

**PUBLIC**

**AI Index: ASA 20/019/2008**

**05 September 2008**

**Further Information on UA 236/08 (ASA 20/018/2008, 27 August 2008) Fear for safety**

**INDIA**                      **Population of Kandhamal district, Orissa state**

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The Orissa state authorities have set up 20 relief camps to provide sanctuary for Christians forced to flee their homes in Kandhamal district. The Christian minority have come under attack since the murder of a prominent Hindu nationalist leader on 24 August, and 20 have so far been killed. One of the camps was attacked on 2 September.

A total of 13,000 people were staying in the camps, in Kandhamal district and the Orissa state capital, Bhubaneswar. A group of 200 women supporters of the murdered Hindu nationalist leader, angry that relief was being given to Christians, went to protest at the camp at Tikabali on 2 September. Police baton-charged them to drive them back.

The 2 September attack came a day after India's home minister, Shivraj Patil, visited one of the relief camps in the district and announced a series of steps to rehabilitate those displaced by the attacks.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The situation in Kandhamal district had been tense for some time before the current violence began. In December 2007, at least 11 people died in communal violence, four of them shot by police. A number of Christian institutions were attacked. A judicial inquiry into the violence, announced by the state government, is still in progress.

The state government announced on 25 August that a special team had been constituted to investigate the murder of Lakshmananda Saraswathi and his associates.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:**

- urging the authorities to provide adequate security for the relief camps set up for Christians in the state of Orissa, and ensure that relief reaches them safely.
- urging them to take immediate action to halt attacks on the Christian minority in Kandhamal and other districts of Orissa;
- urging them to conduct a prompt and impartial investigation into the attacks, including the one on the relief camp, publish the results and bring those responsible to justice.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Naveen Patnaik  
Chief Minister of Orissa  
Office of the Chief Minister  
Naveen Nivas  
Aerodrome Road  
P.O. Bhubaneshwar

Distt. Khurda, Pin - 751 001  
Orissa, India

**Fax:** +91 674 2535100  
**Email:** cmo@ori.nic.in  
**Salutation:** Dear Chief Minister

Shivraj V. Patil  
Minister of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Room no. 104  
North Block  
New Delhi 110 001  
India

**Fax:** +91 11 2309 4221  
**Email:** svpatil@sansad.nic.in  
**Salutation:** Dear Home Minister

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of India accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 17 October 2008.