	2.55	57.64	0.40	247
2.	Bhadrak	397	21.71	1.69	2.55	60.54	0.05	164
3.	Bolangir	188	15.39	22.06	3.86	38.63	1.94	228
4.	Sonepur	209	22.11	9.50	0.64	42.62	0.57	87
5.	Cuttack	504	18.19	3.49	0.98	65.43	1.14	910
6.	Jagatsingpur	583	21.72	0.61	0.09	65.78	0.15	214
7.	Kendrap	448	19.83	0.40	0.06	63.61	0.51	135

	ara							
8.	Jajpur	480	22.87	7.40	1.46	58.00	1.20	170
9.	Dhenkanal	206	16.03	12.68	1.71	54.92	3.25	292
10.	Angul	151	16.82	11.68	1.60	51.52	6.08	355
11.	Ganjam	335	17.91	2.93	1.31	46.72	4.65	395
12.	Gajapati	151	8.77	47.88	3.10	29.37	7.63	141
13.	Kalahandi	138	17.01	28.88	4.64	31.08	6.72	138
14.	Nuapada	138	13.09	35.95	2.40	27.52	3.15	107
15.	Keonjhar	161	11.49	44.52	8.46	44.73	4.35	210
16.	Koraput	123	13.41	50.67	7.42	24.64	2.46	332
17.	Rayagada	94	14.28	56.04	5.69	26.01	7.54	247
18.	Malkangiri	69	19.96	58.36	3.50	20.04	2.71	77
19.	Nabrangpur	160	15.09	55.27	6.65	18.62	2.76	98
20.	Mayurbhanj	181	6.99	57.87	15.51	37.88	9.18	162
21.	Kandhmals	100	18.21	51.51	4.00	37.23	7.92	231
22.	Boudh	92	19.64	12.92	0.58	40.98	1.95	103
23.	Puri	427	18.56	0.27	0.05	63.30	0.54	265
24.	Khurda	520	13.62	5.14	1.10	67.72	2.06	1,483
25.	Nayagarh	198	13.78	5.96	0.66	57.20	3.13	123
26.	Baragarh	207	18.44	19.56	3.36	47.65	2.04	238
27.	Sambapur	121	17.07	35.08	4.04	51.56	6.96	824

28.	Jharsugu da	203	17.15	31.88	2.03	52.64	0.31	378
29.	Deogarh	84	14.60	33.31	1.11	44.45	1.69	47
30.	Sundarg arh	162	8.78	50.74	11.35	52.97	6.96	693

Table : 09

A perusal of the above the table shows that in the districts, which were affected with the Hindu-Christian problems i.e., Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Gajapathi, Balangir, Navrangpur, Sundergarh, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput and Kandhmals, the (1) Density of population per square kilometer is lower than the State figure of 203 persons per square kilometer. (2) Tribals population is very high in these districts as compared to the S.T. percentage of 22.21 for the Orissa State. (3) Except in District Sundergarh Literacy rate in the affected districts is lower than the state literacy rate of 49.09 and (4) Except the district Sundergarh, the average of number of telephone connections per lakh of population in 1993-94 was very low than the above figure of 365 for the state.

The District Sundergarh seems to have high literacy rate and several telephone connections because of Rourkela Steel Plant and because of the Christian Population and because of Missionaries working in the area.

The above socio-economic features reflect lot of problems for policing these areas as regards communication with the people etc.

From the policing point of view this picture is wrought with many problems. Firstly in these tribal areas, the number of policemen available in the district for every square kilometer is quite less which makes the task of policemen very tough. Secondly, because of lower literacy rate and most of the people of the areas being tribals, the communication gap between police or other Government Department and the people is quite much. Thirdly because of very few telephone connections and bad or non-existing roads in the area, the number of visits of policeman in these areas are only quite seldom and perhaps only at the time when some problem develops. Apart from this, the response time for police to reach the scene of crime is unduly long for reasons beyond control of local police. The scene of murder of Father Arul Doss in village Jambvani in police station Mahuldiha in district Mayurbhanj is about 12 to 14 km from the main road and it took many hours for the police and the media- men to reach the spot. The complainant also took lot of time in informing the Police Station Mahuldiha since there were no telephones around.

The concept of Community Policing is very relevant for such remote areas with sparse population. Here is the greatest need for community policing for following reasons.

1. There are very few tribal people in the Police Department though these districts are most predominantly tribal.

2. There is communication gap because of language problem. The language of the local people is generally of Austro-Asiatic or Dravidian origin and very few among the Police or other Government services are conversant with their dialect.
3. The areas of these districts are generally sparsely populated and have lot of forests. In these far-flung and forested areas, Police cannot be present everywhere all the time. In these areas there are only a few roads. Some of the areas get cut-off during the rainy season.

Continuous contact and enlightenment of the members of village defense societies can help Police a lot.

This is noteworthy here that Government of Orissa has taken a big step in August 1999 in the right direction in regard to constitution of 'Surakhya Samiti' on a statutory basis. The members of the Surakhya Samiti are to be selected from among volunteers from the specified urban or rural areas by District S.P/Range D.I.G after consultation with the Magistracy. Some of the objectives of the Surakhya Samiti's are to associate citizens with the police in solving neighborhood problems and in restoring order and peace in the community. This kind of legislation can go a long way in tackling such tensions and problems as seen between Hindus & Christians in the recent past especially in the tribal areas.

Chapter – 18

Public co-operation
The role of Peace Committee Meetings

Shri Joginder Singh, former CBI Director made the following observations in July 1999 issue of Communalism Combat about the role of Peace Committee Meetings in controlling the communal riots:

"Loss of credibility in the police has serious repercussions. The public will neither trust nor co-operate with such an administration in dealing firmly with the situation. And without active public co-operation, it is just not possible to control communal riots. The peace committees can also play a very important role in removing fear, mitigating panic, reducing tension and restoring normalcy in the area. In sensitive areas with a history of communal riots such peace committees should be constituted on a permanent basis and the membership of such committee should be constantly reviewed".[1]

The district administration and the police should be very careful about as to who should be included in the Peace Committee Meetings. Important men having local influence and acceptable to both the communities and having a reputation of impartiality should be selected.

Following are some of the advantages of Peace Committee Meetings during communal situations:

1. Police/Administration views and stand of toughness and impartiality can be communicated during such meetings. This can be told what actions of the people will attract what penal sections of the law etc.
2. Impartiality and Professionalism can be conveyed to the people, which definitely always go a long way in restoring normalcy.
3. Through the influential leaders/representatives of the people who participate in the meetings and who if convinced will turn their followers in favour of administration for the cause of peace. On the other hand, the same people could have pernicious influence in making people violent.
4. Even if they may not contribute actively/directly towards restoration of peace, they can at least immediately inform police by telephone etc., about any dangerous development in their locality etc. Timely information is very useful for police in averting a serious incident. In such times the society gets divided into two mutually-destructive and hostile groups and it becomes difficult for police to get any information from the riot-affected areas inhabited by one or both of the rival groups. But if some people of a group/community are convinced about impartiality of police and believe in pacific means, they can inform police secretly on telephone or by other means about some dangerous developments or designs of a particular community or about the preparedness or movements for attacking by the by the members of the

community, even if they belong to such community Police cannot be present everywhere all the time. But if it has its contacts and sources etc., among the people, seeds of peace can be sown in the minds of people through them. If more and more citizens believe in the righteousness and impartiality, if they believe that police will take right and correct and just action, they will give the police necessary information and help it in bringing normalcy. The people can be told about the principles of love, truth and compassion as the essence of all religions.

5. During the Peace Committee Meetings, it can be told that in a society like India which has diversity, we should tolerate each others ways and religions and when it's citizens fight against each other on caste, religion etc., India as a whole gets weakened.

The greatest role of the peace committee meetings is to detoxify the people of the area who have been injected with the venom of mutual hatred and intolerance by the pamphlets, handbills or by the rallies and processions or by religious conventions etc. The peace committee meetings can only play a secondary role in the restoration of normalcy and peace. In a certain situations, the district and police authorities cannot achieve much through the peace committee meetings. We saw how futile and ineffective was the role of peace committee meetings in district Dangs before the Christmas of 1998 when the decision to allow a rally and a meeting by HJM had been allowed by the District Administration. The peace committee meetings cannot meet the challenge of all the dangerous law and order situations. It is thus apparent that the peace committee meetings have a limited role. It cannot be like this that you invite a problem and then can diffuse it by holding a peace committee meeting. In certain matters and in certain situations, the people or the leaders cannot be trusted or at the crucial moments or in potentially dangerous situations the leaders may have not much to do as the mob becomes leaderless

Notes:

1. July 1999, Communalism Combat.

Chapter – 19

Transfer and Postings:

We saw how the posting of Paramveer Singh who had earlier served in the district and enjoyed a good reputation among both the communities helped in restoration of peace and normalcy in district Kanyakumari in March 1982.

The Venugopal Commission was full of praise for Param Vir Singh and the way he tackled the most explosive communal situation, which the country ever had between the Hindus and the Christians. Shri Param Vir Singh has the reputation of a very tough, competent and impartial officer and who wins the confidence of all the sections of the society because of his cosmopolitan outlook, which I think he imbibed from his family and the varied cultural background of the different educational institutions he attended.

The most serious incidents of Hindu communal nature in the recent past took place in the districts of the Dangs, Keonjhar and in the districts of South Orissa. Ms. Nirja Gotru was S.P of the district, the Dangs from 28th January to 21st July 1998. During her tenure between the period 14th June and 12th July 1998, there were four cases relating to Hindu-Christian communal nature. Three cases were against the Hindus and one case against the Christians. Two cases relating to taking out rallies against Christians and shouting slogans like "*Padri Bhagao Dang Bachao*" were registered in June 1998. One case against the Christians related to throwing away of the statues of tribal god *Nagdev*. She took strong action in all the cases and all the accused were arrested by 16th July 1998. It is said that she was transferred out because she took action against some members belonging to Hindu organizations. The post of S.P district Dangs remained vacant from 22nd July 1998 to 3rd January 1999 and during this period Dy.S.P Shri R.M Gaekwad was in charge of the police in the Dangs district. He belongs to the Dangs district and has a reputation of being a lenient officer and is to retire in the year 2004. The new S.P. Mr. Manoj Shashidharan speedily brought the situation in the Dangs under control. He proved himself to be outstandingly competent officer.

Similar situations existed in district Keonjhar at the time of the murder of Graham Staines and his two sons on22nd/23rd January 1999 when the post of S.P. was vacant and the Additional S.P. was on leave. The post of S.P. Keonjhar was vacant from 16th December 1998 to 26th January 1999 when Arun Kumar Ray was posted. In both the districts of Dangs and Keonjhar, the Dy.S.Ps who did not enjoy reputation of toughness were holding the charge of the districts. In police, the post of S.P. is very crucial and officers who are known for toughness and impartiality should be posted to the communally sensitive districts. The best officers should be posted to these districts and they should not yield to any political pressure while dealing with communal situations. In both the districts, as well as in Mayurbhanj, where Mr. Yogesh Bahadur Khurania was posted, the situation was brought under control because the officers took very tough stand and were professionally very competent. Mr. Khurania arrested Dara Singh and both he and Mr. Arun Kumar Ray took strong action under NSA against the organizers of Dara Sena, Dara Bachao Samiti etc. The members of these organizations caused lot of disturbances and communal disharmony when

Dara Singh was produced before the Court in Karanjia and on other occasions. The Wadhwa Commission observed, "Frequent, illogical and irrational transfers of officers, especially of District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police are to be avoided. Proposal for transfer of Superintendent of Police should emanate from Director General of Police in the State."[1]

S.K Ghosh in his book "The light of other days" wrote about transfers and postings in tough areas of South Orissa. "If a good officer was sent there, he was promised he would not have to stay long. More often the officer who came had some contempt to purge or some misdemeanor to be forgiven". Apart from the Hindu-Christian problems, the districts of South Orissa have many serious problems like Naxalism, Scheduled Caste-Scheduled Tribe divide generally in the form of forcible possession of lands of SC Christians by tribal people belonging to both Hindu and Christian communities. The district Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu is again a very tough charge. Some districts become tough only due to the presence of a few people as otherwise peaceful districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar became tough districts from the point of policing because of the activities of Dara Singh. The best officers should be posted to the communally sensitive districts.

About the transfer and postings, the National Police Commission in its sixth report of March 1981 noted, "The efficiency of the district administration cannot be separated from the general health of the administration and we strongly disapprove of the practice of posting and transfers on political pressures. The faith of the people in the District Administration and the police gets shaken, because of frequent transfers. Loss of credibility in the police has serious repercussions. Only specially selected experienced officers with an image or impartiality and fair play should be posted to the communally sensitive districts".[2]

One of the important recommendations of the National Police Commission which is still pending for implementation is the fixed tenure of State Police Chief.

Notes:

1. Wadhwa Commission Report, Page No. 237.
2. National Police Commission Report, Govt. of India, Pages 30, 31.

Chapter – 20

Hindu Resurgence and Organizations after Independence

Swami Chinmayanand founded Vishwa Hindu Parishad in 1964.
Mark Jergensmeyer in his book "Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State" writes, 'The VHP first came into national prominence by organizing protests against mass conversions of lower-caste Hindus to Islam at Meenakshipuram in South India in 1981. Allegedly the Islamic states in the Persian Gulf had sent large sums of money to India to encourage raids on Hindu society. The secular government became a target for the Hindu leaders wrath because they saw the state's policy of religious neutrality as protecting these Muslim assaults. The Venugopal Commission has quite severly criticized the role of RSS in the communal incidents of the early 1980s in district Kanyakumari in Tamilnadu. In 1983, a great Procession for Unity organized by the VHP brought over a million people to New Delhi in one of the largest gathering of its type in history. The VHP's momentum increased with another issue: control over the alleged birthplace of the God Ram. The VHP was linked in 1985 to a new all-India organization the Dharam Sansad'.

The Bajrang Dal, the youth front of the VHP came into existence in 1984.
Some arms training camps of Bajrang Dal were held in Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura and Meerut and other places in U.P. allegedly for counter-acting the ISI activities and for protecting the Hindus against any eventuality.
Under the guidance and inspiration of some religious Hindu leaders, re-conversions of tribals have been taking place over the last few decades.

Dilip Singh Judeo of the Jashpur royal family has organized many such camps and programmes of conversions in Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. In Ranchi, Givind Oraon the Chief of Dharma Prasar Samity's organizes re-convertions of Adivasis before the idols of Shiva and Parvati. According to him "The Christian Missionaries are not only changing the religion but converting nationality". The Hindu Missionaries have also started the welfare activities like the establishment of schools in the interior tribal areas.
The Hindu organizations in its various meetings and through pamphlets have criticized the proselytizing activities of the Christian Missionaries in the garb of social welfare. They have also accused the Christian Missionaries of political designs and of poisoning the minds of converted Christians.
In the issue of The Hindustan times of 31-7-2000, it was reported," The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has accused the Christian missionaries with working under a calculated plan to target weaker sections of Hindu society for conversion with the purpose of bringing a maximum area under the influence of Christianity.

A decision was taken by the AIVHP to launch a countrywide 'Sanskritik Jagaran Abhiyan' from July to September in 1999 to check conversions in tribal and backward localities.
The Hindu Missions have started schools in different parts of India. There are 5,000 Vanvasi Kalyan Kendras, and 1,100 single-teacher schools and 500 health centers in Jharkhand.

Chapter – 21

Majoritarianism Vs Minoritarianism

The Constitution of India guarantees equality before law, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth and abolition of untouchability. The government has notified five communities, namely, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and Zoroastrians as minorities at the national level. As per census of 1991, the population of all the minority groups constitutes 17.17 percent of total population of the country.
Majority and minority is a relative concept. Jains and Brahmins of Tamil Nadu have sought for minority status.
Hindus are in a minority in Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Punjab, while Christians are a minority in most of the States except Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya.

The Hindus constitute about 82% of the total population of India while Christians are just 2.3% and are thus a minuscule minority. This leads to many insecurity zones for Christians outside the North-East.

In the recent past, there have been many attacks on the Christians particularly, on their prayer halls and sometimes their educational institutions.

Most or all of the cases booked under different conversion laws of the states of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh are against Christians and very few or none against the Hindus, though conversions or re-conversions to Hinduism are also taking place. All this shows the majoritarianism – minoritarianism syndrome. It is world-wide phenomenon that the majority community gets assertive and proud about its values and culture and regards them as superior while the minority community develops a persecution mania.

In the novel 'Gora' written by Ravindranath Tagore, a young man suddenly finds himself in the no-man's land when his father reveals to him the truth about his birth in order to stop him, *a mlechcha* from making the Hindu offerings at his funeral, for he (father) is afraid he is going to die soon.[1] But he reconciles to a white birth and Indian nurture. Such might be the plight and fate of the Christian community caught up in the crosscurrents of two cultures.

Various Christian organizations and associations have complained about attacks on their institutions and about their harassment. Their relevant complaints and grievances in the recent past can be summed up as below:
1-The complicity of the state machinery, particularly that of the police.
2-The behaviour of the magistracy, the subordinate judiciary and of the higher judiciary
3-Continued ignoring of the National Minorities Commission and its orders.
4-Failure of the National Human Rights Commission to do anything on Christian complaints.
5-Continuing delays in central, state and municipal authorities on issues such as new land and clearances for cemeteries, churches and schools, clearing of encroachments and alienation of properties.

Even other countries like England face the same sort of problems as we have in India regarding majoritarianism versus minaritarinism. Jeremy Johns writes, 'In 1989, the opponents of Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* reminded Europe that its Muslim citizens abide by values and laws very different from its own, and will use violence to ensure that they are respected. Once agains, Europe is faced with the problem of how to incorporate its Muslim minorities into society. Unless Europe can abandon its medieval inheritance of exclusivity and intolerance, and unless Islam can break free from the medieval anachronisms advocated by its radical extremists, modern secularism is unlikely to succeed where medieval Christianity failed[2].

The 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights adopted by the United Nations, and which provides for the rights of persons belonging to the minorities was ratified by 140 countries including India [3]. The United Nations General Assembly Declaration of December 1992 urge all the countries of the world to protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories.

The Wadhwa Commission has recommended that it is necessary that National Foundation of Communal Harmony be made a statutory body on the lines of National Human Rights Commission.

Notes:

1. Gora by Rabindranath Tagore, Page 118, Indian Literature : Sahitya Akademi's Literary Bi-monthly, No. 131, May-June, 1989, Vol.XXXII, No.3, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

2. Page 204: The Oxford History of Christianity, edited by John McManners, published by Oxford New York, Oxford University Press, 1990 edition, reprinted in 1993.

3. Minority Identities and the National-State, edited by D.L Sheth, Gurpreet Mahajan.

Chapter – 22

Authority of the State in India

In India, the State has a great significance in the minds of the people. Except in the areas, which are affected with naxalism, terrorism or insurgencies (these activities, ideologically, are against the state itself), the authority of the state is greatly respected in India. One of the notable exceptions to this were the attacks on police force by Muslims resulting in the deaths of a few constables in many districts of Western Uttar Pradesh after the police firing on Muslims in a Idgaha in Moradabad. Because of this respect of authority of state, the task of police is quite easier in combating communal situation if they show professionalism, which includes impartiality. Even during the British period, the authority of the state was greatly respected. That is why there has been such a few attacks on the authority of state or a few instances when its authority was disregarded during the communal incidents between the Hindus and the Christians. There was a case of resisting the authority of the officer in charge of the police station and detaining him by a few Hindus in the jurisdiction of police station Kotgarh in the district Kandhmals in May 2000 village Sajeli for investigation of a case of arson to a prayer hall and in another case, the members of the Hindu Organizations tried to take out a procession defying the prohibitory orders in the Dangs in July 2000. Similarly, in August 2000 in the village Similithapa in the Kandhmals district, there was a case of flouting the prohibitory orders by Christians.

Chapter – 23

International Repercussions and Ramifications of Hindu-Christian tensions:

Relations between Hindus and Christians in Trinidad and Tobago have significantly deteriorated recently, as Hindus have gained confidence with one of their own as Prime Minister. It was feared that the tensions could become serious. The reasons for the conflict are said to be the resurgence of Hindu feelings among the Hindus and the reactions among the Christians to the incidents in India and to the resurgence of Hindus. It is also said that the problems between the East Indian Hindus and African Christians are "more racial than religious." Of Trinidad and Tobago's 1.2 million people, 40 percent are black Christians and 40 percent are East Indian Hindus. Basedo Panday, a Hindu of East Indian descent, has been Prime Minister since 1995, following 30 years of government by the People's National Movement, supported by blacks. There are few reports of Hindus violence against the Afro-Christian community in Trinidad, but one church in a predominantly Hindu area has been burned three times. Southern Baptist missionary to Trinidad Charley Rempel was reported saying, "Hindu meetings stressing home and family have been effective as a recruitment device, especially in 'mixed' marriages. People of African heritage who become disillusioned are easy converts to Hinduism."

There are large number of Hindus in South Africa, Mauritius, Fiji, the Caribbean, Surinam, Trinidad and British Guyana. People of Indian origin are in conflict with the Africans in the Caribbean, in Mauritius they are in conflict with the Creole people, in Fiji they are in conflict with the local Fijians. About a year back, a Hindu Prime Minister of Fiji was deposed in a coup[1].

Notes:

1. An article by V.S. Naipal in the Millennium Series, India Today.

Chapter – 24

The Representation of Minorities in Police and other Government Departments:

Professor Tahir Mahmood, the Chairman of Minorities Commission has written about the inadequate representation of the minorities in police and allied services. For instance, according to him, the minority population in Delhi is more than 15 per cent but the representation of the minorities in the police is less than six per cent.

Shri Joginder Singh, former Director, CBI writes in "Communalism Combat" July 1999 issue.- 'There is a strong case for encouraging the recruitment of members of the minority community and other weaker sections at various levels in the police force. Such recruitment should be without prejudice and without diluting the educational and other standards considered necessary for recruitment to the police'.

In most of the regions like Kanyakumari and the districts of Jashpur, Raigarh, Sarguja of Chattisgarh and districts Ranchi, Gumla and other districts of Jharkhand, the representation of Christians in the police department was found to be adequate. In the districts Jashpur, Raigarh, Sarguja of Chattisgarh and in the districts of Ranchi, Gumla etc., of Jharkhand many of the Christians in police force belong to Oraon tribe. The Oraons both Hindus and Christians take the large chunk of reservation quota in the Chattisgarh State because among the tribal people they are most educated.

On the other hand, in the districts of South Orissa, the representation of the local tribal people forming the majority community is very poor in the police and other departments of the government, while there are many Panos and Dombos (mostly Christians) belonging to Scheduled Caste in the police. There is a need for adequate representation of tribal people of South Orissa in the police department.

Chapter – 25

The Ratio of Police to population and area

Following are the data about the strength of police in for ten thousand population and for 100 sq. km. for the whole India.

10.73 civil police per ten thousand population.
14.55 total police per ten thousand population.
32.90 civil police per 100 square kilometers.
44.60 total police per 100 sq. km. of area.

(Source – Data on Police organizations in India—BPR&D—MHA—GOI—September 1999)

A perusal of the Ratio of Police to the Population and to the Area as published by BPR&D about the different States in India as on 1-1-1999 suggests that maximum number of incidents of communal nature between Hindus-Christians took place in the States which had the ratio of police to per 10,000 of population around 14 or less than 14. States like Punjab, Maharashtra, Haryana, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya and Tripura, which have relatively more policemen per 10,000 of population, had fewer incidents.

Chapter – 26

Caste or Ethnic Identity and Religion:

The caste or tribal identity plays an important role in the social interaction and movements in India. Most of the mass conversions in India took place on caste or tribal lines. In the tribal areas dominated by Oraons in Jharkhand, Orissa and Chattisgarh regions, the conversions are still taking place among the Oraons because many of them had been converted to Christianity during the 19th Century. In the districts Jashpur, Raigarh and Sarguja, the population of Christians among the Oraons have shown appreciable increase even after Independence though, in other tribal areas of Chattisgarh inhabited mostly by Gonds and other tribes, which have only a few converts amongst them, the Christian population is generally showing a negative growth. In many parts of the country, we see caste playing a major role in politics and elections. The Christian Missionaries did most of the conversions in the North-East by encouraging their tribal identities. The caste or ethnic feelings are more intense in the rural areas as compared to urban areas. Though one of the reasons why the SC got converted to Christianity was their lower status in the Hindu caste system, but they continue to have the same lower ranks after conversions even among the Christianity particularly in the South India. In the Churches, separate space is earmarked for them and they have a separate burial ground. There is no intermarriage between high caste and low caste Christians and clashes between them are known to occur. Their marriage and funeral processions are not allowed to pass through the main streets.

M.N.Srinivas writes about the existence of caste system amongest the Christinity and Islam in India in the following words:

The conversion of the so called low castes to Islam and Christianity in many parts of India, and to sects such as Sikhism and the Arya Samaj in the Punjab ans western Utter Pradesh, was often motivated by a desire to shed the odium attached to being low. But the converts found that it was not at all easy to shake off their caste and that, in fact, they carried bear the stamp of the caste system; this is not to say, however, that the caste system among the Indian Christians and Muslims is the same as the caste system among the Hindus[1]

Caste sometimes played an important role as regards the Hindu-Christian tensions particularly in the 19th Century during the British period. The 1858 riots of Tirunelveli in Tamilnadu in which at least ten people were killed were over the resistance to the passage of the dead body of a low caste Christian through the street inhabited by the higher caste people, mostly the Vellalas. During the plague administration of the late 19th Century, there were many riots in different parts of the country because the British administration did not make the caste distinction between the higher and lower castes and disregarded the caste susceptibilities of the Hindus while implementing the plague measures. But on certain occasions different castes of the Hindus combined together to fight against the onslaught on Hindu religion by Christian Missionaries. One such inter-caste alliance was formed in 1841 under the leadership of a Nadar. The Britishers played a double policy. Their government and

Courts did not interfere with the social system and in a case of Tamilnadu, the Court ruled against the entry of lower caste people to the temples, while their Missionaries attacked the caste system and were successful in some areas to convert the Scheduled Caste people. In the tribal areas, the British government exploited the forests for the timber used for shipbuilding and railways etc. for their Empire and collected the revenue through introduction of Zamindari system (landlordism) and thus started the process of exploitation of the tribal people which ultimately made most of them landless in the areas where they were earlier kings though in their own primitive way. The Missionaries on the other hand exploited the grievances (that had been caused by the British government) as regards their exploitation by the landlords and converted them on mass scale to Christianity, particularly in certain areas of the Chhota Nagpur plateau. In fact the policy of the British government facilitated the proselytizing work of the Missionaries. It was a no-win situation for the Indians. The heads the British government won and the tails, the Missionaries. From 1901, the British government started the gradation of the caste among the Hindus in the Census operations.
On the other hand religion has in many cases divided the earlier cohesive society into two or three hostile groups. In the Chota Nagapur plateau, we have Hindu tribals, Christian tribals and tribals who are following their local rituals and customs. In this region, there were many cases of tensions between the Christian tribals and non-Christian tribals over the issue of conversions. The inter-religious marriages between the Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars quite common till the early 1980s. But after the deterioration of communal harmony between the Hindus and the Christians in Tamilnadu and Kanyakumari, such marriages are now rare.

According to Abdulrahim P.Vijapur, the government policy of protective discrimination regarding reservation of jobs etc. has tended to perpetuate the solidarity of the Hindu community and to prevent their conversions to other religions.[2]

Notes:

1. Village, Caste, Gender and Method - Essays in Indian Social Anthropology by Shri M.N.Srinivas, Oxford India Paperbacks, 1998, Oxford University Press, Delhi.

2. Minority Identities and the National-State, edited by D.L Sheth, Gurpreet Mahajan.

Chapter – 27

The Identity Phenomenon

According to the Hindu philosophy, truth has many facets and so has the identity of an individual. God can be reached or realized in many ways. The problem arises when we give over-importance to one identity, which conflicts with the ideology or ways of life of others. The reading of the column of followers of "the Other Religion and Persuasions" in the different census of India present an interesting picture. Many thousands have shown their language as their religion, yet many other thousands have shown their regions or their caste as their religion etc. Some have shown themselves as atheists or as non-Christians etc. It suggests that what people give more importance over other things is their identity at that particular moment. We are in our family as father or son or husband or wife etc. When we are in an organization, which becomes our identity. During the war in the Middle East, an American was asked whether he was a Christian or a Muslim and he replied that he was a tourist.

The Need for Constructing a National Identity

The Hindu culture and religion has been known for its values of tolerance. The Hindu forbearance and tolerance was seen at its best during the British period at the time of the *melas* where the Christian Missionaries used to preach in the presence of thousands of Hindu devotees and *bairagis (Vashnaivites)*. The Millenarian conviction (the period of one thousand years during which Christ will reign in person on earth) that the Kingdom of God or of Jesus would be established on earth has urged the Christian Missionaries to work for the Christianisation of all the human-beings on earth and such beliefs have led to confrontations with the people following religions other than Christianity. The Christian exclusivism resulted in the persecution of the Jews through out the medieval ages. The Old Testament, sacred to both the Jews and the Christians, proclaims the coming of the Messiah and the Jews as the chosen people of God. The Jews were not liked by the Christians and faced persecution because they did not accept Jesus as the Son of God or as the Messiah (whose coming was proclaimed in the Old Testament) and because all the chosen people of Israel or Holy Land did not embrace Christianity. During the British period the Christian Missionaries were exclusivist and the Hindus showed the virtues of tolerance. A few decades after Independence, the Christian Missionaries have started adopting some of the indigenous customs in certain areas like the Chhota Nagpur region where the Oraon Christians celebrate the Sarhul and Karma festivals while the Hindus have on many occasions shown intolerance towards the Christianity. The beginnings of the inclusivist tendencies among the Christians have been depicted in some measure in the short story 'The Heart of Robert Thakur Das' written by Indira Goswami. Robert Thakur Das, a Christian used to teach in the St. Stephens and Hindu College in New Delhi but came under a cloud of suspicion of being involved in the spying activities at the time of India's Independence. He was piqued at the way he had been treated by the Indians though he gave his entire life to the students and in a moment of anger throws a flower vase at a student who happened to visit his house at that moment and

thus he unintentionally becomes the cause of the death of the student. He, to atone his guilt, expresses his last wish that his final rites should be performed at the electric crematorium on the bank of the river Yamuna.[1]

A projection of the future growths of the religions between 2000 and 2025 published in an issue of 'The Week' magzine has shown all the religious groups except Christianity or Islam as declining. According to the figures given in *Lajja* written by Taslima Nasrin, the Hindu population has been declining continuously in Bangladesh. The population of Hindus in 1901 was 33.1% in 1941 and in 10 years after Independence it went down from 28% in 1951 to 22% in 1961 and further declined to 12.1% in 1981. The population of the Hindus in India has also shown decrease since Independence. Apart from this India cannot remain unaffected by the fundamentalist developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan etc. The statement of the Pope in New Delhi in 1999 during his visit to India that in the 1st Millennium the Christianity spread in Europe and in the second Millennium in the Africa and the Americas and the 3rd Millennium will belong to Asia. The reasons for the growth of intolerance among the Hindus are not far to seek. All this works to create a Hindu psyche that their population is decreasing both in India as well as in the neighboring countries outside India and that they have real threats to their religion from the world's two most proselytizing religions – the Islam and the Christianity. This sometimes is sufficient to whip up emotions among Hindus against the minorities. It is thus apparent that threats to secularism as enshrined in the Indian Constitution are not only from within the country but also from outside. We can meet these threats both from outside and within if we are strong and we can be strong only when we are first Indians and our other identities take a secondary place. We can be a strong nation only when we are united and when we are first Indians. The role of religion in life cannot be disregarded. Without a religious philosophy, we become more materialistic. T.N. Madan writes, "Contrary to what may be presumed, it is not religious zealots alone who contribute to fundamentalism or fanaticism, which are a misunderstanding of religion, reducing it to mere political bickering, but also the secularists who deny the very legitimacy of religion in human life and society and provoke a reaction.

T.N. Madan further writes in his book, 'Secularism and Fundamentalism in India: Modern Myths, Locked Minds', "Islam and Christianity are non-indigenous in origin, but can hardly be considered alien today. ---The task of socio-cultural reconciliation is daunting but not beyond reach. At the same time, we have to recognize, first, the limitations of an ambiguous concept of pluralism and, then, the real dangers of Hindu communalism and the insensitivity of the Hindus generally to the feelings of those who consider themselves non-Hindus. It has been noted that these non-Hindus are treated as permanent outsiders if they happen to be Christians or Muslims, or are denied a sense of separate identity if they are 'tribals' or Sikhs (see Oommen 1990: 11). Gandhi no less than Nehru was conscious of the greater harm that majority communalism might do in India though neither could be said to have approved of minority communalism. As Ashis Nandy has insightfully argued, Gandhi was the sterner foe of Hindu communalism and paid for it with his life." [2]

About the need of national unity in India, T.N. Madan writes in 'Pathways', "In India, national unity has been considered to be under the persistent attacks of fissiparous forces—notably 'casteism', 'linguism,' 'regionalism,' and 'communalism'. Here, too, rethinking of

categories is called for and the notion of national accommodation of regional communities has to supplant the rigid concept of national integration: instead of viewing the situation from the top, it has to be looked at from the bottom, that is, from the perspectives of the peoples involved".[3]

Gunnar Myrdal wrote long time back in the book (which won him Nobel Prize), 'Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Causes of Poverty in South Asian Nations' that in India, the citizens have loyalties first to themselves then to their families, then to their caste and last to their nation. We fight against each other because we lack in national feelings. One of the biggest reasons for growth of communalism is this lack of national identity in each of us. If we are united, each of us will progress and we shall become a strong nation. If we fight against each other, we all become weak and India remains a backward nation. The communal riots in India are to some extent, a legacy of the British policy of divide and rule, which they doggedly perused after the 1857 rebellion. According to the official figures of the British government given in a book written by Gyanendra Pandey, there was tremendous increase in the frequency of Hindu-Muslim communal riots after 1857. There was just one major Hindu Muslim riot between 1800 to 1870, while there were 12 major Hindu-Muslim riots between 1871 to 1918.[4] According to Ranjit Guha, 'the benefits of officially sponsored social reform seemed to have been cancelled out by the aggravation of what was believed to be officially engineered caste and communal conflict designed to keep the natives divided in order to perpetuate foreign rule.'[5] There is a strong need at present for building a national identity among the citizens of India. At present, we seem to be a highly divided society. The national identity can be built within the parameters of 1-the indigenous values of tolerance of each others ways of life and cultures, 2-the eclectic and syncretic tendencies (taking the best from the culture of others and retaining the best in one's own culture), 3- the spirit of devotionalism in religious and spiritual matters, 4-a uniform civil code which is based on the common denominator of the customs and laws of all the religious groups (without interfering in the fundamentals of any religion and without discriminating one religion against the another), 4-one language that is Hindi (and the Hindi language should be flexible enough to take the words from other languages which are in common use and thus acquire a national character) because it is spoken by the largest number of Indians, and lastly 6-the values of strong bonds in family relationships. A citizen should be first an Indian, then belonging to any religion, then to any caste, or any region and so on. Father Camille Bulcke of the Chhota Nagpur Mission was a popular figure because of his English-Hindi Dictionary and his book "Ram Katha" he was awarded Padma Bhushan in 1973 by the Government of India. According Father P.Ponette, some people among his Hindi audiences were inclined to believe that he shared his religious beliefs to which he used to say that he was not a devotee of Ram, but a devotee of Tulsi Das. He wrote an essay "The Faith of a Christian- Devotion to Hindi and Tulsi"[6]. According to many educationists of India including Father Kunnankal, Hindi should be made a national language. Mark Tully writes in 'No Full Stops in India' that the best way to destroy a people's culture and identity is to undermine its religion and language and the British established their rule in India by asserting the superiority of their religion and language in the minds of Indian intelligentsia.

About the values of tolerance, Sudhir Kakkar wrote in the India Today, The Millenium Series Vol.2: --- "Another gift of the spiritual preoccupation is tolerance. In the absence of a single

religious orthodoxy, the seekers have worn many garbs and held different, often contradictory opinions on the nature of spiritual truth and the best way to realize it. At its core, then, the Hindu mind has come to be pervaded by the idea that truth is relative, not absolute, leaving it no choice but to be tolerant of the truth of others. "We are all moving toward the same goal, if by different roads."

About the syncreticism, Kunal Ghosh writes, 'India is a vast country with diverse languages, religions, dressed, food habits etc. All these are cultural attributes. But that does not mean that she (India) has different culture in separate water-tight compartments. These really are sub-cultures with an underlying unity. These sub-cultures are in constant syncretic interaction with each other. They can be compared to different notes in a melody. The whole of the Indian culture is the melody, accompanied by harmony, to borrow from the musical terminology. However, nowadays there are loud voices in support of so-called "multiculturalism". These voices forbid syncretism between different sub-cultures. Interactions are sought to be supressed. In other words, different notes need not result in a melody. If the notes do not have a relationship among themselves they cannot produce music. Therefore, the only other thing they can produce is noise accompanied by acrimony. So the challenge before the Indian culture is the ideology of anti-syncretism, which has put on a disguise and masquerades as multiculturalism.[7]

Notes:

1. Indian Literature : Sahitya Akademi's Literary Bi-monthly, No. 131, May-June, 1989, Vol.XXXII, No.3, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

2. 'Secularism and Fundamentalism in India: Modern Myths, Locked Minds',Page 262 – 63 by T.N. Madan – Oxford India Paperbacks---1998.

3 Pathways: Appraoches to the study of society in India, Page 221 by T.N. Madan published by Oxford University Press, 1994; Oxford India Paperbacks 1995, 2nd Impression, 2000.

4. In an essay 'The Colonial Construction of 'Communalism' by Gyanendra Pandey in Subaltern Studies-VI, Page 133, Oxford India Paperbacks, Oxford University Press, 1989

5. In an essay 'Dominance without Hegemony And Its Historiography' by Ranjit Guha in Subaltern Studies-VI, Page 290, Oxford India Paperbacks, Oxford University Press, 1989

6. To Chota Nagpur with Love and Service, Page 122, edited by S.J. Peter Tete, Ranchi Jesuit Society, 1991, The Catholic Press, Ranchi.

7. Religion, Linguistics and Separatism in North – East India, Kunal Ghosh -- Mainstream ----September 25, 1999—Dr. Kunal Ghosh is a Professor, Aerospace Engineering department IIT, Kanpur.

Chapter – 28

The Essence of all Religion is Love for Humanity [1]

George Meredith wrote, "No villain need be! Passions spin the plot. We are betrayed by what is false within." According to Volney, 'the source of his calamities----- resides within Man himself; he carries it in his heart'.
A communal situation or riot means use of violence on religious lines while the essence of all religious preaching is love and non-violence. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains prayers to God to lead from death to immortality:
Lead me from the unreal to the real
Lead me from darkness to light.
Lead me from death to immortality.
According to the Dhammapad, the teaching is to abstain from killing:
"I undertake observe the rule to abstain from taking life;
Winning, one engenders enmity.
Miserably sleeps the defeated.
The one at peace sleeps pleasantly,
Having abandoned victory and defeat.
What is hateful unto you,
Do not do unto your neighbor.
The rest is commentary-
Now go and study.
According to Christianity: Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
You shall not murder.
Love one's neighbor as oneself.
According to the preaching of Jesus Christ one should love God and one should love human beings and should not take revenge but rather forgive.

The teachings of Jainism and Buddhism also stress on the values of love and non-violence. Hindus worship all forms of life. That is why there is a stress on vegetarianism in Hindu religion. Some of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu are in the animal forms like tortoise, man-lion, etc. The ten incarnations match to some extent to the Darwinian Theory of Evolution. The caste system may also have its origin in vegetarianism and perhaps in the beginning, the fishermen and the castes and the tribes eating flesh were regarded as low castes. Therefore, the original concepts of Hindu religion centered on the love and respect for all life forms. Love for all human beings is central to the Christian ideology.

No body gains in such situations, no group wins, nobody is able to make a point. The humanity as a whole suffers. The area suffers both in respect of communal harmony as well as in regard to trade and industry.

Through Peace Committee meetings, we can stress the element of love as contained in all the religions. The Wadhwa Commission has recommended that to avoid any distrust among the

different communities and to bring in communal harmony, it is necessary that at the school level itself, children are taught components of all religious faiths making available to them treasure of all faiths.

The seeds of peace and love are to be sown in the areas, which get communally surcharged. All the religions preach love and compassion. We see tensions in the tribal areas where conversions and re-conversions are taking place. It shows that these conversions or re-conversions are not being done for religious purposes but rather for political purposes or merely to impose one's image or ideology on others or are being imperfectly done.
India was in far worse situations at the time of Independence and still we forged ahead.

Notes:

1. Arnold Toynbee

Chapter – 29

Areas of the Hindu- Christian problem:

Some areas of the country are from progressive than the rest; we had fewer problems in the progressive rural areas than in the rest of the areas. Communal incidents between the Hindus and Christians can be categorized into four regions namely:

1) The Tribal areas of central India:

The tribal areas of Central India extending from Chhota Nagpur plateau, and South Orissa to Bhil dominated areas of Madhya Pradesh and South Gujarat had maximum number of communal incidents between Hindus and Christians during the last four years. During the two decades, we have seen many incidents in the districts of Chhota Nagpur plateau (mostly in Jharkhand) and in certain districts of South Orissa. The communal incidents in South Gujarat and Western Madhya Pradesh are a recent development. Wherever, the tribes have been almost completely assimilated to Hinduism, we have seen very few incidents. But areas which remained cut-off from the civilization and where tribal people still followed their primitive ways, there has been a fierce competition between the different denominations of Christianity in the areas of Chhota Nagpur plateau in the hill regions of South Orissa. With the entry of Hindu Missionaries into these regions, the tensions started building up. We have witnessed this in district Kandhmals, district Gumla (now district Shimdega) and quite recently the district Dangs in South Gujarat. A common feature of these regions is under development and the lack of educational institutions. In Madhya Pradesh (Now Chattisgarh) we had seen very few tensions in the tribal areas as the tribal welfare department under the Madhya Pradesh Government looked after the welfare of tribal people and the schools run by government or by V.K.A complete in quality of education with Christian Missionaries run schools.
The tribal people of these regions are simple and gullible. After the activities of Hindu Missionaries in these regions, the rate of conversion to Christianity has slowed down. There has been many incidents of attacks on prayer halls etc., particularly in district Kandhmals and the Dangs.

2) North India:

The States of North India like Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab have only a negligible percentage of tribal people. In U.P. the tribal population is only in some areas on the border of Nepal and in district Sonbhadra bordering Chattisgarh and Jharkhand.

In certain regions of North India like Western Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, there is only a microscopic presence of Christians but the intolerance to Christian Missionaries and their institutions among the Hindus has been most severe. We have seen many incidents of attacks on the Christian institutions in the different districts of Western U.P during the last decade and especially during the last 2 – 3 years. There was a case of rape of nuns in Garjaula in

1990. These areas have been most intolerant of Christian ideology since the 19th Century during the British period. The priests and the nuns working in these areas are generally from the South India or the Chhota Nagpur plateau and many of them are ignorant of the culture of North India, which sometimes leads to problems. Though hardly any conversions are taking place in the Missionaries run institutions of North India but there have been several incidents. There were very few incidents in Punjab. This absence of intolerance of the inhabitants of Punjab particularly, the Sikhs can be traced back to the 19th Century when there were many *Shuddhi* campaigns by Arya Samaj to re-convert and purify not only the Christian converts but also those Hindus, who had converted to Islam or Sikhism and the Sikhs and the British government sometimes helped each other to face the challenge of the Arya Samajis.[1]

In 1971, inUttar Pradesh 88.64% of the total Hindu population lived in the rural areas, while the corresponding figure in 1991 became 83.76%.[2] The similar figures for the Christians in 1971 and 1991 were 43.52% and 38.25% respectively[3]. This shows that in Uttar Pradesh the fall in the rural population of the Christians has been much sharper, in fact almost double, as compared to the decline in the rural population of the Hindus. The possible reasons for this migration to cities among the Christians might be the job opportunities in the urban areas and the sense of insecurity among the Christians in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh, though most of the conversions take place in the villages.

3. South India:

The district Kanyakumari of Tamilnadu has seen the worst-ever Hindu Christian riots in independent India. Twenty-one people lost their lives just during a period of 16 days in March 1982. The Hindu-Christian riots of 1980s have created some animosity between the Hindu Nadars and the Christian Nadars in the districts of South Tamilnadu. Earlier both the communities use to go to each other's religious places and used to participate in each other's festivals and the marriages between them were common. The growth of Hindu-Christian tensions in the South can be traced back to conversions of lower caste people to Islam in Meenakshipuram inTamilnadu and the subsequent activities of Hindu organizations. During the last 2 – 3 years there have been many cases of damage/destruction of Christian prayer halls in Tamilnadu and there have been several communal incidents in Kanyakumari district till the early 1990s. In the states of Karnataka also there have been cases of clashes between Hindus and Christians, mostly over the issue of conversions. In Andhra Pradesh fewer incidents have been reported from the districts where there is sizable Christian population like West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Kurnool and Ongole

4. North-East

In the North-East, the States of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya are predominantly Christian. The Church has tried to alienate the tribal people of North-East from the Assamese or Bengalese culture and languages and thus helped in creating separate nationalities in certain tribes of the North-East. This has led to tensions and cultural separation between them. Apart from this the neglect of the aspirations and the development of the tribal people and their exploitation in the form of corruption in bureaucracy etc., by the Assamese or Bengalis have also contributed to this alienation from the Bengali or Assamese

culture or language. Quite recently, insurgents in Tripura kidnapped a few RSS men. The certain underground outfits of Tripura like NLFT also threatened the tribal people not to celebrate Hindu festivals. Despite all this, the tensions among the people of the North-East are more of inter-ethnic nature than of communal, though, some insurgent organizations are pro-Christian. Lots of conversions took place in the States particularly in the Nagaland, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh even after Independence. According to F.S.DOWNS, the first American Baptist Mission stations in the North-East India were not established for the purpose of evangelizing the peoples of that area but as strategic outposts in a campaign to evangelize the Shan tribes of Northern Burma and Southern China[4]. There was at least one case in which, the involvement of a Christian Missionary was found in the separatist activities in the North-East. At present, the most serious problem in the North-East is not communal but is of insurgency.

Notes:

1. Gurupreet and also pages 52, 53 Copley.
2. 1971 & 1991 Census.
3. Ibid.
4. The Mighty Works of God by F.S Downs, published by the Christian Literature Centre, Guwahati, 1971.

Chapter – 30

Tensions in the Tribal areas:

The largest concentration of tribal people anywhere in the world except perhaps Africa, is in India. The population of tribal people in India is 5.36% to the total population of India.[1] The tribal societies may be broadly classified as (1) Primitive tribes (2) Tribes in transition:-(3) Assimilated tribes. In regard to the areas tribes where tribes have been assimilated to Hinduism, we find no tensions. Even among the primitive tribes where there is no presence of outsiders whether Missionaries or others, we have witnessed no communal incidents. It is only in the third category of the tribes in transition that we see maximum tensions. The tribal people of these areas have been cut-off from civilization because no roads existed there and now these areas have been thrown open to outsiders.

During the recent past, we have seen many incidents between Hindus and Christians or between Christian and followers of tribal religion in the tribal regions of central India. Many of the incidents of communal nature between the Hindus and the Christians took place during the weekly *haats* (markets) in the tribal areas. The police must make arrangements during the weekly *haats* so that no untoward incident takes place.

About 75% population of the total tribal population is in the in the tribal belt of Central India comprising of Jharkhand (Undivided Bihar 13.94%), Orissa (14%), Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh (Undivided Madhya Pradesh 22.13%), Maharashtra (7.94%), Gujarat (9.13%), and Rajasthan (7.79%).[2]

The climate of these areas is generally unhealthy and many people die of cerebral malaria particularly, in the districts of South Orissa. There are vacancies in government departments as the officials are generally unwilling to serve in these areas. Most of the tribal people of India affirmed their faith in the Indian national movement and in the Indian leadership after the Independence.

Most of the incidents have been reported from the areas, which had been quite recently inaccessible and where no religious or social reform movements have taken place. People of certain tribal societies in many areas of the tribal belt still believe in spirits and ghosts, and much of their money is spent on rituals to appease the spirits. Most of the people belonging to primitive tribal societies are in constant fear of spirits (*Bhut, and Pisach etc.)*. The prayers to the Christ or the recitation of *Hanuman Chalisa* dispel such fears of spirits and ghosts and this too may be one of the reasons why they embrace Christianity or Hinduism. They are very simple and gullible and generally don't know even about the use of money. These people have been exploited from outsiders and because of their drinking habits and expenses on the performance of rituals etc., they generally get into indebtedness and live far below the poverty line. Even after 50 years of Independence, the fruits of development and planning of government schemes and projects have not reached them.

During the Census of 1951 – 1961, most of the tribals showed themselves as Hindus. But afterwards they got disillusioned with the successive governments. A large number of tribal populations of Gumla, Ranchi, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj are now showing themselves as followers of their tribal religions rather than as Hindus. Many provisions were made in the Indian Constitution for the development of the tribal people.

The first and foremost principle for the officials working in these areas is to understand these people and to reach them with love and sympathy.

But the way the government and the bureaucracy have functioned, the economic condition of tribal people of these most interior areas have further deteriorated.

Jawaharlal Nehru once expressed the need to approach the tibal people with sympathy and love, " Their culture soil has been constantly eroded by the dangerous floods of Christianity and Hinduism. The Santhal, Munda, Gond, Naga and the rest may maintain their own culture and identity and yet be an integral part of then Indian nation and society. Our country abounds in many heterogeneous cultural patterns and social groups. It is only integration, and that can be done only by allowing maximum freedom to the different---- "We must approach the tribal people with affection and friendliness and come to them as a liberating force. We must let them feel that we come to give and not to take something away from them. That is the kind of psychological integration India needs."

It is thus apparent that the tensions that have been developing in these regions cannot be resolved by policing alone. In fact, the biggest factor for tensions in these areas have been the under-development of these people who sometimes get attracted to Christianity or Naxalite ideologies and may sometimes be incited to frenzied behaviour by the outsiders whether Hindus or Christians or their missionaries.

The Wadhwa Commission in its report has stressed that the development of tribal areas should be accelerated. The Wadhwa Commission has further recommended that the IPS and IAS Officers who are on the cadre of Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, should be taught about the tribals, their culture, customs etc. during the training in their respective Academies.

Most of the incidents of violence of communal nature between Hindu-Christian were perpetrated with bows, arrows and *tangi* etc., on a very few occasions was the firearms used. In the murder of Arul Doss, the bows and arrows were used. The use of modern weapons like guns, and bombs etc. has been very rare among the tribal people. Most of the problems have taken place in the rural areas and that too in the most interior areas which generally are hilly and forested areas. The problems of policing in forest and hilly areas are quite different from the policing in urban areas or policing in plain areas. In most of these areas, the population is sparsely distributed and a policeman has to cover a lot of area. During the rainy season, some of these areas get cut-off because of floods in rivers and it becomes quite difficult and takes very long for police to reach these areas. For meeting these situations, it is necessary that the number of police stations and outposts in these areas should be increased and the communication network should be strengthened and modernized and more repeater stations should be opened because of the hilly terrain. These districts should be provided with more

wireless fitted vehicles Even in areas dominated by Bhils in western Madhya Pradesh or eastern or southern Gujarat, there have been many occasions when bows and arrows were used by Bhils and other tribes.

Some of the tribes in India were beefeaters but after getting sanskritized, most of the tribal people of Central India gave it up. In certain interior areas some of the primitive tribes might still be taking beef. In certain Tribal Ashram Hostels, the tribal students have sometimes protested against the vegetarian diet. Even Swami Aseemanand was reported opposing it. Cow is a sacred animal for the Hindus. The communal tension may develop if some converted Christians slaughter a cow or eat beef. In the districts Jashpur they were cases of cow slaughter during the Christmas celebrations in the past but during the last two-three years, no such case has been reported. Cow slaughter is a very sensitive issue as it hurts the religious feelings of Hindus. In a recent case, an Indian woman was awarded a token compensation of $ 6,000 from a British Health Authority for inserting a cartilage taken from a cow into her nose. She claimed that the operation offended her religion.[3] The killing of a cow in full view of protesting Hindus has been held an offence under Section 298 IPC and not under Section 295 IPC.

In the tribal areas, sometimes the problem arises because of the departure or dispute over the community or communal rights. In the tribal societies, many of the things are observed or held in common. The tribal people were earlier mostly forest dwellers and the concepts of private ownership were not prevalent among them. In certain areas, they still enjoy these communal rights. A trouble arose in the Kandhmals when the Christian tribals felt that the non-Christian tribals before their arrival did the ceremony of buffalo sacrifice. In district Sahebganj in Jharkhand, there was a resistance to the auction of a pond by SDM to a private person where the tribal people used to fish as a community right. The police opened fire against the agitating mob in the early 1980s killing Father Murmu.

The areas like Dangs, the districts of South Orissa and Jhabua etc. have been cut-off from the main civilization and there was hardly any communication (road etc.) in these areas. There were no reform movements in these areas from within the community or tribes living there. For example, in case of Bhils, there have been such religious / cultural /social reform movements in the East Gujarat under Thakkar Bapa and other leaders and also among the Bhils living in Rajasthan etc., but there were no reform movements etc., in the Dangs as well as in the Bhil areas around Jhabua, Dhar etc. and such tribal people who have seen no reform movements could be easily exploited or incited by outsiders including the religious missionaries and this sometimes gives rise to tensions within the people or society of the same tribe/community living in the same area. The tribal society has now been in some areas divided into two or three groups like Hindus, Christians or those following their tribal ritual and customs. This sort of division of an earlier cohesive society into two or three antagonistic and hostile groups also leads to tensions.

In the Chota Nagpur region we still have followers of tribal religions, and Christians have started adopting certain tribal rituals etc. to attract the tribal people to their fold.

In the districts Gumla, Ranchi, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum of Chhota Nagpur and district Mayurbhanj of Orissa there are tensions between Christians and followers of tribal religions like *Sarna* etc. In these regions, the attempts of conversions of Christian Missionaries are opposed both by the Hindu Missionaries as well as by the tribals following

tribal rituals. The hold of tribal rituals in these areas is strongest. One of the reasons for the murder of Staines and Arul Doss in districts Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj was over departure from the performance of tribal rituals by the converted Christians. There has been a reassertion of tribal identity in these regions, the Oraon Christians celebrate the Karma and Sarhul festivals and practice community endogamy and clan exogamy. Tension was noticed in district Sarguja over the alleged placing of a Christian symbol side by side with the Sarna symbol during a Sarhul festival. Some Christian Missionaries in the Dangs complained of putting the idols of Hanuman in the tribal places of worship. Randhir Khare, a protagonist of certain tribal culture and customs (in his book 'The Dangs – Journeys into the Heartland') finds a renovated tribal Devi temple when he visits the Dangs after the incidents of December 1998 and thinks that it has been appropriated [4] after the activities of the Hindu Missionaries. He express this fear and surprise to his friend, the Bhagat of the temple who does not agree with him and says that the renovation and the fresh construction was done to save the *murti* (idol) of the Devi.

Most of the areas of South Orissa were Agency areas under a Political Agent till Independence and no development took place and rebellions were crushed with strong hand. Some of these areas, which are outside the influence of Naxalism ideology, are at present fertile and virgin grounds for conversions and have seen lot of incidents and tensions between Hindus and Christians. Certain regions of districts Kandhmals, Gajapati, Rayagada and Koraput fall in this category

Sometimes there are different patterns or intensity of communal tensions between the Hindus and the Christians as well as in regard to the conversions to Christianity as we enter into the areas of a different state though adjacent to it. For example, only 0.28% of the Saoras population in Andhra Pradesh follows Christianity, while in the adjoining areas of Orissa the percentage of Christians among the Saora community is 7%[5]. Similarly, we saw very few incidents in the districts of Jashpur, Sarguja and Raigarh of Northern Chattisgarh, while in the adjoining areas of district Sundergarh in Orissa and in the areas of district Shimdega and Gumla in Jharkhand there were comparatively many incidents of communal nature between the Hindus and the Christians or between the followers of the tribal religions and the Christians. The possible reasons for this change across the boundaries of different states might be the steps taken by the concerning governments towards the welfare of the tribal people or the fact of the areas being under Naxalite influence or the protective measures of the different governments for example in the form of reservation policy in regard to the Scheduled Tribe or Scheduled Caste people.

The British entry to the tribal areas of Chhota Nagpur was resented and there were disturbances in 1789, 1801, 1807 and 1808, which had to be put down with the help of the armed forces. In 1807 the Court of Directors of the East India Company made a decision that "the knowledge of the tribal people would be of great use in the future administration of the country[6]." Since then several anthropologist-administrators, like Risley, Thurston, Dalton, Grigson, Gurdon, Russell, Hutton and others, wee deputed from time to time by the British Government to prepare handbooks, gazetteers and monographs on the tribes and castes of India. These studies were primarily intended to help the administration[7].

The British Government opened these tribal areas to the civilization by making roads etc., for the purpose of the timber required in shipbuilding and for railway sleepers and for the purpose of collecting the land revenue in these areas and thus the simple and the gullible people were subjected to exploitation by landlords and *sahukars* etc. Later on the British Government came up with the legislation of Scheduled Districts Act in 1874 for the protection of the tribal people against exploitation by outsiders. But the Christian Missionaries carried on their activities in an uninterrupted manner.

The biggest factor for tribal unrest has been the land issue. It was because of the land issue that Father Lievens got many tribals converted to Christianity during the later half of the 19th Century. Recently there have been many firings when tribal people have resisted the acquisition of their lands by government for different projects. Three people died in Rayagada and some in Ranchi during the year 2000. There were seven deaths in police firing in district Gajapati when tribal people forcibly tried to take possession of the land belonging to Pano Christians. Five adivasis were killed in police firing in November, 2001 in District Navrangpur in Orissa about disputes over lands between Adivasis and Bengalis. Some of the Christian institutions, some non-tribal activists and militant political radicals espouse the cause of the tribal people. B.K. Roy Burman, a noted Gandhian and anthropologist reported in the Mainstream Magazine that, In 1985, a Committee of Government of India under his Chairmanship found that in some parts of the country hardly one per cent of the land under occupation of the tribal peoples for centuries was recorded in their favour during the land survey and settlement operation[8].

It seems necessary that the land settlement work should be given utmost priority by district administration in the districts of South Orissa. Police cannot do much in regard to tensions, which are related to land.

The Land issue has been a cause for conversions as well as for Hindu-Christian or converted-non-converted tribals tensions in the past as well as at present particularly in the districts of South Orissa. There are many tensions between the tribal people belonging to Saora or Kandha tribes on the one hand and the Scheduled Caste Panos on the other hand in the districts of Kandhmals, Gajapati and Rayagada

In January and February 1999, a few Hindus belonging to Scheduled Caste or backward classes got converted to Buddhism and Christianity as a symbol protest against the acquisition of their lands for the headquarters of the newly created district of Chitrakoot.
Many of the areas, which have recently witnessed Hindu-Christian tensions and where conversions to Christianity have taken place, are adjacent to the Naxalite affected areas. The tensions between the Hindus and Christians and the conversions to Christianity in the recent past have been noticed from the areas of South Orissa, South Jharkhand and North Chattisgarh. The areas adjacent to these regions i.e. Eastern Jharkhand, Northern Andhra Pradesh, Western Maharashtra and Southern Chattisgarh are affected with Naxalite activities. The districts of South Orissa where we had lot of Hindu-Christian problems border the Naxalite affected areas of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa. Similarly, many districts of the Chhota Nagpur plateau have also seen Hindu – Christian tensions and such areas of

communal sensitivity are adjacent to Naxalite affected areas. But in the Naxalite affected areas, the Hindu or Christian Missionaries are generally not operating. About such areas, Shri B.K Roy Burman (who is on the faculty of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi) writes in Mainstream February 13, 1999 issue:

"It is to be noted that in the areas in East and Central India under the sway of political militancy, there had not been much increase in the adoption of Christianity by the tribal peoples till 1991. In fact, as already indicated at some phase, there had been decline in affiliation to both Hinduism and Christianity. In these areas, self-assertion of the tribal peoples was more marked"[9]. The areas where violence existed only in rituals, we now see a culture of violence being propagated. In North Orissa where witchcraft exited, we now a people like Dara Singh spreading the culture of brigandage. In South Orissa where violence existed only in the occasional cases of human sacrifice (*meria*), we now see the cases of mutual hatred and destruction of religious places. In the North-East where headhunting prevailed, we now have large-scale violence in the form of insurgency.

The responsibility and the task of bringing the tribal people of the most interior areas into the mainstream of India rests on the state governments and district administration. Lots of provisions have been made in the Indian Constitution for the welfare of the tribal people. But after Independence their condition has become from bad to worse and they have many grievances and disillusionments. If the religious leaders belonging to any community in the garb of bringing them into the mainstream and instead of ministering to their religious needs, spread the venom and mutual hatred or encourage the separatist tendencies among them, there are enough provisions in the laws which can be used by the police officers to deal with them.

During his address to the senior police officers at the DGPs/IGPs Conference in 1999, Shri. A.B Vajpayee, Prime Minister of India said, "The dignity of the poorest of the poor, the rights of Dalits and tribals and the honour of the weakest of our land can be protected and upheld by government if the police are alert, active and firm in the discharge of their duty."

Notes:

1. Tribal life in India, editors Dvendra Thakur and D.N. Thakur, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995.
2. Ibid.
3. Deccan Chronicle 25th July 2000.
4. The Dangs 'Journey into the Heartland – Randhir Khare, Pages 318 – 19, Harper Collins Publishers India, 2000.
5. People of India, National Series, Vol. III, Scheduled Tribes, Pages 1053-54., an Anthropolotical Survey of India, Oxford University Press.
6. Tribal life in India, editors Dvendra Thakur and D.N. Thakur, Deep and Deep Publications, New Delhi, 1995.
7. Ibid.
8. Mainstream, February 13, 1999 issue, Shri B.K Roy Burman (who is on the faculty of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi).
9. Ibid.

Chapter – 31
Re-assertion of Tribal Identity

The following table shows the state-wise percentage of the followers of "other religions and persuasions" most of which are tribal religions from 1951 to 1991:-

STATE-WISE PERCENTAGE OF THE FOLLOWERS OF 'OTHER RELIGIONS AND PERSUASIONS' IN DIFFERENT STATES OF INDIA

Census Year	India	Bih-ar	West Ben-gal	Oris-sa	Megh-Alaya	Mani-pur	Mizo-ram	Naga-land	Aruna-chal Prad-esh	Sikkim
1951	.52	2.25	.44	.02	---	---	---	---	---	---
1961	.37	1.63	.11	.01	42.93	---	---	37.23	---	---
1971	.34	1.73	.44	.42	31.45	7.75	---	20.94	63.46	---
1981	.42	1.69	.48	1.04	25.71	2.50	.32	3.59	51.6	.63
1991	.38	1.67	.67	1.26	16.82	.77	.27	.48	36.22	.09

Table : 10

It is clear from a perusal of the above table that while in the states of North-East like Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim the percentage of the followers of 'other religions and persuasions' (mostly tribal religions) is fast declining since 1961. On the other hand their population in Bihar has almost stabilized since 1961 and in West Bengal and Orissa it has shown gradual increase since 1961 though there was a decline during the decade 1951-61.

The following table shows the change in the complexion of the growth of some of the important 'other religions and persuasions' in India from 1971 to 1991.

	1971	1981	1991
Doni Polo/Sidonyi Polo	*	**222481**	**279450**
Gondi	*	127926	67111
Khasi	*	148437	111750
Santal	*	32252	23645
Sari Dharma	**161992**	**221991**	**380007**
Songsarek	*	127201	94846

Swarna	888787	1391178	1820468
Zorostrians	*	71630	76382
Non Christian	*	25985	9615

Table : 11

Denotes that data are not available.

The above table shows the growth of the important 'other religions and persuasions' in India. In the Census tables of different Census years of India, all the followers of religions other than Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism have been clubbed together and put in the category of 'Other Religions and Persuasions'. Out of these 'other religions and persuasions', most of the religions except Zorostrianism are tribal religions. The perusal of the above table indicates that except the Doni Polo, Sari Dharma and Swarna (or Sarna) religion, which have shown gradual increase, all the other tribal religions are showing steep decline during the last two-three decades before 1991.

In Orissa, the percentage of tribals returning their religion as Christianity was 2.46 in 1961, 4.31 in 1971 and 5.52 in 1981. More spectacular was the rise in the percentage of tribal peoples reporting to be followers of religions other than Hinduism and Christianity. In 1961 only 0.03 per cent of the tribals were reported to belong to this category, in 1971 the figure went up to 1.81 but by 1981 there was a quantum jump to 4.83 per cent.

The quantum jump in the tribal peoples claiming other than Hinduism and Christianity as their religion is, however, most marked in West Bengal.

Another feature to be noted is that where there has been marginal increase in affiliation to Christianity there has been more spectacular increase in the claim to belong to 'other religions' which as already mentioned, are mostly traditional religions of the concerned tribes.

The Hos of Orissa give a very different but significant picture. In 1961 the claimants of other than Hindu and Christian religions constituted zero per cent; in 1971, they were 12.79 per cent and in 1981 they further rose to 17.63 per cent. While there was a marginal percentage rise of the followers of Christianity (0.02 per cent, 0.44 per cent and 0.87 per cent in 1961, 1971 and 1981 respectively) there was a very visible decline in the percentage of those who claimed to be Hindus.

The Santals present still another picture. In Bihar, the percentage of Christians increased among them from 1.78 in 1961 to 3.17 in 1981. At the same the percentage of claimants of 'other religions' also went up in successive censuses. It was 6.74 per cent in 1961, 11.74 per cent in 1971 and 14.08 per cent in 1981. The percentage of Hindus showed marked decline: 91.47 per cent in 1961, 85.31 per cent in 1971 and 82.75 per cent in 1981.

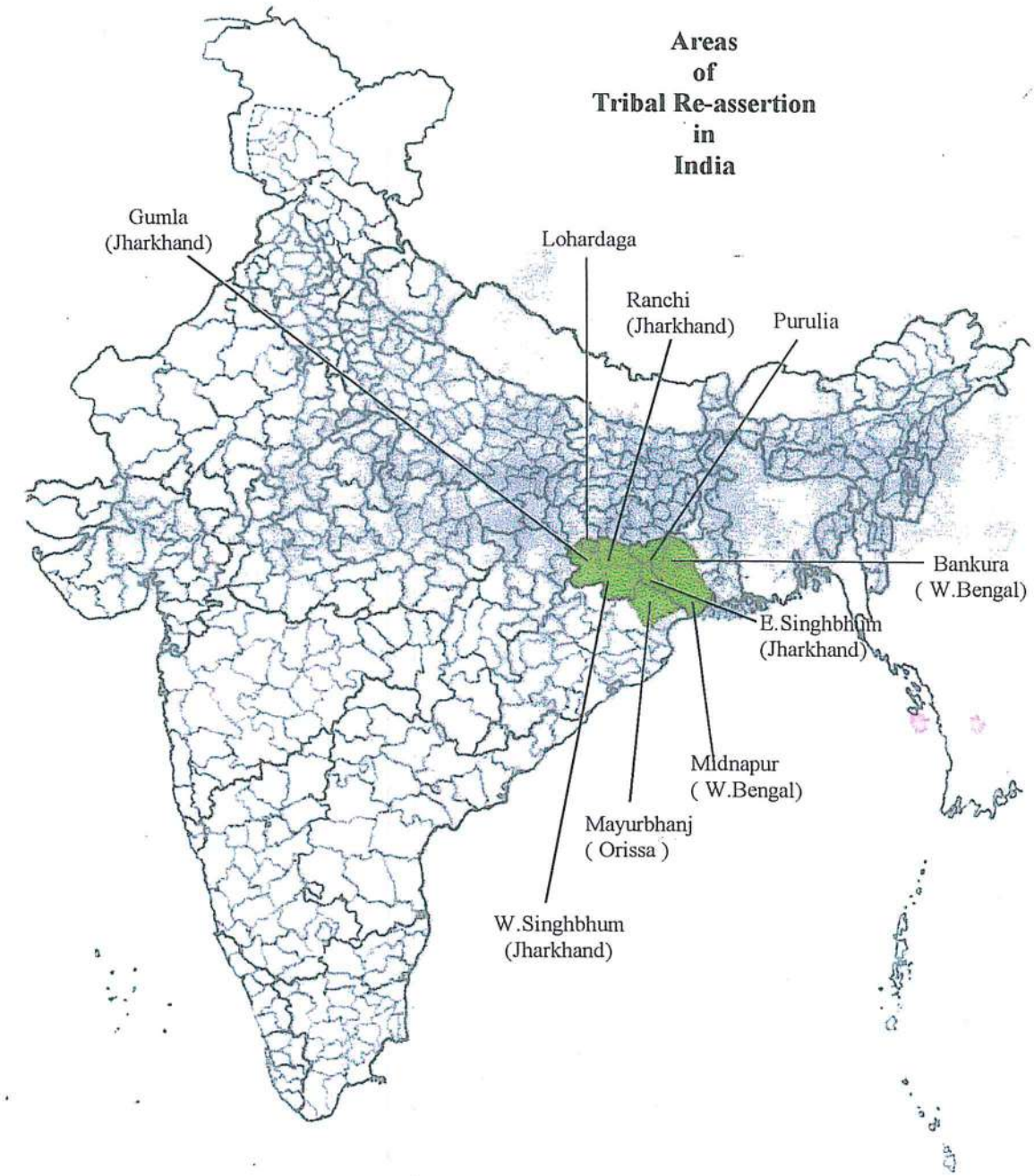
In Orissa, the trend among the Santals was startlingly different in magnitude, though not in pattern. While percentages of Christians showed a marginal rise in successive censues (0.01 per cent in 1961, 0.07 per cent in 1971 and 0.35 per cent in 1981), the percentages of the claimants of other religions went up to a heady height – from the base of 0.34 per cent in 1961 to 13.49 per cent in 1971 and 46.23 per cent in 1981. It was not Christianity, but the assertion of the distinct identity of the Santals that accounted for the decline of the Hindu identity in this tribe during the decades under scrutiny. In 1961 as many as 99.61 per cent of the Santals reported themselves as Hindus, in 1971 the number came down to 86.48 per cent and in 1981 it crashed to 53.41 per cent.

On the basis of above figures and data Shri B.K. Roy Burman writes, 'Taking an overall view, it is obvious that a surge of identity assertion is taking place among the tribes all over India. ----- in 1960s and onwards, Christianity has made a halting progress. The decline in the hold of Hinduism, in so far as the identity marker by name is concerned, is in many cases related to a greater extent to the assertion of a distinct identity by the tribal peoples than to their conversion to Christianity. To say this does not mean that no conversion to Christianity is taking place. There might also be cases of inducement. But if one considers the various forces operating at the ground levels it would be difficult to agree that inducement or coercion is a major factor.''

The most of the followers of the Swarna or Sarna Dharma are from the Munda, Ho, Santhal tribes and they speak an Austro-Asiatic dialect belonging to the Mundari group of language.

According to the 1991 Census nine districts of three states of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Orissa namely, Mayurbhanj (Orissa), Gumla, Pashchimi Singhbhum, Purvi Singhbhum, Ranchi and Lohardaga (all in Jharkhand), Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia (all in West Bengal) contain 2179289 followers of "Other religions and persuasions" which is 66.66% of their total followers of 'other religions and persuasions' (3269355) in India. Apart from this as the other figures of different states of India show, the number of the followers of "other religions and persuasions" in the North-East is fast dwindling. However, there is a re-assertion of tribal identity in the above nine districts of Bihar (now all the concerning districts form part of Jharkhand), Orissa and West Bengal and their population in these districts has almost stabilized or in certain districts like Mayurbhanj in Orissa and in the above three districts of West Bengal have shown steady increase during the last decades since 1961. Most of the followers of 'other religions and persuasions' in district Mayurbhanj (Orisa), Gumla, Pachimi Singhbhum, Purvi Singhbhum, Ranchi and Lohardaga follow Swarna or Sarna religion while in the above three districts of West Bengal most of them follow Sari Dharma (True Religion) and in Arunachal Pradesh most of the followers of 'other religions and persuasions' belong to Doni Polo/Sidoni Polo (Sun-Moon) religion. The percentage of the followers of 'other religions and persuasions' in India was lowest in the Census years of 1961 and 1971.

MAP



Legend:

Areas showing re-assertion of tribal identity

MAP

Closely linked with the phenomenon of re-assertion of tribal identity in the above nine districts of Jharkhand, Orissa and West Bengal is the *diku* factor in these areas.

The term diku probably dates back to the last quarter of the seventeenth century, when the jagirdari system was introduced in the Chota Nagpur plateau. It however assumed a direct political relevance under colonialism. In almost all the local tribal languages, diku signified something more than the ethnic distinctiveness of plains-people' or 'foreigner' and Hindu'. According to Ranajit Guha, the term had 'a meaning which indicated at the same time both the ethnic and the class aspects of the exploitation of the peasantry of these regions'. By the mid nineteenth century the diku had come to be deeply hated as the natural enemy of all the adivasi peoples. In folklore and popular consciousness the dikus were variously described as looters, troublemakers and deceivers. As Carstairs observed, 'The Dikku personifies all the plagues—the ousting cultivator, the usurer, the policeman, the process-server, and the rent-collector—parasites all'. During the Oteli ceremony among the Hos of Chota Nagpur the priest would chant, 'We will kill the witches, the snakes and the dikus'. Among the Santals a proverb expressed the deep hatred colourfully: 'A diku friend is like a thorn fence'. [1]

Birsa spread his own religious faith with new rules 'to over come the evil influence of Hindu and Christian religions and spread the word that he had received this new religion of his from the chief deity of the Mundas, Sing Bonga himself.' [2]

But sometimes some tribal movements ran counter to this assertion of tribal identity and aimed at Hinduization or Sanskritization to enhance their social status in the Hindu society. This seems to reflect a fundamental tension without tribal culture since the late nineteenth century. There has no doubt been a continuous and strongly articulated sense of hostility to the outsider. An awareness of their vulnerability to the tricks of the *dikus* had fuelled the great rebellion of 1855 and this perspective was indicated in the songs supposedly sung by its leaders, Sido and Kanho, 'We will kill and make an end of all the Deko, rule ourselves, and whoever does not listen, show him a sword'. But this perspective, however full of resentment, also shows an equally strong awareness of diku power, defeatism about prospects of a better deal and a deeply negative self-image. The sense of defeatism was accentuated by the failure of the great tribal rebellions of the nineteenth century. The self-confidence of the autochthonous population broke down to make way for conversion to Christianity or Hinduism on a large scale and a revision of tribal custom in favour of a widespread sanskritizing campaign among Kols, Oraons, Mundas and Santals. It is significant that from the 1870s all over the Santal Parganas, many Santals declared themselves as Safa Hor (Pure Men), gave up aboriginal ritual and offered puja to Durga or Kali after the manner of the Hindus.

The 1926 and 1932 phases of the movement launched by Jitu Santal of Malda in West Bengal, seemed, at least on the surface, to amount to a rejection of the Santal identity in an endeavour to raise their status through integration with the same Hindu society that had always oppressed them. In 1936, a huge Santal procession went up to the Durgasthan at Dumka and claimed Hindu status on the ground that their earliest ancestors had helped Ram against Ravana: 'Sri Ram used bows and arrow as we do. Shri Krishna was dark like us and played on the flute and tended cattle as we do. Why are we not Hindus? We are'. This again

seemed, at least on the surface, to be the final surrender to the diku, an abdication of cultural autonomy and self-identity. Malda Santals too formed a part of this general trend. Conversion to Christianity began in the 1910s, but was confined to a few small villages. A Christian Santal school teacher asserted that Jitu's 'agitation against Christians also includes Mussalmans and Santals who have not given up hens and pigs'. The aspect of tribal culture that came under repeated attack in Jitu's preaching was the custom of keeping pigs and fowl, considered unclean by caste Hindus. 'We must kill all hens, pigs and Mussalmans', reported a Santal. Rumours circulated threatening dire consequences if this injunction was disobeyed. The 'other' that defined the subaltern's self-consciousness need not then only be the elite groups exerting dominance; it may equally be the classes and groups that lie even lower in the hierarchy, and the striving to maintain a distance from them may be the most important content of his self-image and self-respect. The interesting aspect of such internalization seems to be the intermeshing of apparently contradictory social and political strands: while the attitude towards Christians and Muslims certainly indicated the influence of Hindu communal organizations.[3]

It is thus apparent that the re-assertion of tribal identity in the above region is a manifestation of the diku factor as explained above and which signifies their revolt and alienation to all outsiders whether Hindus or Christians who they think had exploited them but sometimes there have been movements among the tribal people for Sanskritization. David Hardiman writes about the Devi movement in Vyara taluka of Surat District, quite close to the Dangs in Gujarat, 'The Devi commanded the adivasis not to become Christians. Vyara was a center for missionary activities.[4] Behind the attacks on prayer halls of converted adivasi Christians by non-converted adivasis of Dangs since 1998, there might be a hidden desire/effort for a better social status among the Hindu Society. While on the other hand, one of the reasons for the killings of Christian Missionaries, Arul Doss and Stains in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar respectively in Orissa during 1999, was departure of converted Christian tribals from the tribal traditions and thus the element of diku factor might have played some role in these incidents. The district- wise percentage of the followers of tribal religion, mostly Sarna religion in Orrisa is as follows: Mayurbhanj 6.13% of the total population of the district; Sundergarh .32%; Keonjhar .07%.

In the above regions where the re-assertion of tribal identity has been manifesting itself since 1961, there have also been contrary movements in the form of adoption of Christianity and Hindu rituals and traditions.

As we have seen above in the state-wise analysis of the incidents in Jharkhand State (pages 55 to 61 of the report) at least three incidents out of 15 were the nature of communal tensions between followers of Christianity and followers of tribal religion i.e. Sarna religion. Similarly in the above state of Jharkhand, there were 6 out of 14 cases of tensions because of conversions of tribals following Sarna religion to Christianity. This needs to be highlited here that in the districts of Jharkhand where the tensions and the incidents have been witnessed have large following of tribal religions, mostly Sarna or Swarna religion. The percentage of the tribal religions in the affected districts was as follows according to the 1991 census: Gumla 21.5%; Pachimi Singbhum 37.5%; Purvi Singhbhum 14.8%; Ranchi 10.3% and Lohardaga 8.8% to the total population of each district.

Notes:

1. Page 119 and 120 of Book Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society, edited by Ranajit Guha, Published by Oxford University Press. Article 'Adivasi Politics in Midnapur, c. 1760-1924 by Swapan Dasgupta).

2. The Prose od Counter-Insurgency by Ranjit Guha, Page 37 of Subaltern Studies-II: Writrings on South Asian History and Society, Edited by Ranajit Guha, Published by Oxford India Paperbacks, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, edition 1986.)

3 Page 149-153, of Book Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society, edited by Ranajit Guha, Published by Oxford University Press. Article Jitu Santal's Movement in Malda, 1924-1932 : A Study in Tribal Protest by Tanika Sarkar)

4. Page 211 Subaltern Studies III – Writings on South Asian History and Society edited by Ranajit Guha – Adivasi Assertion in South Gujarat: The Devi Movement of 1922-3 by David Hardiman- Oxford India Paperbacks 1994- Oxford University Press 1984, Delhi.

Part – VI

Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions

Chapter – 1
Summary and conclusions

The growth of Christianity in India has taken place in three phases before the Independence. The Church of the Syrian Christians of the Malabar Coast in Kerala dates back from the beginning of 6th Century A.D., though some claim that the Christianity came to India when St. Thomas one of the twelve Apostles of the Jesus allegedly visited India in 58 A.D. The second wave of Christianity started with the discovery of sea route to India by Vasco de Gama in 1498 and subsequent conversions by St. Francis Xavier and others during the 16th century. The third phase of Christianity started with the British rule in India and the conversions in the North-East, Chhotanagpur plateau and in Andhra Pradesh and other regions took place during this phase.
The censuses of India from 1951/1961 to 1991 show that: -

a) Christian population has declined in all the states except Orissa, North Eastern States, and undivided Madhya Pradesh etc.
b) Hindu population has declined in most of the states except Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana and Andaman & Nicobar etc.
c) "Other religions and persuasions" have declined in all the states except a few districts of Jharkhand like West Singhbhum etc., Orissa (particularly in district like Mayurbhanj) and West Bengal etc.
d) Muslim population has increased as a whole in all the states except in Andaman and Nicobar, Punjab etc.

According to the censuses figure the population of the Christians have declined from 2.6% in 1951 to 2.34% in 1991 but this may not reflect the true picture as in certain areas like Andhra Pradesh some Christians like Mala Christians and Madiga Christians are not showing themselves as Christians. But in most parts of the India, except in a few districts of Orissa and Gujarat and in some states of North-East like Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, the population of Christians is generally not showing increase. In most parts of the hilly areas of the North-East, there have been lots of conversions to Christianity and their alienation from the Indian mainstream because of the policy of the Church for adopting Roman script for the tribal people instead of the prevalent Assamese or Bengali script of the region. Most of the tribal people of India did not have their scripts and they speak a particular dialect. In the North-East, presently the problem is more of inter-ethnic nature than of communal nature, though in the past, the Christian Missionaries have been successful in distancing/dissociating converted tribes from the Indian culture and Indian language. Even Muslims of Bangladesh have Bengali language. But the Christian Missionaries preferred for the Roman script and thus has started a process by which all the Assamese, Bengali and Sanskritic words will be gradually dispensed with severing the links of the hill tribes from the neighbouring plains and valley people. The corruption and exploitation by the Assamese and Bengalese bureaucrats, politicians and businessman who were more educated have also hastened this process of the alienation of tribal people living in the hills of North-East. North-East occupies a strategic position for India from the security

point of view and the Church sees it as a base for their further expansion among Mongoloid races of China and South-East Asia. A sharp divide between those who live in the hills generally Christians and those who inhabit the plains and valleys mostly Hindus is noticeable in the North-East, though the divide is not strictly on communal lines and is rather on ethnic lines.

Hindu- Christian communalism is not of such a serious magnitude as Hindu – Muslim communal problem. There have not been as frequent and serious cases of confrontations of riots between Hindus and Christians as we have seen between Hindus and Muslims in the past. Sec.144 CrPC or its specific provisions regarding curfew has been very seldom imposed to deal with such problems and very seldom the preventive detentions under the National Security Act have been resorted to. While most of the tensions and incidents between Hindus and Muslims have been over a number of causes, the Hindu Christian tensions are generally over the issue of conversions. The Hindu-Muslims riots have a long history while the tensions between Hindus and Christians have been till recently a phenomenon localized to certain areas. There have been many cases of arson to the prayer halls of the Christians during the last two-three decades in certain areas, for example, a few districts of Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, and The Dangs in Gujarat where the Christians are in minuscule minority. In Kandhamals most of the cases of arson to prayer halls of Christians took place in the areas of police stations where the Christians are outnumbered by Hindus, while the maximum number of cases of incidents of clashes and tensions were reported from the areas of police stations which have almost equally matched population of Hindus and Christians.

There have been only a very few occasions of attacks against the state and administration, for example, 1 – During the Lievens time over the land issue in Chota Nagpur by the Christians 2) In Poona during the 1890s when a D.M was assassinated by Hindus during the resistance to the plague measures which did not respect the caste and religious sensibilities of the Hindus and 3) In R. Udayagiri incidents regarding killing of under-trials before the police station by non-converted tribals.

The areas of Hindu-Muslim conflicts generally have almost equal percentage of rival religious communities. The Hindus and Christians do not have such explosive proportions in most parts of the country. Only in a few districts of Kerala and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu, we have Hindus and Christians in about 60:40 ratio. Though Kanyakumari has seen serious riots since the early 1980s, in Kerala we do not have a history of communalism between Hindus and Christians. Kanyakumari saw the worst-ever communal riots between Hindus and Christians in March 1982 claiming lives of 11 Hindus and 10 Christians just within a period of sixteen days. In the rest of India, either the Christians dominate in the region, for example in the states of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya in the North-East or the Hindus out-number the Christians by a big margin of percentage. But in a few sub-divisions or police stations of Kandamals, Gajapati in South Orissa, Jashpur in Chattisgarh and in Gumla, and Ranchi of Jharkhand, we have the Hindus and the Christians in almost equal proportion, which accounts for many incidents and tensions in these areas. We do not generally see reactions or retaliations by minority community in a particular area of Hindus and Christians as we see during the Hindu-Muslim riots. This is perhaps because the Hindus are in a minuscule minority in some states of North-East like Nagaland, Mizoram, and Meghalaya

etc., while in the rest of India barring a few districts in Jharkhand and Orissa or in districts like Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu or Jashpur in Chattisgarh, the Christians are in a minuscule minority.

In some incidents, the nature of the conflict was either inter-tribal or rather inter-ethnic (for example SC versus ST in Kandhmals, Gajapati and Rayagada districts in South-Orissa). Some cases of violence were not of communal nature but they happened when the Christian Missionaries participated or led some movements of the tribal or S.C. people. In one of such incidents, a pastor Achyuta Nayak leading the Panas was killed in Kandamals by Kandhas in 1994 while a Christian Harijan leader Emmanuel Sekaran was killed in Tamil Nadu in 1957 during inter-caste confrontations between Thevars on the one side and Nadars and the Harijans on the other side. Similarly Father Murmu lost his life in Sahebgunj in 1982 Jharkhand state as he was leading a tribal mob against the auction of a fishing pond by sub-divisional Magistrate. Just because, the Christian missionaries led during such mob agitations or movements and acted supposedly in pursuance of the 'social gospel', and got killed during the incidents and the confrontation between the two groups, or between the mob and the police, it cannot be regarded as inter-religious or of communal nature. There have almost been no incidents of communal nature in the communist-ruled states like West Bengal and Kerala as the issues in these states are taken up on party lines rather than on communal lines. In Kanyakumari and a few districts of Tamilnadu, there have been many incidents of communal nature while in the neighbouring Kerala State which have many districts in the range of 40:60 Christian-Hindu ratio, there have been a very few communal tensions. Many tensions in the tribal areas of Jharkhand, and Orissa are because of the assertion or re-assertion of tribal identity.

The cohesive tribal society has been divided into two or three groups- Hindu tribals, Christian Tribals or the Tribals following their own primitive religions and this has led to tensions between the different groups of the tribal society in Orissa, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Chattisgarh.

In Andhra Pradesh there were very few incidents in the districts, which have maximuim Christian population, like Krishna, West Godavari, and Guntur. Out of a total of 21 incidents (if we exclude five case of bomb-exploitations in May, June 2000), only three cases, one in West Godavari and two in Krishna district took place, while the population of Christians in these three districts (Krishna, W.Godavari, and Guntur) is above 51% of the total Christian population of the entire state.

In Tamil Nadu there were many cases of arson to prayer halls of Christians in the recent few years and even conflicts between Christian Nadars and Hindu Nadars, which shows a shift from early 1980s from caste over religion to religion over caste. Earlier the marriages between the Hindu Nadars and Christian Nadars were common but after the Meenakshipuram conversions and Kanyakumari riots in the 1980s, there are hardly any such marriages.

There have been resistance to conversions to Christianity in the state of Karnataka and recently in the years 1999 and 2000, eight cases of incidents of the nature of Hindu-Christian

tensions took place because of the conversion activities by Christian Missionaries and four other incidents were in the form of assault on Christian Missionaries and attacks and desecration of religious symbols of Christians and disturbing the prayers in a Church.

In South Orissa the inter-ethnic divide between the SC, and ST over the land issue plays an important role. There have been many cases of police firing in regard to the issue of the ownership of land in these areas. Some of such land disputes may be between converted Christians, mostly Panas or Dombos and tribal Hindus. There have been cases of arsons to prayer halls in Kandhmals during the past two decades and the three issues a) Bandapipli issue over the construction of a orphanage hostel by Christian Missionaries b) Kutiguda issue over the conversion of tribals to Christianity and c) Betticola issue over the attempts of construction by Christian Missionaries over a disputed land led to many tensions and incidents in district Kandhamals.

In Mayurbhanj & Keonjhar districts, the cause of the tensions was firstly more because of one person Dara Singh than any other factor and secondly in Mayurbhanj and some villages bordering it in Keonjhar and inhabited by Santhals, Hos and other tribals a re-assertion of tribal identity has been quite noticeable since 1961 and any departure by the converted tribals from the rituals is viewed seriously by the non-converted tribals. One of the reasons for the killings of both Staines and Arul Doss in Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts was non-observance of the tribal rituals by the converted Christians. The re-assertion of tribal identity has been taking place since 1961 in the districts of Gumla, Ranchi, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, and Mayurbhanj etc where most of the tribals follow *Sarna* religion. This aversion to outsiders or *dikus* is in the form of re-assertion of their tribal identity vis-à-vis Hindus and Christians and sometimes in the form of violence against Christians indulging in conversions.

Maximum conversions in the tribal society in the Chhotanagpur plateau and the areas around have taken place among the Oraons. One of the reasons for this is their extroverted nature and less concern about their identity. The element of intolerance for the outsiders or *dikus* is also not present to such a dominant degree in the Oraons as in other tribes like Santhals, Hos, and Mundas.

There have been very few incidents in Chattisgarh. There was only one major incident of communal nature after the damage to a Shiva temple in Latboura in Jashpur.

There were lots of incidents in the Dangs district in Gujarat. Fifty cases of communal nature between Hindus and Christians from June 1998 to July 2000 were registered while before June 1998 no incident of communal nature was ever reported. Most of the incidents took place after processions and rallies by Hindu Jagaran Manch and generally were in the form of arson to prayer halls. In other parts of Gujarat, there was an incident of Bible burning in Rajkot, an exhumation of dead-bodies in Kapaddwaj in district Kheda and disturbance to the religious conventions of Christians in Vadodara.

In Jharkhand, three Hindus vagrant goldsmiths were killed following rumours of poisoning of wells in September 1986. Pope had visited earlier in February 1986 and the passions ran

high in both the communities after his visit. The rumours after the publication of an article by a Church Missionary led to the rumours and panic among the Christian community. The followers of Sarna religion killed three tribal people in Gumla because they had showed sympathy with the Christians and were inter-mixing with them despite a social decree by the tribal community of the area against it.

In Uttar Pradesh, most of the incidents and tensions were generally over the matters relating to schools and some unknown miscreants killed Father George in Mathura while his cook died in police custody. Most of the incidents took place in Agra and Mathura, a region in Western Uttar Pradesh, which has never been receptive to towards Christian religion despite presence of Christian Missionaries since Akbar's time. Prior to the incidents, there were religious conventions in Mathura and Agra subsequent to Pope's visit of Delhi and his statement that the third millennium is for evangelization of Asia

There have been conversions among the Tharu tribe in district Udham Singh Nagar in Uttaranchal and in other districts in Northern parts of U.P bordering Nepal.

There were some incidents of tensions between the two communities over the alleged role of Changai Sabhas of Chritistian Missionaries in the conversion of Hindus and tribal people to Christianity. Some incidents were reported from Agra in October 1999 when the Hindu Missionaries opposed the holding of Changai Sabhas by Christian Missionaries. Religion particularly, at its popular levels may promise the magical removal of specific hills. Catholic Orthodoxy for example has always sought to maintain a priestly monopoly over magic. Birsa Munda who spearheaded his movement of rebellion against all authorities started as a faith healer. The movement still survives among the followers of Sarna religion in Chhota Nagpur region.[1]

In 1868, the Constabulary of Madras Presidency consisted of 1.73% Christians and their percentage increased to 4.31% in 1920. Indian Christians were considered by the British government to have the advantage of being both indigenous and at the same time loyal to British because of their religion.[2] At present the representation of Christians in most of the districts was found to be adequate. The problems and tensions between Hindus and Christians at present have been reported mostly from the tribal areas and in most of such areas the representation of tribals in the district police was found inadequate. There is a need for recruiting more policemen from the tribals in these areas. In some of the districts for example in Raigarh, Jashpur and Sarguja of Chattisgarh and in Gumla and Ranchi of Jharkhand the representation of local tribal people mostly Oraons was found to be proportionate to their population in the above districts.

There were relatively fewer incidents in Punjab.
Most of the tensions and incidents have taken place in the tribal areas and where both Hindu and Christian Missionaries are operating. The Hindu Missionaries/Hindus have been resisting conversions by Christian Missionaries and some re-conversions are also taking place.

The exclusivist and the proselytizing nature of the Christian religion accounts for most of the tensions between the two communities.

The greatest cause for tension between the Hindus and Christians has been the issue of conversions. A few incidents took place because of inept handling by police. Sometimes there have been serious incidents over trivial issues like planting or painting of symbols of cross or *trishul* on hillocks etc. There have been incidents of communal nature after the religious rallies, meetings, and processions by either of the religious groups. Some of the incidents have been exaggerated or blown out of proportion by Christians and media particularly English media and sometimes, even incidents of criminal nature have been portrayed as communal.

The patterns of violence have been in the form of attack on Christian schools, assault on Fathers and Nuns, arson to prayer halls of Christians etc., disturbance of religious assemblies of Christians generally by Hindus, desecration or damage to Christians or Hindu religion or religious places. There were fewer incidents of assaults on Christian Missionaries/ Nuns in the South as compared to North India, though there were cases of arson to prayer halls in the South particularly in Tamilnadu.

The tensions have been noticed mostly in rural tribal population of hill areas, which are densely forested with fewer roads. Police took much longer in reaching the areas of tension because of remoteness of the areas from the police station or district headquarters.

There were many lapses by police in the Staines case both before his assassination as well as during the investigation of the case. In the Dangs, the procession/rally by HJM in June 1998 generated tension and then permission of holding a HJM rally/meeting on Christmas Day, 1998 had disastrous consequences. No S.P., or even additional S.P was holding charge of district in Keonjhar and Dangs when the major incidents took place in the districts. S.P & D.M of Keonjhar took no action under NSA against Dara Singh though he had committed many incidents before the killing of Staines.

Response time for reaching Latboura in District Jashpur in Chattisgarh where a Shiva temple was damaged was also very poor. Police received information about the incident a day before but reached the village only after the incident of killing of a Christian and of seriously injuring his brother had taken place.

Notes:

1. The Conditions and Nature of Subaltern Militancy by Sumit Sarkar, pages 309-310 Subaltern Studies-III: Writings on South Asian History and Society edited by Ranjit Guha.
2. Recruitment in the Madras Constabulary, Pages 10, 11 and 15, by David Arnold, Subaltern Studies Vol. IV Writings on South Asian History and Society edited by Ranjit Guha, Oxford India Paperbacks, fourth impression 1999.

Chapter – 2

Suggestions

1. Many incidents/tensions between Hindus and Christians or between converted and non-converted tribals have taken place over the observance/performance of rituals. The officers posted in the districts, which are sensitive from the point of view of Hindu-Christian communalism, should have sound knowledge of the areas, people, their customs and rituals. They should also be very well acquainted with the topography of the district. They should be aware as to which areas or villages of his jurisdiction are sensitive and in which parts of his area, either of the community is in a vulnerable position and should accordingly make suitable *bandobust*, security arrangements and take preventive measures. The areas of most of these districts particularly in Jharkhand, Chhatisgarh, Orissa, are mountainous with dense forests and quite often the location of the sensitive area/villages from police stations and district headquarters is far off and there are only a few roads, though in the past no roads existed in these regions. The inadequacy of the means of communication in the past had set limits to the Missionary activities of different religions. Now the opening of these tribal areas through construction of roads etc., have started a mushrooming growth of religious organizations and their competition for the souls of the tribal people between different denominations of Christianity as well as between Hindu and Christian Missionaries but the number of police stations generally remain the same. There is a need for increasing the presence of police force in these areas by establishing new police stations to tackle the communal situations and tensions that develop from above proselytizing measures of the above ever-increasing Christian and Hindu Missionary organisations. The police communication system of these districts should also be improved by opening new wireless repeater stations. Apart from this, these areas should be provided with additional fast moving vehicles fitted with wireless sets so that minimum time is taken in reaching to the spot of trouble. The most sensitive districts are: Dangs, Surat Rural, Valsad and Kheda in Gujarat; Kandhamals, Gajapati, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Rayagada and Koraput in Orissa; Gumla, Ranchi, West Singhbhum, East Singhbhum, Lohardaga, Sahibgunj and Dumka in Jharkhand; Jashpur, Sarguja and Raigarh in Chhatisgarh; Indore and Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh; Agra and Mathura in Uttar Pradesh; Kanyakumari, Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu.

2. The biggest reason for Hindu-Christian tensions has been the conversions of the tribals by Christian Missionaries. In many areas there is a resistance and reaction to such activities of the Christian Missionaries. Most of the tribal areas of India are in the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Orissa, and in different states of North-East. Four of the above states in the tribal belt viz. Madhya Pradesh/Chattisgarh, Orissa and Arunachal Pradesh have already enacted anti-conversion laws. The officers both D.M. and S.P. posted in the tribal districts of these states should have knowledge of the Freedom of Religion Act of their respective state and should apply them when conversions take place by way of inducement, fraud or

force and thus give no occasion to Hindus or non-converted tribals or their missionaries or religious leaders to take law into their hands.

3. All efforts should be made to check the communalization of the police forces/administration and the communal clashes should be tackled with impartiality. The officers and the policemen should show no partiality for the religion they belong to and they should not be emotionally involved with the religious issues like conversion etc., while in their official capacities or while performing official duties. They should be free of any bias or narrow-mindedness. The police training institutions can do a lot in broadening the outlook of the officers and the policemen. Toughness with impartiality is the key for dealing with communal situations. Impartiality helps police and the district administration in many ways in dealing with the communal situations. Firstly if the people of a particularly community feel that the police and the administration is impartial and tough, they do not take law into their hands and go to them for the redressal of their grievances and do not attack the members of the other community etc. Secondly it helps police greatly in enlisting the public co-operation of all the sections of the society, which is a must for controlling communal riots, and tackling and diffusing communal tensions. The members of the both the communities should have confidence in the police that it exists for both of them and that it will protect them. When such a relationship exists between the police and district administration on the one hand and all the sections of the society on the other hand, people help police in giving information and in restraining themselves from taking law into their hands.
4. Failure to take prompt and effective action has resulted in many incidents of serious communal nature for days together between the two communities. The police leadership should act decisively and effectively to control the communal situations and there should be no hesitation in taking action against religious or political leaders even if they belong to the ruling party when they are found to be indulging in incidents of communal nature or in whipping up communal passions in the communities. The firm action in initial stages saves many serious communal situations and casualties. Ethics should be made to develop in the police and the district administration that strong action will be taken against the officers and policemen who run away from a scene when a serious law and order situation develops or when they fail to take prompt and firm action. The failure of police leadership leads to demoralization of police force which then may act out of uncontrolled emotions of fear, anger etc. The members of the demoralized and un-sensitized Police force generally do not seem to exercise the use of their reasoning faculties and do not act according to the provisions of the law under such situations.
5. The spirit of love and tolerance to the religion of others should be inculcated in the children by including the basic tenets and teachings of the major religions of India in the syllabi of schools and the policemen should also be made aware of them during their training in their respective college and Academies. Mahatma Gandhi was of the opinion that a curriculum of religious instruction should include a study of the tenets of faiths other than one's own and for this purpose the students should be trained to cultivate the habit of the understanding and appreciating the doctrines of various great religions of the world in a spirit of reverence and broad-minded tolerence.[1]

6. A close watch should be kept on the communalists and religious fanatics. The identification of such elements should be done with lot of care and hard work in all the sensitive areas and not just hastily and superficially and no political or other influence should be allowed to work while preparing the list of the communalists. A proper documentation of all the activities of such elements should be done in the respective police stations, which helps greatly in taking effective action against them when situation demands it. The officers should take strong action against miscreants and anti-social elements and against those who create communal tension in area. For this they should have fair knowledge of the provisions of Indian Penal Code, National Security Act and other laws. In taking action against the trouble makers or those who foment trouble, he should not compromise and should act with utmost impartiality. If he yields to political or other pressure, there is a great likelihood of the development of tensions or the occurrence of an incident in the area. At the most he will be transferred out for not toeing the line of the politicians. Increasing politicization of police and bureaucracy is one of the greatest constraints and limitations to the free and independent exercise of discretion by them. The politicization of bureaucracy has made it more and more difficult for the police and the district administration to act independently and impartially. The control over the police passed down over to political leadership after attainment of India's Independence. In the communist ruled states, the police acted as an arm of the government or the communist party. But the politicization or control of ruling politicians over police took place in most of the rest of India only during the last few decades when the politicians started learning the taste and use of their powers over police and district administration for their political, corrupt or selfish ends and when the majority of the officers and men of both police and district administration were willing to please them for having a share in the power for their corrupt and selfish ends.
7. The post of D.G.P.s of states should have a fixed tenure independent of political interference as recommended by the National Police Commission. The posting of S.Ps should be the sole prerogative of D.G.P otherwise the independence and a fixed tenure of D.G.P.s post will not lead to much improvement. Presently the transfer and postings of the officers above the rank of S.P and D.M is done by Chief Ministers of respective states.
8. The district S.P. should have an effective intelligence network so that he comes know about the tensions and the developments in the sensitive areas immediately. As most of the sensitive areas happen to be in the interior areas sometimes having dense forests, it is necessary that a close co-ordination should be maintained with the forest officers and revenue officers so that even a small incident comes to the knowledge of the police immediately otherwise many incidents in initial stages or tensions may go un-noticed in these remote and interior and sometimes cut-off regions which when unattended may later on develop into serious and dangerous proportions.
9. Even the incidents of most trivial nature in the sensitive areas should be attended to immediately and resolved. For this the police should have an effective communication system and the mobility of police should be of highest standard. The officers and policemen need to be sensitized and briefed from time to time about the importance of promptly attending to the communal problem and resolving it when it is in its initial stages.

10. The investigation of the cases of communal nature should receive utmost importance because the effective action against communalists is the only deterrent against repetition of incidents by them as the social deterrent is absent in regard to such incidents and rather in many cases, the communalists have the social sanction of their respective communities behind their actions, which encourages them further for such unlawful acts.

11. Police should take all the incidents in regard to the religious places seriously. The trouble over religious places may arise over the desecration or damage to a religious place or over claiming of a religious place by members of both communities or because of its being situated on a disputed land or over the uncontrolled use of loudspeakers by members of either communities in their places of worship situated close to each other etc. Police should take all the precautionary measures and make effective police arrangements during the festivals of either community and also during the festivals of tribal communities. The policemen should be properly briefed and sensitized before they are deployed for such sensitive duties. Many incidents of communal nature took place during the Hindu, Christian or tribal festivals. No religious procession, or rally should be allowed on the day of festivals of the other community and through sensitive areas. If such procession or rally is allowed because of past tradition etc., heavy police arrangements should be done to prevent the occurrence of any incident. Apart from this, no hate propaganda should be allowed by way of pamphlets, posters etc. and strong action should be taken against those who indulge in it or abet by aiding or publishing such material. The publication of alarming incorrect or provocative news, which encourages hatred against a community on religious lines, is very harmful for the communal harmony. This needs to be emphasized that the hate propaganda of inciting communal hatred in the members of a religious community against another religion and the members of its religious community through pamphlets, posters etc., has a very pernicious effect in vitiating the communal harmony, generating tensions and communal frenzy.

12. The police should have the maximum public co-operation for dealing with the communal situations. This can be done through effective community policing. Mohalla level or village level peace committee meetings should be organized. The D.M. and S.P. and other officers of the district should exercise great discretion in selecting the members of such committees. Through the members of such committees, the police can spread the massage of its impartiality, toughness and professionalism and can come to know about the development of tensions in the sensitive areas in the very early stages.

13. The NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) should be involved to diffuse tensions. Their help can contribute greatly towards establishing communal harmony. At the same time, their activities should be monitored and FCRA should be strengthened to check the mis-utilization of foreign funds received by them.

14. The police should have excellent relationship with the media. The media can be used for contradicting the rumours and putting the correct version of an incident etc. before the public. This helps in diffusing tensions when the environment is surcharged by communal sensitivity.

15. One of the biggest factors for the growth of Christianity in the tribal belt has been the lack of development in these areas even fifty years after Independence. District

Magistrates are in-charge of both law and order and as well as development. Law and Order is the joint responsibility of District Magistrate and Supdt. of Police of the district. The development of the tribal areas has in many cases resulted in the landlessness and pauperization of the tribals. It is therefore necessary that along with the development measures in the tribal areas, the protection of the tribal people should also be ensured. In diffusing many of the law and order problems these days relating to the land or any other issue, the police only provide a temporary solution by controlling the situation. The permanent solution for many of the problems, which recur repeatedly in the form of law and order situations, lies elsewhere. Most of these problems have their origins in social or economic reasons and as such their solutions can only be found by social or economic measures. One of the greatest causes for tensions in the tribal area is the exploitation of the tribal people by outsiders. Many provisions have been made in the Constitution for the protection of people belonging to Scheduled Tribes. The upliftment of Dalits and Tribal people should receive utmost importance from the government through political and economic measures and a social-consciousness should be created for this. All efforts should be made for the development of tribal areas and the best officers of revenue, police and other departments should be sent to these areas. These officers should be of proven integrity and should have sympathy for the tribal people who have suffered exploitation at the hands of outsiders, whether government servants or landlords or businessmen etc. The attitudes and personality of police leaders especially of S.P. in charge of a district or of sub-inspectors or inspectors in charge of police stations goes a long way in shaping the attitudes, conduct and actions of the subordinate officers who generally adjust and mould accordingly. Apart from the Christian missionaries, corrupt officials, exploitative landlords, businessmen, sahukars etc have also caused the alienation of the tribal people in the North-East. It is therefore necessary that to mitigate the intensity of resentment against the Hindus, the government should make all efforts to put an end to corruption in the government machinery in the tribal areas and exploitation of the tribal people.

16. The Land issue has been one of the causes for conversions as well as for Hindu-Christian or converted-non-converted tribals tensions. The Land issue figured prominently during the Lievens times in Chotanagpur and accounted for the conversions to the Christianity and subsequently for Hindu-Christian and converted-non-converted tribal tensions. The Land problem still rages in the districts of Kandhmals, Gajapati, Rayagada, etc of South Orissa among the Kandhas, Saoras etc on the one side and the Panas and Dombos on the other side. The land problem in these regions is in the form of Scheduled Caste people, generally Panas and Dombos most of whom have been converted to Christianity versus Secheduled Tribe people, mostly. Kandhas, Saoras and other tribes, and some of them have also been converted to Christianity while large number of them still follow Hinduism and in some cases, their tribal religions. The transfer of the land of the tribals to the outsiders should be stopped. Certain states already have laws to protect the tribals against the alienation of their lands by outsiders. The government should enact laws against any further alienation of the lands of the tribals. The revenue department should carry out land reforms in this or should distribute lands to the landless tribals and should complete the R.O.R. (Record of Rights) in all the tribal areas at the earliest. Apart from this, to

tackle the problem of indebtedness among the tribals and the consequent exploitation by appropriation of their lands by outsiders etc., co-operative movements should be started and the loans on nominal interests by government departments should be made available to the tribals. The legal status of the disputed lands on which both the religious communities lay their claims as belonging to their religious places or institutions should be settled at the earliest and preventive measures like their attachment etc. should be resorted to wherever it is necessary in the interest of maintaining public peace.

17. The Indian Police Commission of 1902-03 laid down the principle for future policing in India by recommending that the 'duties of Constables should be of a mechanical character' and that 'duties requiring the exercise of discretion and judgment' should not be entrusted to them. The bulk of our police force i.e. about 80- 90% consists of Constables and Head Constables and they directly deal with the people and in most probability they might be the first to deal with a communal tension when it is in its initial stages. Apart from this they are in maximum contact with the public and as such can enlist maximum public co-operation. But the present system of policing, which is largely based on colonial principles, makes it very difficult, if not impossible to do so. No wonder that the British government adopted a policing system modeled on the reforms suggested by Robert Peel and oriented for the service of the people for their own country and another one, an exploitative, corrupt and predatory for their colony like India, otherwise there always was a danger of their siding with the masses. It is not understandable why we haven't change the system even fifty years after Independence. Till some major reform in the policing system is achieved through legislation, we can overcome these difficulties and constraints by intensive police training. The various Commissions set up with the task of making recommendations for improving the policing in India have stressed emphatically the need and importance of training of policemen. Instead of using *danda,* the policemen should be taught and trained to use their brains and to have feelings of compassion for the countrymen whom they are supposed to serve and not to exploit and boss over. We will have to trust the constabulary and sensitize and train them for exercising their discretion. The mechanical nature of their duties has made them de-humanized and as such unfit for fruitful and effective interaction with the people. The policemen should help the tribals when they approach them in regard to the cases of their exploitation. This will go a long way in developing respect and confidence in them for the police as well as for the authority of the State and in the areas where this sort of relationship exists between the police and the tribal people, they can help police in a big way in diffusing communal situations and tensions.

Notes :

1. The Ways of Religion-An Introduction to the Major Traditions, Third Edition, edited by Roger Eastman, Published by Oxford University Press, New York, Oxford, 1999.

ANNEXURES

ARTICLES OF THE CONSTITUTION / SECTIONS /RULES OF THE RELEVANT LAWS

The Constitution of India

Article 14. **Equality before law.**

Article 15. (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

(1) No citizen shall, on ground only religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to

(a) Access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment; or

(b)

(c) The use of wells, tanks, bathing *ghats,* roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.

Article 16. Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.__

Article 21. Protection of life and personal liberty.

RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Article 25.Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion,--(1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.

(1) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law—

(a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;

(b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious Institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

Explanation I: The wearing and carrying of *Kirpans* shall be deemed to be included in the professions of the Sikh religion.

Explanation II: In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jain or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly.

Article 26. Freedom to manage religious affairs: Subject to public order, morality and health, every religious denomination or any section there of shall have the right-

(a) to establish and maintain institution for religious and charitable purpose;

(b) to manage its own affairs in matters of religion;

(c) to own and acquire movable and immovable property; and

(d) to administer such property in accordance with law.

ARTICLE 27. Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion:

No persons shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.

ARTICLE 28. Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions:

(1) No religious instruction shall be provided in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds.

(2) Nothing in clause (1) shall apply to an educational institution, which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust, which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

(3) No person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attended any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached there to unless such person or, if such person in a minor, his guardian has given his consent there to.

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS

ARTICLE 29.Protection of interests of minorities. __ (1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part there of having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

(2) No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

ARTICLE 30. Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions: (1) All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

1[(1-A) In making any law providing for the compulsory acquisition of any property of an educational institution established and administered by a minority, referred to in clause (1), the State shall ensure that the amount fixed by or determined under such law for the acquisition of such property is such as would not restrict or abrogate the right guaranteed under that clause.

(2) The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

ARTICLE 44. Uniform civil Code for the citizens: The state shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India.

ARTICLE 46. Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections: The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitations.

ARTICLE 331. Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the House of the People. __..... the President may,..... nominate not more than two members of that community .....

ARTICLE 333. Representation of the Anglo-Indian community in the Legislative Assemblies of the States. The Governor of the State may,.... nominate one member of that community to the Assembly.

ARTICLE 336. Special provision for Anglo-Indian community in certain services.

ARTICLE 337. Special provision with respect to educational grants for the benefit of Anglo-Indian community.

ARTICLE 338. National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Article 342 Scheduled Tribes—(1) The President (may with respect to any State (or Union territory), and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State (or Union territory, as the case may be).

(2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

Chapter VIII-OF OFFENCES AGAINST THE PUBLIC TRANQULITY

Section153-A. Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony.

(1) Whoever

(a) by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise, promotes or attempts to promote, on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, caste or community or any other ground whatsoever, disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities, or

(b) Commits any act which is prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities, and which disturbs or is likely to disturb the public tranquillity, [or]

2[(c) Organizes any exercise, movement, drill or other similar activity intending that the participants in such activity shall use or be trained to use criminal force or violence or knowing it to be likely that participants in such activity will use or be trained to use criminal force or violence, or participates in such activity intending to use or be trained to use criminal force or violence or knowing it to be likely that the participants in such activity will use or be trained to use criminal force or violence, against any religious, racial language or regional group or caste or community and such activity, for any reason whatsoever causes or is likely to cause fear or alarm or a felling of insecurity amongst members of such religious, racial, language or regional group or caste or community,]

shall be punished with imprisonment, which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

Offence committed in place of worship, etc., _____ (2) Whoever commits an offence specified in sub-section (1) in any place of worship or in any assembly engaged in

the performance of religious worship or religious ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to five years and shall also be liable to fine.]

CASE LAW

Intention of writer, policy of the journal, class of readers and state of feeling of communities at the time should be considered. Intention may also be gathered from external circumstances. AIR 1927 Lah 594=28 PLR 497=28 Cr LJ 794=104 Ind Cas 234. Comment on a religion or its founder with a view to induce person to change religion may be permitted. But a scurrilous vituperative attack on a religion *prima facie* falls under the section. AIR 1927 Lah 594=28 PLR 497=28 Cr LJ 794=104 Ind Cas 234.

Liberty to criticize religion does not include license to use vile and abusive language. AIR 1927 All 649=49 All 856 ; *see* also 22 Cr LJ 513=22 Bom LR 166=62 Ind Cas 401. Intent to incite hatred or enmity is necessary.

Truth of language is immaterial. AIR 1927 All 649=49 All 860.

If the words naturally, clearly and indubitably have the tendency to incite one community against another then the intention to do it should be inferred. AIR1929 Cal 309.

Note: The offence is cognizable and non- bailable and not compoundable. There can be no prosecution without the previous sanction of the State. A warrant case-- Triable by Magistrate of the first class.

1[**153-B. Imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration:** (1) Whoever, by words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise, __

(a) makes or publishes any imputation that any class of persons cannot, by reason of their being members of any religious, racial, language or regional group or caste or community, bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution o India as by law established or uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India, or

(b) asserts, consents, advises, propagates or publishes that any class of persons shall, by reason of their being members of any religious, racial, language or regional group or caste or community, be denied to deprived of their rights as citizens of India, or

(c) makes or publishes any assertion, counsel, plea or appeal concerning the obligation of any class of persons, by reason of their being members of any

religious, racial, language, regional group or caste or community, and such assertion, counsel, plea or appeal causes or is likely to cause disharmony or feelings of enmity or hatred or ill-will between such members and other persons,

shall be punished with imprisonment, which may extend to three years, or with fine, of with both.

(2) Whoever commits an offence specified in sub-section (1) in any place of worship or in any assembly engaged in the performance of religious worship or religious ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to five years and shall also be liable to fine.]

CHAPTER XV

OF OFFENCES RELATING TO RELIGION

Section 295. Injuring or defiling place of worship with intent to insult the religion of any class: Whoever destroy, damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention of there by insulting the religion of any class of persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion, shall be punished, with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

CASE LAW:

The ingredients of the section are that the person in destroying, damaging or defiling any place of worship or any object held sacred by any class of persons should have intention of thereby insulting the religion of that class of persons or the knowledge that such destruction damage or defilement is likely to be considered as insult of their religion. AIR 1955 Mad 550=1955 Cr LJ 1266; *see* AIR 1958 SC 1032 (supra.).

Objects held sacred. – The words `` any object held sacred by any class of persons'' have been given a much too restricted meaning by the High Court by holding idols in temples or carried in processions of festival occasions are meant to be included within those words. Any

object however trivial or destitute of real value in itself, if regarded as sacred by any class of persons would come within the meaning of the penal section. AIR 1958 SC 1032=1958 SCA 1116=(1958) SCJ 1=1958 SCR 1211=1958 Cr LJ 1565 ; *see* also AIR 1955 Mad 550=(1955) 1 MLJ 368=1955 Cr LJ 1268 ; AIR 1955 Bhopal 23=1955 Cr LJ 1563.

The killing of a cow even if done with the intention of offending religious susceptibilities of others is no offence under this section. 12 PR Cr 1918=1 PWR Cr 191=44 Ind Cas 330=19 Cr LJ 314 (FB).

Note : Cognizable – Bailable – Not compoundable -Triable by any Magistrate.

Section 295-A. Deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class, by insulting its religion or religious beliefs: Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of citizens of India, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs or by visible representations or otherwise, insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

CASE LAW:

Courts have got to be very circumspect in matter of religious suspectibilities of different class of persons with different beliefs. (1962) 2 Cr LJ 564.

The main ingredient of the section is the insult or attempt to insult the religions of a class of citizens of India and not merely those of an individual or individuals. 1979 Chand LR (Cr) 6.

If the language used transgresses the limits of decency and is designed to vex, annoy and outrage the religious feelings of others, then, the malicious intention of the writer can be inferred from the language employed by him.1963 MLJ (Cr) 259=1962 (2) Cr LJ 564.

Cognizable except with the previous sanction of the Central Government – Warrant – Not bailable – Not compoundable – Triable by Magistrate of the first class.

Section 296. Disturbing religious assembly : **Whoever voluntarily causes disturbance to any assembly lawfully engaged in the performance of religious worship, or religious**

ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term, which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

CASE LAW:
An assembly can be disturbed even in a highway. 8 ALJ 1150 ; but see 119 PLR 1909. A religious procession lawfully carried through highway does not changes its character simply because music is stopped before a mosque, 3 DLR (Nag) 36=ILR 1948 Nag 657=AIR 1949 Nag 132=50 Cr LJ 329. The mere playing of music before a mosque would not by, itself, amount to an offence under this section. AIR 1945 Mad 496. Disturbance means substantial and not fanciful disturbance. (*Ibid*). For the purposes of this section, three persons gathered together for purposes of worship are sufficient to constitute an assembly. AIR 1940 ALL 291=41 Cr LJ 647.
The playing of music by a procession would depend upon whether music was an appropriate observance. AIR 1950 Bom 192=52 Bom LR 214.
Note: Cognizable – Bailable – Not compoundable – Triable by any Magistrate.

Section 297. Trespassing on burial places, etc: Whoever, with the intention of wounding the felling of any person, or of insulting the religion of any person, or with the knowledge that the feelings of any person are likely to be wounded, or that the religion of any person is likely to be insulted thereby, commits and trespass in any place of worship or on any place of sculpture, or any place set apart for the performance of funeral rites or as a depository for the remains of the dead, or offers any indignity to any human corpse, or causes disturbance to any persons assembled for the performance of funeral ceremonies, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a team which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

CASE LAW:
The term "trespass," means any violent or injurious act committed in such place and with knowledge or intention as is defined in that section. 49 All 529; 17 CWN 534=40 Cal 548. The word "trespass" denotes a wrongful act, and the act of a person who destroys or disturbs a place of *sepulcher* with the intention of wounding the feeling of any person. AIR 1949 Cal 104=50 Cr LJ 135.

Persons who enter a burial ground and plough up land as a grave-yard are guilty of an offence under this section, although they enter the ground with the knowledge of the owner, and apparently with his consent. 18 All 395=AWN 1896, 119; *see* also 8 ALJ 927=12 Cr LJ 532.

The term "trespass" in this section does not have the same meaning as is attached to criminal "trespass" in Section 441, IPC. The term "trespass" appears to mean any violent or injurious act committed in such place and with such knowledge as is specified in this section. 1 Rang 690 see also 45 All 529=21 ALJ 455=24 Cr LJ 911. Disturbing graves of others even on one's own land is an offence. 137 Ind Cas 872=36 CWN 544=1932 Cr C 449=33 Cr LJ 517=AIR 1932 Cal 459

Note : Cognizable—Bailable---Not compoundable – Triable by any Magistrate.

Section 298. Uttering words, etc., with deliberate intent to wound religious feelings: Whoever, with the deliberate intention of wounding the religious feelings of any person, utters any word or makes any sound in the hearing of that person or makes any gesture in the sight be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

CASE LAW:

The intention to wound the religious feelings of another must be in order to convict a person under this section, a deliberate one. 4 PR 1890 (Cr) ; 44 Cr LJ 30=AIR 1942 Pat 471 : AIR 1939 Rang 199=40 Cr LJ 640. This section is wide in its scope and includes any action, which is known to wound the religious feeling of others. If a person must have known that the killing of a cow in the presence of Hindus would lead to a wounding of their religious feelings, he must be supposed to have intended the necessary consequences of his acts. Motive is not to be confused with intention. 1936 ALJ 1197=1936 Cr C 214=1336 AWR 1024.

This section is much wider in its scope than Section 295 and includes any action, which is known to wound the religious feelings of others. Motive is not to be confused with intention. AIR 1937 All 13=38 Cr LJ 202.

Note: Non-cognizable – Bailable --- Compoundable – Triable by any Magistrate.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION ACTS OF ORISSA, M.P. & ARUNACHAL PRADESH

The Orissa Freedom of Religion Act 1967.

Section 2 . In this Act unless the context otherwise requires__

(a) 'conversion' means renouncing one religion and adopting another;

(b) "force" shall include a show of force or a threat of injury of any kind including threat of divine displeasure or social ex-communication;

(c) "fraud" shall include misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance;

(d) "inducement' shall include the offer of any gift or gratification, either in cash or in kind and shall also include the grant of any benefit, either pecuniary or otherwise;

(e) "minor" means a person under eighteen years of age;

3. No person shall convert or attempt to convert or otherwise, any person from one religious faith to another by the use of force or by inducement or by any fraudulent means, nor shall any person abet any such conversion.

4. Any person contravening the provisions contained in section 3 shall, without prejudice to any civil liability, be punishable with imprisonment of either description, which may extend to one year or with fine, which may extend to five thousand rupees or with both:

Provided that in case the offence is committed in respect of a minor, a woman or a person belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, the punishment shall be imprisonment to the extent of two years and fine up to ten thousand rupees.

5. An offence under this Act shall be cognizable and shall not be investigated by an officer below the rank of an Inspector of Police.

6. No prosecution for an offence under this Act shall be made without the sanction of the Magistrate of the District or such other authority, not below the rank of a Sub-divisional Officer, as may be authorized by him in that behalf.

7. The State Government may make rules for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.

THE ORISSA FREEDOM OF RELIGION RULES, 1989

Rule:3.(i) Each District Magistrate shall maintain a list of religious institutions or organizations propagating religious faith in his district and that of persons directly or indirectly engaged for propagation of religious faith in the district.

(ii) The District Magistrate, if he thinks fit, may call for a list of persons of the religious faith, receiving benefits either in cash or in kind from the religious organizations or institutions or from any person connected there-with.

4. Any person intending to convert his religion, shall give a declaration before a Magistrate, 1st Class, having jurisdiction prior to such conversion that he intends to convert his religion on his own will.

5. (1) The concerned religious priest shall intimate the date, time and place of the ceremony in which conversion shall be made along with the names and addresses of the persons to be converted to the concerned District Magistrates before fifteen days of the said ceremony.

Note: (Cf. the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969: according to Rule 3 (1) of the M.P Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969, the intimation to the District Magistrate should be sent within seven days after the date of such ceremony).

(2) The intimation shall be in Form A and shall be delivered either personally by the priest, to the concerned District Magistrate or be sent to him by registered post with acknowledgement due.

6. The District Magistrate on receiving the intimation from the priest shall sign thereon stating the date on which and the hour at which the intimation has been delivered to him or received by him and shall forthwith acknowledge the receipt thereof in Form B.

7. The District Magistrate shall maintain a register of conversion in Form C and shall enter therein particulars of the intimation received by him.

8. Any person who contravenes the provisions of rule 5 or 6 shall be liable to a fine of rupees one thousand.

Note: (This punitive provision regarding punishment for failure of sending intimations of ceremonies of conversions is included in the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam, 1968 itself.)

9. The District Magistrate shall, by the 10th of each month, send to the State Government a report of intimations received by him during the preceding month in From D.

THE ORISSA FREEDOM OF RELIGION (AMENDMENT) RULES, 1999.

Rule2:-.

In the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989 (herein- after called as the said rules), in rule 5, after sub-rule (2), the following sub-rule shall be added, namely: -

(3) On receiving the intimation under sub-rule (2), the District Magistrate shall inform the concerned Superintendent of Police in detail who shall pass on the information to the concerned Police Station and the officer-in-charge of the Police Station shall ascertain

objection, if any, to the proposed conversion by local inquiry and intimate the same to the District magistrate. (This provision does not seem to be included in the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969)

Rule 3

In the said rules, for Form-A, the following Form shall be substituted, namely: -

FORM – A

INTIMATION REGARDING CONVERSION FROM ONE RELIGIOUS FAITH TO ANOTHER

To

The District Magistrate,
District,

Sir,

I as a religious priest intend to perform the necessary ceremony for conversion of Shri_____-S/o._____R/o._____from_____religious faith to_____religious faith, do hereby give intimation of the intended conversion as required by sub-rule (1) of rule 5 of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989 as follows:-

1. Name of the person to be converted_____
2. Name of the father of the person to be converted_____
3. Address of the person to be converted in full_____

House No._____Ward No._____

Mohalla_____

Village_____

Tahsil_____

District_____

4. Age_____
5. Sex_____
6. Occupation and monthly income of the person to be converted_____

7. Whether married or unmarried_____
8. Name of persons, if any dependent upon the person to be converted_____
9. If a minor, name and full address of the guardian if any_____
10. Whether belongs to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe and if so, particulars of such Caste or Tribe_____

11. Name of the place where the ceremony would take place with full details

House No._____Ward No.___

Mohalla_____

Village_____

Tahsil_____

District_____

12. Proposed date of conversion_____
13. Name of person who will perform the conversion ceremony and his/her address_____

_____

14. Name of at least two persons other than priest/the persons giving intimation_____to remain present at the time of conversion ceremony.

Signature of the religious priest/
The person taking part in the conversion ceremony.

VERIFICATION

I, the undersigned do hereby declare that the facts and particulars stated above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Place_____

Date_____

Signature of the priest
(/the person taking part in the conversions ceremony.

THE MADHYA PRADESH DHARMA SWATANTRYA ADHINIYAM 1968

Section 2. Definitions: In this Act unless the context otherwise requires:-

a) "allurement" means offer of any temptation in the form of:
   i) any gift or gratification either in cash or kind
   ii) grant of any material benefit either monetary or otherwise;

b) "conversion" means renouncing one religion and adopting another;
c) "force" shall include a show of force or a threat of injury of any kind including threat of divine displeasure or social ex-communication;
d) "fraud" shall include misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance;
e) "minor" means a person under eighteen years of age.

Section 3. Prohibition of forcible conversion: No person shall convert or attempt to convert, either directly or otherwise, any person from one religious faith to another by the use of force or by allurement or by any fraudulent means nor shall any person abet any such conversion.

COMMENTARY

Provisions of Ss.3,4 and 5 are not ultra vires of Art.25 of the Constitution of India : (1) Meaning of the expression "propagate" as used in Art.25 guarantees a right to freedom of religion, and the expression "propagate" cannot be said to have been used in a biological sense.

The expression has been defined in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary to mean, "to spread from person to person, or from place to place, to disseminate, diffuse (a statement, belief, practice, etc.)"

According to the Century Dictionary (which is an Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language) Vol. VI 'propagate' means as follows:

"To transmit or spread from person to person or from place to place; carry forward or onward; diffuse; extend; as to propagate a report; to propagate the Christian religion."

There is no doubt that it is in this sense that the word 'propagate' has been used in Article 25(1). Rev. Stainislaus V. State of M.P AIR 1977 SC 908.

(2) Article does not guarantee right to convert. For what the Article grants is not the right to convert another person to once own religion, but to transmit or spread once religion by an exposition of its tenets. It has to be remembered that Art.25 (1) guarantees "freedom of conscience" to every citizen, and not merely to the followers of one particular religion and that, in turn, postulates that there is no fundamental right to convert another person to one's own religion because if a person purposely undertakes the conversion of another person to his religion as distinguished from his efforts to transmit or spread the tenets of his religion, that would impinge on the "freedom of conscience" guaranteed to all the citizens of the country alike.

The meaning of the guarantee under Art.25 has been correctly given in Ratilal Panachand V. State of Bombay (AIR 1954 SC 388), and there is no justification for the view that it grants a fundamental right to convert persons to one's own religion. It has to be appreciated that the freedom of religion enshrined in the Article is not guaranteed in respect of one religion only, but covers all religions alike, and it can be properly enjoyed by a person if he exercises his right in a manner commensurate with the like freedom of person following the other religions. What is freedom for one is freedom for the other, in equal measure, and there can, therefore, be no such thing as a fundamental right to convert any person to one's own religion. Rev. Stainislaus V. State of M.P., AIR 1977 SC 908.

(3) MP Act prohibits forcible conversion. The Madhya Pradesh Act provides for the prohibition of conversion from one religion to another by use of force or allurement, or by fraudulent means, and matters incidental thereto. The expressions "allurement" and "fraud" have been defined by the Act. S.3 of the Act prohibits conversion by use of force or by allurement or by fraudulent means and s.4 penalizes such forcible conversion. The Act, therefore, clearly provides for the maintenance of public order for, if forcible conversion has not been prohibited, that would have created public disorder in the State. Rev. Stainislaus V. State of M.P, AIR 1977 SC 908.

(4) "Public Order"- The expression "public order" is of wide connotation. It must have the connotation, which it is meant to provide as the very first entry in List II. It has been held in Ramesh Thapar v. The State of Madras (AIR 1950 SC 124), that "public order" is an expression of wide connotation and signifies state of tranquility, which prevails among the members of a political society as a result of internal regulation imposed by the Government, which they have established. Rev. Stainislous v. State of M.P., AIR 1977 SC 908.

(5) The expression 'public order' ought not to be confused with 'law and order' or 'public safety'. These three concepts are altogether different and they convey a different connotation. Rev. Stainislaus v. State of M.P, AIR 1975 MP 163=1974 JLJ 571=1974 MPLJ 656.

(6) Restrictions may be imposed on the rights guaranteed by Arts.25 and 26 in the interests of public order. It has been held in AIR 1970 SC 1228, that if a thing disturbs the current of the life of the community, and does not merely affect an individual, it would amount to disturbance of the public order. Thus, if an attempt is made to raise communal passions,

e.g. on the ground that someone has been "forcibly" converted to another religion, it would, in all probability, give rise to an apprehension of breach of the public order, affecting the community at large. The impugned Act, therefore, falls within the purview of Entry 1 of List II of the Seventh Schedule as they are meant to avoid disturbance to the public order by prohibiting conversion from one religion to another in a manner reprehensible to the conscience of the community. Rev. Stainislaus v. State of M.P, AIR 1977 SC 908.

See also Rev. Stainislaus v. State of M.P., AIR 1975 MP 163=1974 JLJ 571=1974 MPLJ 656.

Section 4. Punishment for contravention of the provisions of section 3.

Any person contravening the provisions contained in section 3 shall, without prejudice to any civil liability, be punishable with imprisonment, which may extend to one year or with fine, which may extend to five thousand rupees or with both:

Provided that in case the offence is committed in respect of a minor, a woman or a person belonging to the Scheduled castes or Scheduled Tribes, the punishment shall be imprisonment to the extent of two years and fine up to ten thousand rupees.

Section 5. Intimation to be given to District Magistrate with respect to conversion:

(1) Whoever converts any person from one religious faith to another either by performing himself the ceremony necessary for such conversion as a religious priest or by taking part directly or indirectly in such ceremony shall, within such period after the ceremony as may be prescribed, send an intimation to the District Magistrate of the district in which the ceremony has taken place of the fact of such conversion in such form as may be prescribed.
(2) If any person fails with sufficient cause to comply with the provisions contained in sub-section (1), he shall be punishable with imprisonment, which may extend to one year or with fine, which may extend to one thousand rupees or with both.

COMMENTARY

(1) Section not ultra vires of Article 20(3) of the Constitution of India. Rev. Stainislaus v. State of M.P., AIR 1975 MP 163=1974 JLJ 571=1974 MPLJ 656.
(2) Provision regarding giving intimation about conversion does not violate Article 20(3) of the Constitution. Rev. Stainislaus v. State of MP, AIR 1975 MP 163=1974 JLJ 571=1974 MPLJ 656.

Section 6. Offences to be cognizable: An offence under this Act shall be cognizable and shall not be investigated by an officer below the rank of an Inspector of Police.

Section 7. Prosecution to be made with the sanction of District Magistrate: No prosecution for an offence under this Act shall be instituted except by, or with the previous sanction of, the District Magistrate or such other authority, not below the rank of a Sub-Divisional Officer, as may be authorized by him in that behalf.

Section 8. Power to make rules: The State Government may make rules for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.

The Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantra Rules, 1969 contain almost the same provisions as in the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules. Wherever there is difference between the two, it has been highlighted in the above-mentioned Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules.

Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Rules, 1969

Form A

The only difference between the Form A under Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules, 1989 and as amended in 1999 is in respect of the time for the intimation regarding conversion from one religious faith to another. While in the Orissa Freedom of Religion Rules the Priest has to inform before the ceremony of conversion, under the M.P Dharma Swantrantrya Adhiniyam Rules, 1969 the above intimation is to be sent after the ceremony.

Form B

(See Rule 4, which pertains to the acknowledgement receipt by District Magistrate about the intimations of conversions as required to be sent to him under Rule 3 within seven days, after the date of the conversion ceremony)

Received intimation under section 5 of the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam, 1968 (27 of 1968) on ------19 from Shri.....S/o.....resident of.....with respect to conversion of Shri.....son of.....resident of.....from.....religious faith to.....religious faith.

Date.....

District Magistrate

Form C

(See Rule 5, which relates to the maintenance of a register of conversion by District Magistrate regarding particulars of intimations received by him about conversions)

Register of Conversion

1. Name of the person converted.

2. Father's name of the person converted.
3. Address of the person converted in full.
   House No.....Ward No.....
   Mohalla.....Village.....
   Tahsil.....District.....

4. Age.....
5. Sex.....
6. Occupation and monthly income of the person converted.....
7. Whether married or unmarried.....
8. Name of person, if any, dependent upon the person converted.....
9. If a minor, name and full address of one guardian, if any.....
10. If belongs to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe and if so, particulars of such Caste or Tribe.....
11. Name of the place where the conversion ceremony has taken place with full details

    House No.....Ward No.....
    Mohalla.....Village.....
    Tahsil.....District.....
12. Date of conversion.....
13. Name of person who has performed the conversion ceremony and his address.....
14. Name of at least two persons other than priest/the person giving intimation present at the conversion ceremony.....

Form D

(See Rule 6, which requires submission of report by the District Magistrate to the State Government on the 10th of each month)

Report for the month of.....

1. No. of intimations received during the month.....
2. Religion-wise intimations.

	Break up of the Religion from which converted	Religion to which converted

3. No. of prosecutions, if any, instituted under the Adhiniyam.....
4. No. of acquittals and convictions under the Adhiniyam during the month.....

District Magistrate

THE ARUNACHAL PRADESH FREEDOM OF RELIGION ACT, 1978

Section 2 (b) "Conversion" means renouncing one religious faith and adopting another religious faith and "convert" shall be construed accordingly.

Section 2 (c): "Indigenous faith" means such religions, beliefs and practices including rites, rituals, festivals, observances, performances, abstinence, customs as have been found sanctioned, approved, performed by the indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh from the time these communities have been known and includes Buddhism as prevalent among the Monpas, Membas, Sherdukpens, Khambas, Khamptis and Singphos, Vaishnavism as practiced by Noctes, Akas and Nature worships, including worships of Doni-Polo, as prevalent among other indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

Section 2 (d) : "Force" shall include show of force or a threat of injury or any kind including threat of divine displeasure for social ex-communication .

Section 2 (e): "Fraud" shall include the misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance .

Section 2 (f): "Inducement" shall include the offer of any gift or gratification either in cash or in kind and shall also include the grant of any benefit, either pecuniary or otherwise.

Section 3: No person shall convert or attempt to convert either directly or otherwise, any person from one religious faith to any other religions faith by the use of force or by inducement or by any fraudulent means nor shall any person abet any such conversion.

Section 4: provides for punishment up to 2 years and fine up to ten thousand for contravention of the provisions of section 3.

Section 5(1) provides for the requirement of intimation to the Deputy Commissioner within a prescribed time by a Priest or a person who directly or indirectly takes part in such

ceremony or conversion. Section 5(2) provides for punishment up to one year or fine up to one thousand or both against a person contravening the provisions of Section 5(1).

Section 6 provides that an offence under this Act, shall be cognizable and shall not be investigated by an Officer below the rank of Inspector of Police.

Section 7 provides for the previous sanction for prosecution of Dy. Commissioner or any Officer under him not below the rank of Extra Assistant Commissioner.

Section 8 . The Government may make rules for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.

U.N.CHATER

The United Nations Declarations on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities.

Article 1:- States shall protect the existence of the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories, and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends.

Article 2: - Persons belonging national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities have the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, and to use their own language in private and in public, freely and without interference or any from of discrimination.

Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in culture, religious, social, economic and public life.

Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in taking decisions, on the national and where appropriate regional level, concerning the minority, to which they belong, or the regions in which they live, in a manner not incompatible with national legislation.

Persons belonging to minorities have the right to establish and maintain their won associations.

Persons belonging to the minorities have the right to establish and maintain, without any discrimination, free and peaceful contacts with other members of their group and with persons belonging to other minorities as well as contacts across frontiers with citizens of other states to whom they are related by national or ethnic, religious or linguistic ties.

Article 3: - Persons belonging to minorities may exercise their rights, including those set forth in this declaration, individually as well as a community, with other members of their group without any discrimination. No disadvantages shall result for any person as a consequence of the exercise or non-exercise of the rights set forth in this declaration .In U.K.

Catholics are a minority but they are majority in Ireland. In Latin American Countries, Catholics are in majority. In the Philippines, Muslims are a minority vis-à-vis Christians.

The National Commission for Minorities Act 1992

As amended by National Commission for Minorities (Amendment) Act 1995 [Act XLI of 1995]

Functions of the Commission: -

(1) The Commission shall perform all or any of the following functions, namely:

(a) Evaluate the progress of the development of minorities under the Union and Sates;

(b) Monitor the working of the safeguards provided in the Constitution and in laws enacted by Parliament and the State Legislatures;

(c) Make recommendations for the effective implementation of safeguards for the protection of the interests of minorities by the Central Government or the State Governments;

(d) Look into specific complaints regarding deprivation of rights and safeguards the minorities and take up such matters with the appropriate authorities;

(e) Cause studies to be undertaken into problems arising out of any discrimination against minorities and recommend measures for their removal;

(f) Conduct studies, research and analysis on the issues relating to socio-economic and educational development of minorities;

(g) Suggest appropriate measures in respect of any minority to be undertaken by the Central Government or the State Governments;

(h) Make periodical or special reports to the Central Government on any matter pertaining to minorities and in particular difficulties confronted by them; and

(i) Any other matter, which may be referred to it by the Central Government.

(2) The Central Government shall cause the recommendations referred to in clause (c) of sub-section (1) to be laid before each House of Parliament along with a memorandum explaining the action taken or proposed to be taken on the recommendations relating to the Union and the reasons for the non-acceptance, if any, of any of such recommendations.

WADHWA COMMISSION

CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions:

(b) Graham Stewart Staines, an Australian missionary, devoted most part of his life in India to the cause of eradication of leprosy and rehabilitation of leprosy patients. As a missionary, he was also involved in spreading the Gospel and was behind the church movement in the two districts of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar. He himself was not involved in conversions. A missionary preaches, and it is the individual who converts. There have been conversions among the tribals. Tribals who got converted distanced themselves from tribal customs. There have been instances of conflicts between Christian and non-Christian tribals evidencing growing tensions between them. Opposition was also developing against conversions in the area. Staines himself had suspicion about the growing tensions. But he did not expect that a stage had come where there is threat to his life or a riotous situation is developing. The administration was quite unconcerned and oblivion to the growing tension. Manoharpur was a peaceful village inhabited by Santhal tribe. Now, it is a divided house. In the election of the headman of the village, Christians had their own candidate and all of them voted for him. Non-Christians voted for their non-Christian candidate. It is a strange scenario. When a non-Christian converts himself, he does not become a different human being. Why then does any religious group think it that way? Religion is one's faith. It is not to become a big divide. People, it appears, have more religion in them than they are religious. Here what we need is, understanding of religion. Prime need of the hour is the consensus, harmony and reconciliation. Staines was a popular figure by all accounts in Baripada. He earned fame for his selfless service for the cause of leprosy. Gladys, his wife, talks of his attainments. Unfortunately, some of the tribals perceived Staines to be the person behind spread of Christianity by converting innocent and unsuspecting tribals and the one making inroads into their culture and customs.

Dara Singh was growing in stature. He is a fanatic. He committed crimes against Muslim leaders. There was no check on him. There were criminal cases pending against him and yet he was not declared as absconder. These Muslim leaders were trading in cattle. Dara Singh played on the sentiments of Mahanta community in the area who worship cows. Action of Dara Singh in stopping the transporting of cattle from Muslim traders and also by a Hindu trader and then distributing the cattle earned him popularity. Tribal youth looked at him with awe as if they found a Messiah in Dara Singh. They drew his attention to the conversions in Manoharpur by the Christian Missionaries. Now, attention of Dara Singh was diverted towards Christian Missionaries. These youth are not members of any organization. Dara Singh understood the psyche of the tribals. He played on their emotions and provoked their ire saying that Christian Missionaries were destroying Hindu religion. He prepared them and them led the attack on the Christian Missionaries. Staines was killed by these fanatics and with him his two children also perished.

other's faith and to spread a message of love, peace and kindness. Murderer is a murderer to whichever faith he may belong. A criminal is a criminal. Religion need not be brought in such matters. Allow the police to make independent investigation of the crime uninfluenced by politics or religion or caste.

10. Media, both print and electronic, has also to exercise restraint. Screaming headlines should be avoided which have the effect of misleading the public and creating more tension and suspicion among different communities. News headlines in the cases of rape of nun and murder of a Christian boy and girl after rape have been noticed. One cannot imagine the damage that might have been caused to the polity by such headlines and reporting. Reporting of communal strife should not be done without proper verification or an ordinary crime given a communal twist.

(c) The act of murdering Staines and his two children was inspired by Dara Singh and his clout and no authority, organization or any other person played any role in or in connection with the killings. There is no evidence that any authority or organization was behind the gruesome killings.

Recommendations:

1. It is imperative that development of tribal areas is accelerated.
2. To avoid any distrust among the different communities and to bring in communal harmony, it is necessary that at the school level itself, children are taught components of all religious faiths making available to them treasure of all faiths.
3. It is necessary to evolve a common framework for the future and for that National Foundation of Communal Harmony be made a statutory body on the lines of National Human Rights Commission.
4. Law and order machinery in the state is to be strengthened. Frequent, illogical and irrational transfers of officers, especially of District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police are to be avoided. Proposal for transfer of Superintendent of Police should emanate from Director General of Police in the State. IPS and IAS Officers, who are on the cadre of Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, while in their respective academies, should be taught about the tribals, their culture, their customs and their habits. These officers are being given lessons in the language of the particular State to which they are assigned.
5. FIR registered in the case does not represent true state of affairs. It is certainly a doctored document. Then there is the arrest of 51 persons initially in connection with this case, which was apparently without any reasonable basis. Their detention for over two months in custody appears, prima facie, to be unjustified. There should be an independent inquiry to find out the circumstances leading to the recording of the FIR, arrest of innocent persons and how they are to be recompensed for their illegal arrest and detention. Responsibility for this be fixed on the guilty be it the State Government and/or its officials and necessary action taken.
6. Intelligence gathering machinery also needs strengthening especially the community intelligence.
7. There should be proper understanding of the provisions of the Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967 and the Rules made thereunder.
8. Visits of VIPs need drastic curtailing as their visits hamper investigation and there is every chance of important evidence being lost by delay in investigation.
9. There should be a Code of Conduct for the political parties when their leaders make statements without verification in a situation like the present one. Leaders cannot make statements merely for gaining political mileage. Their statements should be subdued and not to fan the fire when the atmosphere is communally surcharged. It is the duty of everyone to have regard to each

Observations and Recommendations of The Venugopal Commission into Hindu Christian riot in Kanyakumari in 1982.

The Commission made the following observations and recommendations:

The commission cannot observe that the minority communities should always abide by the will of the majority community. But it can state, as a bare fact that the futures safety, security, rights and privileges of the minority community are dependent on a large measure on the goodwill, understanding and sympathy of the majority community viz., Hindus. -------When a minority community becomes majority in a "pocket" or area, it tends to become militant, defiant and aggressive in that area. Communal clash in North Indian States is a recurring problem and people have learnt to live with it. In the State of Tamilnadu, with the great Dravidian tradition and culture, the soil is not conducive for the growth or spread of communal clashes.

a) Individual conversion is an exception, rather than rule. Conversion of Hindus to other religious has given rise to problems of law and order. It disturbs the social structure and existing inter-communal harmony and fans the flames of communal passion, justly or unjustly. Christianity and Islam are feeling annoyed with the conversion efforts of Hindus. The conversion of Hindus and the propaganda method adopted constitute a major contributing cause for the building up of tension. Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura have enacted legislation banning conversions by foul and fraudulent means.

   The Commission has therefore, recommended that the State Government should either request the Central Government to pass a law covering the whole of India banning conversions or enact a State law, prohibiting mass-conversions and conversions by foul and fraudulent means.

b) Proximity of places of worship of different religious groups has all the potential to generate communal tension and clash. There is rivalry between Hindus and Christians in the erection and creation of new places of public worship at strategic places and vantage points.

   The commission, has therefore, recommended to pass legislation regulating the erection and creation of new places of public worship or converting the existing place or building into a new place of public worship. The legislation may be modeled on the lines of the Proclamation issued by the erstwhile Maharajha of Travancore State on 27th November 1898.

c) The application of personal laws to Indian citizens depending on the religion to which they belong to tends to accentuate the distinction and differences between the various religious groups. The people of this country are Indians and they should be governed only by one common Civil Code. Such uniform civil code will go a long way to promote communal harmony and peace between the different religious groups.

The Commission, therefore, recommends that in pursuance of the Directive Principles of State Policy contained in Article 44 of the Constitution, a Common Civil Code should be enacted in respect of civil rights of Indian citizens, irrespective of whether they are Hindus, Christians or Muslims.

d) Installation of loudspeakers at close proximity by two rival religious groups is bound to create tension, which can spill over into violence. Indiscriminate use of loudspeakers in places of public worship without any control exercised by the police and revenue authorities tends to create communal tension and disharmony.

The Commission has given certain guidelines for regulating the use of loudspeakers in the places of public worship. It has recommended that statutory recognition may be given to the following guidelines by amending the Police Act:

4) The use of loudspeakers during the festival times should be regulated both with regard to duration of time and also with reference to the number of loudspeakers to be used.

5) Simultaneous use of loudspeakers by rival religious groups in close proximity should be avoided.

6) Use of loudspeakers should be strictly confined within the precincts of the place of worship.

e) Religious processions tend to create communal tension and disturb communal harmony and peace. When such processions are taken by religious groups shouting abusive and provocative slogans, they cause irritation to the rival religious groups and tend to create communal tension. The Commission recommends that religious processions should be discouraged, if not banned altogether. They should be regulated by prescribing the route (they must as far as possible, conform to the customary route, if any) and banning the shouting of slogans. Such processions should be invariably banned in sensitive areas, prone to communal violence in the past. The Commission recommends that suitable amendment to the Police Act should be made for achieving this object.

f) The Commission has pointed out that foreign money received in this country goes not merely to maintain educational and medical institutions, but is also shared by professional proselytizers.

The Commission has, therefore, recommended that the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act should be amended to control the money received by individuals and utilized for proselytization activities.

(1) Those Missionaries whose primary object is proselytization should be asked to withdraw. The large influx of foreign Missionaries is undesirable and should be checked.

(2) The best course for the Indian Churches to follow is to establish a United Independent Christian Church in India without being dependent on foreign support.

(3) Law should prohibit the use of medical or other professional services as a direct means of making conversions.

(4) To implement the provision in the Constitution of India prohibiting the imparting of religious education to children without the explicit consent of parents and guardians, the Department of Education should see that proper forms are prescribed and made available to all schools.

(5) Any attempt by force or fraud, or threats of illicit means or grants of financial or other aid, or by fraudulent means or promises, or by moral and material assistance, or by taking advantage of any person's inexperience or confidence, or by exploiting any persons necessity, spiritual (mental) weakness or thoughtlessness, or, in general, any attempt or effort (whether successful or not), directly or indirectly to penetrate into the religious conscience of persons (whether of age or underage) of another faith, for, the purpose of consciously altering their religious conscience or faith, so as to agree with the ideas or convictions of the proselytizing party should be absolutely prohibited.

(6) Religious institutions should not be permitted to engage in occupations like recruitment of labour for tea gardens.

(7) It is the primary duty of Government to conduct orphanages, as the State is the legal guardian of all minors who have no parents or natural guardians.

(8) Government should issue an appeal to authoritative and representative Christian Missionary Organizations and to Christians in general to come together and to form an authoritative organization which should lay down and inform Government in clear terms the policy which the Missions and Christians in general will follow in respect of propagating their religion, the methods to be followed in conversions, the type of propaganda which will be promoted and the attempts which will be made to confine their evangelistic activities within the limits of public order, morality and health.

(9) An amendment of the Constitution of India may be sought, firstly to clarify that the right of propagation has been given only to the citizens of India and secondly that it does not include conversion brought about by force, fraud or other illicit means.

(10)Suitable control on conversions brought about through illegal means should be imposed. If necessary Legislative measures should be enacted.

(11)Advisory Boards at State level, regional level and district level should be constituted of non-officials, minority communities like Tribals and Harijans being in a majority on these boards.

(12)Rules relating to the registration of Doctors, Nurses and other personnel employed in hospitals should be suitably amended to provide a condition against evangelistic activities during professional services.

(13)Circulation of literature meant for religious propaganda without approval of the State Government should be prohibited.

(14)The officers of Government should compulsorily inspect every quarter institutions in receipt of grants-in-aid or recognition from Government.

(15)Government should lay down a policy that the responsibility of providing social services like education, health, medicine, etc., to members of scheduled tribes, castes and other backward classes will be solely of the State Government, and adequate services should be provided as early as possible, non-official organizations being permitted to run institution only for members of their own religious faith.

(16)A separate department of Cultural and Religious affairs should be constituted at the State level to deal with these matters which should be in charge of a Minster belonging to a Scheduled Caste, tribe or other backward classes and should have specially trained personnel at the various levels.

(17)No non-official agency should be permitted to secure foreign assistance except through Government channels.

(18)No foreigner should be allowed to function in a scheduled or a specified area either independently or as a member of a religious institution unless he has given a declaration in writing that he will not take part in politics.

(19)Programmes of social and economic uplift by non-official or religious bodies should receive prior approval of the State.

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