

Nepal: Freedom of Religion or Belief

ANNEX 2: Cases of violence and threats of violence against Christians in Nepal

1. On 1 May 2015, in Champi village, Lalitpur district, six Christians were attacked by four of their neighbors, who beat them with steel rods. Other Christian families living nearby tried to stop them, but they were fought off. The incident happened during aid distribution and is consequent to threats stemming from religious affiliation.²
2. On 16 April 2017, in Lalitpur, Kathmandu Valley, a Christian worker, Santosh Khadka, was shot in Kathmandu while returning home from an Easter service.³ This case remains unresolved at date of submission of this report, and no one has been formally accused of this crime.
3. On 8 April 2018, in Kathmandu, a Hindu religious leader was arrested on 7 May 2018 on accusation of issuing instructions to shoot himself, to instill religious conflict.⁴ He had sought to provoke a strife between Hindus and Christians. He was released on bail and his court case is ongoing at the time of writing of this report.
4. On 15 June 2018, in Satdobato, Lalitpur District, a group of people came into Anandaban hospital saying they are Shiva Sena (Army of Shiva) and that they had come to stop religious conversion. Non-Christian staff members were in the hospital and they were also threatened.⁵
5. On 3 November 2018, in Palpa, over a period of two months, Brahmins, the highest caste from which Hindu priests and teachers are drawn, disrupted the worship service of the Pakhluwa Eternal Life Church in Palpa every week, and accused Pastor Tufani Bhar of converting villagers. The church was forced to shut down.⁶ It has remained closed every since and the Christian worshipers initiated church meetings in the neighboring village.
6. On 25 December 2018, in Bharatpur, Chitwan District. On Christmas Day, the president of the Hindu Revival Campaign Nepal (Hindu Jagran Abhiyan Nepal), Ram Prasad Upadhyay, led a huge anti-Christian procession and burned Bibles at a highway intersection. A crowd estimated at between 5,000 and 8,000 people shouted slogans such as, “Beat the Christians,” “Throw out Christians” and “Down with Christians.”⁷

1 Report submitted by: The World Evangelical Alliance, the Commission of Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches, Baptist World Alliance, Nepal Christian Society, National Christian Fellowship of Nepal, International Panel of Parliamentarians for Freedom of Religion or Belief (IPPFoRB) - Nepal Chapter Transformation Nepal, ITEEN, Safe Family Nepal, Religious Liberty Forum – Nepal, Interfaith Peace Federation of Nepal, Network for Christian NGOS Nepal (NECON), and Pax Romana – Nepal.

2 Nepal Christians attacked while trying to help, 18 August 2016, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/08/nepal-christians-attacked-while-trying-to-help/>

3 Nepal: Christian worker shot at Easter says he’s still fearful, 14 July 2017, <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/nepals-christian-worker-who-was-shot-at-on-easter-says-hes-still-fearful/>

4 ‘Religious Leader’ staged attack on himself to incite conflict, arrested, 7 May 2018, <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/religious-leader-srinibas-acharya-held-from-kathmandu/>

5 See article in Nepali titled “Shiv Sena arrives at Missionary Hospital”, <http://annapurnapost.com/news/129939>

6 Church in Nepal Forced to Shut Down, 16 November 2018, <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/11/church-in-nepal-forced-to-shut-down/>

7 Hindu Extremists Pressure Convert to File False Charge against Pastor in India, Sources Say, 5 February 2019, <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/02/hindu-extremists-pressure-convert-to-file-false-charge-against-pastor-in-india-sources-say>

7. On 20 January 2019, in Kathmandu, threats and intimidation by Hindu extremists forcibly stopped the construction of a church building.⁸
8. On 23 February 2019, in Pipal Chautari, Dhangadi, two Indian, two European and one Nepali were returning to India from visiting a church in Pipal Chautari when their car was stopped and they were forced out of their vehicle and publicly assaulted by a group led by Sanjib Sahi, mayor-candidate of the Rastrya Prajatantra Party, a political party that promotes Hindu nationalistic views.
9. On 10 April 2019, in Sarlahi, a pastor was beaten following a stationery distribution program in a Dalit settlement in Sarlahi. After a few minutes of beating, the attackers instructed him to stop spreading religion. The pastor was involved in a non-religious program helping the Dalit children.⁹ The police was informed of the incident, but no arrest has been made to date.
10. During the second week of September 2019, in Chitwan District, Hindu extremist threats have driven a pastor in Nepal into hiding following a leak onto social media of a restricted audience-interview of a talk he gave in March 2019.¹⁰

8 Ibid.

9 Article in Nepali "Beating by an unidentified group claiming to preach religion," <http://annapurnapost.com/news/123652>

10 Social Media Backlash Reflects New Era of Hostility in Nepal, 16 September 2019, <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/social-media-backlash-reflects-new-era-of-hostility-in-nepal/>