

Ambassador Krishan Kumar  
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Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my concern about 271 pastors and church members in Jaunpur in Uttar Pradesh State who have been charged with a range of crimes, including attempts to convert Hindus by the means of drugs and spreading lies about Hinduism. The 271 Christians were initially cleared of any wrongdoing by a court in August, but now they stand accused of various criminal offenses, like fraud, defiling places of worship and prejudice against national integration.

Your Excellency, I am concerned that the recent arrests signify an upsurge in religious intolerance against Christians and other religious minorities in Uttar Pradesh State, and that the police are not sufficiently protecting minorities from attacks. In fact, several of the reported arrests seem arbitrary, and police officers have also disrupted prayer service and threatened pastors to stop conducting Sunday worship. The police and judiciary even seem to presume that evangelical activities and prayer groups are illegal or criminal. In addition, Christians and other religious minorities in Uttar Pradesh are targeted by violent Hindu nationalist groups while impunity is rampant.

I understand that your country has a rich tradition and legal framework supporting the freedom of religion or belief. May I respectfully remind you of your government's obligations to uphold the right to freedom of religion or belief for all Indians, as guaranteed by the Constitution of India and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which India is a party. Accordingly, the nation of India is obligated to ensure that everyone under its jurisdiction can practise their religion, thought and conscience publicly or privately, alone or with others.

I humbly petition your intervention to ensure that:

- all actions targeting Christians and other religious minorities in Uttar Pradesh are stopped immediately;
- the accused believers will have a fair trial;
- the environment of impunity in Uttar Pradesh State is ended by holding perpetrators responsible for religiously motivated threats and violence;
- minority groups' right to practice freedom of religion or belief is respected and upheld by the authorities at every level and in all states of India.

I thank you in advance for using your influence as ambassador and conveying this message to the relevant authorities in your home country.

Yours sincerely,