



"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." - Matthew 5:10

PERSECUTED CHRISTIAN FORUM (PCF)



హింసించబడిన క్రైస్తవ పోరమ్
Jerusalem Mathaiah @ 9290761702

క్రైస్తవ పోరమ్
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1800 3090 777

2-4-119,5A, Gandhi Nagar, Uppal, Medchal Dist,
Hyderabad,500039.TG.Mathaiah706@gmail.com

OFFICE : 9-1-29/10, 15B, 1st Floor, RIJHUMALL MANSION, YMCA BACK SIDE, PILLER NO 1214, SD ROAD,
SECUNDERABAD, HYD, TELANGANA, 5000003. Wtsp: 9505251777. Persecutedchristianforum.com

Persecuted Christians Forum –Toll Free Helpline: 1800 3090 777 (Emergency Services).

† HISTORICAL PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS

From Jesus Christ and the Apostles to Christian Martyrs in India and Around the World

"If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you."

— John 15:20

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake."

— Matthew 5:10

1. PASTOR SANJEEVA OF VIKARABAD, TELANGANA — 2014

Among the cases that should be remembered in the modern history of Christian persecution in India is the death of Pastor Orucanti Sanjeevi / Rev. B. Sanjeevulu, a Christian pastor associated with Vikarabad in the present-day Telangana region. According to contemporary reports, Pastor Sanjeevi was attacked at or near his residence in Vikarabad in January 2014. Reports stated that he sustained serious injuries and subsequently died on 13 January 2014. Contemporary reporting also stated that police arrested members of the Hindu Vahini group in connection with the attack. One contemporary report stated that four men allegedly attacked Rev. B. Sanjeevulu in front of his home and that a Christian organisation subsequently approached the National Human Rights Commission concerning the case. Another contemporary report by Morning Star News reported that police had arrested seven of eight alleged members of Hindu Vahini in connection with the attack and that Pastor Sanjeevi, reported as 48 years old, died from his injuries on 13 January.

Historical significance

The case is important to the record of Indian Christian persecution because it illustrates the vulnerability of a Christian religious worker who was allegedly attacked because of his Christian identity and ministry.

At the same time, a responsible historical record must distinguish between:

FACTS REPORTED:

- Pastor Sanjeevi was attacked.
- He suffered serious injuries.
- He subsequently died.
- Police arrested persons in connection with the case.
- Contemporary Christian and human-rights reporting raised concerns about religious persecution.

ALLEGATION / MOTIVE:

- Contemporary Christian sources described the attack as connected to Hindu extremist opposition to Christianity.

- The precise legal finding concerning the religious motive should be stated only from the relevant FIR, charge sheet and final judicial record.

Therefore PCF should record the case as:

“The 2014 Vikarabad killing of Pastor Orucanti Sanjeevi/Sanjeevulu, in which members of Hindu Vahini were accused and arrested, is documented in contemporary news reports as an alleged anti-Christian attack.”

This wording protects the historical credibility of the PCF archive while ensuring that the pastor's death is not forgotten.

2. THE WIDER HISTORY — FROM CHRIST TO INDIA

Pastor Sanjeevi's death should be understood within the much longer Christian history of persecution.

The biblical record begins with Jesus Christ Himself.

Jesus was rejected, arrested, beaten, crucified and killed.

John 15:20 records Christ's warning:

“If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”

After Christ's resurrection, His disciples and followers continued preaching despite opposition.

Stephen

Acts 7:54–60

Stephen was killed after proclaiming his faith in Christ.

The Early Church

Acts 8:1

“At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem.”

Apostle Paul

Paul experienced imprisonment, beatings, dangers, persecution and suffering because of his ministry.

2 Corinthians 11:23–27

Yet he declared:

2 Timothy 4:7

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

3. ROMAN CHRISTIAN MARTYRS

The first centuries of Christianity contain numerous accounts of persecution under Roman authorities.

Important historical periods include persecutions associated with:

- Nero
- Decius
- Valerian
- Diocletian

Among famous early Christian martyrs are:

- Ignatius of Antioch
- Polycarp of Smyrna
- Justin Martyr

- Perpetua
- Felicity
- Cyprian of Carthage

Their stories survive through ancient Christian writings, letters, martyr accounts and later historical scholarship.

4. ST. THOMAS — INDIA'S APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Indian Christianity possesses an ancient tradition connecting St. Thomas the Apostle with India.

According to longstanding Indian Christian tradition, Thomas travelled to India, preached the Gospel and eventually suffered martyrdom at Mylapore, present-day Chennai/Madras.

The precise date and circumstances of his arrival and death are subjects of historical discussion. Therefore PCF should distinguish the ancient Christian tradition from details that can be independently established through contemporary first-century documentation.

Nevertheless, the St. Thomas tradition has played a foundational role in the history and identity of India's ancient Christian communities.

5. CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES, EVANGELISTS AND MARTYRS

Through subsequent centuries, Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant and Evangelical Christians have suffered persecution in different countries and historical circumstances.

Among those remembered are:

- priests;
- bishops;
- nuns and religious workers;
- missionaries;
- pastors;
- evangelists;
- Bible translators;
- Christian teachers;
- humanitarian workers;
- ordinary Christian families.

Their experiences include imprisonment, expulsion, torture, church destruction, forced displacement and death.

However, each individual case must be independently documented before being classified as persecution.

6. GRAHAM STAINES AND HIS SONS — INDIA

The killing of Australian missionary Graham Staines and his sons Philip and Timothy in Odisha in January 1999 is one of India's most documented modern cases involving a Christian missionary and his children.

Government inquiry and judicial proceedings provide substantial documentary evidence concerning the case.

The case became an important symbol in discussions concerning religious violence and the safety of Christian missionaries in India.

7. KANDHAMAL AND OTHER CASES OF CHRISTIAN VIOLENCE

The history of Indian Christians also includes the serious violence experienced by Christian communities in Kandhamal, Odisha, particularly during the violence of 2007–08.

Reports documented:

- deaths;
- attacks on Christian homes;
- destruction of churches;
- displacement;
- destruction of Christian institutions;
- fear among Christian families.

Such incidents must be documented individually with police records, government reports, court records and credible journalism.

8. WHY PASTOR SANJEEVI MUST BE REMEMBERED

The Vikarabad case should not be separated from the broader Christian history. I found contemporary reporting specifically identifying the victim as Pastor Orucanti Sanjeevi/Sanjeevulu of Vikarabad, and reports state that he was attacked at his home in January 2014, later died from his injuries, and that police arrested members of the Hindu Vahini group in connection with the case.

From:

JESUS CHRIST → STEPHEN → THE APOSTLES → EARLY CHRISTIAN MARTYRS → ST. THOMAS → MISSIONARIES → MODERN INDIAN MARTYRS → PASTOR SANJEEVI → PRESENT-DAY CHRISTIAN VICTIMS

there is a continuing historical record of Christians who have suffered because of their faith or Christian ministry.

The PCF purpose is not to promote hatred against Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, atheists or any other community.

Rather:

THE CRIME MUST BE OPPOSED — NOT AN ENTIRE RELIGION.

Individual perpetrators must be held accountable through the law.

9. PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS FORUM — PCF

✚ SERVE • PROTECT • SUPPORT • EMPOWER

The Persecuted Christians Forum (PCF) seeks to transform the memory of persecuted Christians into practical service.

PCF OBJECTIVES

1. DOCUMENT

Maintain a verified record of attacks, threats, harassment, killings and other serious incidents affecting Christians.

2. PRESERVE MARTYR MEMORIES

Record the lives and sacrifices of pastors, evangelists, missionaries and Christian families.

3. VERIFY EVIDENCE

Collect FIRs, charge sheets, court orders, government reports, photographs, videos, credible news reports and authenticated eyewitness information.

4. PROTECT CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORSHIP

Assist Christians during emergencies through lawful coordination with police, medical services and legal professionals.

5. PROVIDE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Help victims understand lawful complaint procedures and connect them with appropriate legal assistance.

6. SUPPORT FAMILIES

Assist families affected by death, injury, displacement, property destruction or other serious consequences.

7. DEFEND CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Promote freedom of religion, equality before law and peaceful exercise of constitutional rights.

8. SUPPORT CHURCHES AND CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

Assist with lawful administrative, property, documentation and institutional problems.

9. PROMOTE PEACE

Reject revenge, mob violence, hatred and unlawful retaliation.

10. BUILD A CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION ARCHIVE

Preserve reliable historical records for future generations.

10. PCF EVIDENCE STANDARD

Every case entered into the PCF archive should preferably contain:

CASE FILE

A. Victim's name

B. Date and place

C. Christian ministry / identity

D. Description of incident

E. FIR / police information

F. Arrest information

G. Charge-sheet information

H. Court proceedings

I. Government / NHRC records

J. Newspaper reports

K. Photographs / videos

L. Eyewitness statements

M. Final judicial outcome

Digital/social-media material should be preserved with its original source, date and context and independently verified wherever possible.

11. PCF MESSAGE TO INDIA

WE REMEMBER THE MARTYRS.

WE STAND WITH THE VICTIMS.

WE SEEK JUSTICE THROUGH LAW.

WE PROTECT CHRISTIAN FAMILIES.

WE DEFEND FREEDOM OF RELIGION.

WE REJECT REVENGE AND HATRED.

WE PROMOTE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

12. FINAL CHRISTIAN MESSAGE

The history of Christian persecution teaches believers not to answer violence with violence.

Matthew 5:44

"Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Romans 12:14

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

Romans 12:18

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Revelation 2:10

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."

✠ PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS FORUM — PCF

REMEMBER THE MARTYRS

PROTECT THE LIVING

SUPPORT THE VICTIMS

SEEK JUSTICE

DEFEND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

PROMOTE PEACE

SERVE • PROTECT • SUPPORT • EMPOWER

"For the righteous falls seven times and rises again." — Proverbs 24:16

History of Christians and PRSCN

The Christian Journey Through History

Christianity has a long history marked by faith, growth, sacrifice, and perseverance. From the ministry of Jesus Christ and the birth of the early Church to the present day, Christians in many parts of the world have experienced periods of acceptance as well as opposition.

The first followers of Christ faced persecution because of their faith. Many early Christians continued to worship, serve others, and share the Gospel despite social, political, and religious pressure. Their testimony became an important part of Christian history.

The Early Church

The Book of Acts records how the early Church grew even during periods of persecution. Christians gathered together, supported one another, cared for people in need, and continued to proclaim their faith.

Over the centuries, Christianity spread across different regions and cultures. Churches, Christian communities, schools, hospitals, and charitable organizations developed in many parts of the world.

Persecution Through the Centuries

Christian persecution has taken different forms at different times. Christians have sometimes faced discrimination, restrictions on worship, social exclusion, violence, imprisonment, destruction of property, or pressure to abandon their faith.

The circumstances have differed from country to country and from one historical period to another. Understanding this history helps Christians recognize the importance of religious freedom, peaceful coexistence, and protection of human dignity.

The Role of PRSCN

The Persecuted Christian Forum seeks to remember this history while addressing the challenges faced by Christians today. History is not only about remembering the past; it is also about learning from it.

PRSCN aims to encourage Christians to remain faithful, support those experiencing hardship, promote awareness, and respond to persecution through prayer, compassion, peaceful advocacy, and practical assistance.

The history of Christianity demonstrates a continuing message of faith and perseverance: even in times of suffering, hope can endure.