



भारतीय राजदूत
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA
WARSAW

No.WAR/321/1/2008

January 5, 2009

Dear Dr. Kochanowski,

I wish to thank you for your letter dated 10 December, 2008, expressing your condemnation of the terror attacks in Mumbai. We deeply value your expression of support, compassion and solidarity.

As regards your concern about "safety of some Christian communities in India", I do not know of your sources of information about it. We have had some violence in the Kandhamal district of Orissa in August-September 2008 but that has since been brought under control and I have not seen any report, neither in the Indian media nor in the international media, about any recurrence of that violence. The Prime Minister of India had himself assured the EU Presidency in this regard during the India-EU annual summit and said the following during the joint press conference with President Sarkozy on 29th September, 2008:-

"With regard to the Christian minority in India, let me say India is a secular state. We are a country which is multi-racial, multi-religious and the Constitution of India guarantees to all citizens of India the freedom and right to profess and propagate the religion of their choice. There have been sporadic incidents in some parts of our country, but our government has taken a firm position. I have myself condemned these acts. "

I am happy to enclosed herewith a detailed report on the Kandhamal district violence in Orissa and it may be seen that the cause of violence has been tribal rivalries. Ironically conversion by members of the Scheduled Caste Pana tribe to Christianity had denied them reservation privileges and became a contributing factor to the tribal rivalry. There are also land rights issues. You would also note that the violence was triggered by murder of Swami Taxamananda and four of his disciples.

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Permit me to draw your kind attention to the abduction of an Indian national, Mr. Harish Hitange, in April 2004 in Warsaw. Despite the Embassy's best efforts through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw, no information has been forthcoming about his whereabouts. I would request your office to kindly look into this humanitarian issue and help us in determining the whereabouts of Harish Hitange. His parents in India are still hoping that their son is alive and will return home some day.

Warm regards,

Yours sincerely,



(C.M. Bhandari)

Dr. Janusz Kochanowski
Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection
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