

# CONVERSION IN CHHATTISGARH

*FACTS & MYTHS*

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# CONVERSION IN CHHATTISGARH

## At the Root of the Controversy

The State Assembly Elections in the newly constituted state of Chhattisgarh are due to be held on December 1, this year! The two major political parties-Congress (I) and the Bhartiya Janata Party - are vying with each other to raise issues that would capture the public mood.

The Congress (I) has announced "development" during its 3-years tenure as the main plank for the forthcoming elections. Of course, it is another matter that in the name of development, the Congress (I) is ruthlessly peddling the globalisation agenda on the people of Chhattisgarh. The privatisation of Sheonath river water is only a burning example, thus denying people their control on and usage of natural resources.

Although the BJP and its coalition partners in the NDA government at the Centre are also pursuing the globalisation agenda, in Chhattisgarh it has declared "Dhan Aur Dharmantaran" (Paddy & Conversion) as the election issue. It is quite in line with the BJP's policy of cashing on the communally surcharged atmosphere, especially in the wake of Gujarat's so-called success story in elections. In Chhattisgarh, its obvious target is the Church and its various activities, especially related to evangelisation (with an ingredient of proselytization), in short, Conversion. The issue of Conversion has not suddenly cropped up in Chhattisgarh! It has a history of its own, which needs to be traced in the current context of elections.

It is very interesting to note that the then Government of Madhya Pradesh led by Pandit Ravi Shanker Shukla, had set up 'The Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee' on 16th April 1954 headed by Sri Bhawani Shanker Niyogi, retired Chief Justice. The Niyogi Committee Report was highly critical of conversion activities, particularly the conversion of tribals, and activities of foreign missionaries. The Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam 1968 (that is still in force in Madhya Pradesh) has also provided sufficient ground for actions against conversion attempts by the Church in the Chhattisgarh region (as part of Madhya Pradesh)! It totally bans forcible conversion, and those violating its provision are punished with one year's imprisonment or a fine of Rs. 5000 or both. However, in the case of conversion of a minor, woman or tribal or dalit, the imprisonment is for two years, and fine up to Rs. 10,000.

The much-publicized "Operation Home Coming" (Operation Grah Vapasi), mostly spearheaded by the present Cabinet Minister of State for Environment & Forest, Sri

Daleep Singh Judeo, has been going on in the region for the past many years now. It is an attempt to bring back those tribals (and dalits) into the Hindu fold, who had been converted to Christianity. The functions include washing of their feet by Shri Daleep Singh Judeo, a former Raja of Jashpur State. But, such acts have hardly resulted in large-scale return of Christians to Hindu fold. Besides, each attempt landed itself into a fresh controversy, when those re-converted to Hinduism publicly claimed that they had never been converted to Christianity !

Serious questions have also been raised in the wake of "Operation Home Coming". Firstly, it is well established that tribals were not categorized as Hindus. At best, they declared themselves to be following religions like "Sarna" etc., and were declared "animists", following local village deity or worshipping nature. The major issue that remains unresolved is that after "Operation Home Coming", where would they return in the Hindu hierarchy of caste system? Those brought back to the Hindu fold were mostly tribals and dalits. By all counts, they continue to be subjugated to the age-old caste discrimination, not even allowed to enter the temples. The "Operation Home Coming" did not result in the basic relationship of "Roti aur Beti" (meaning sharing of bread and daughter in marriage). Thus, it has not cut any ice in spite of much media hype!

However, Conversion as an election issue is an obvious choice for BJP, primarily because of the Congress (I) Chief Minister, Shri Ajit Pramod Kumar Jogi being a Christian (a member of the Protestant Church called 'The Church of North India'). As a fascist outfit, the BJP and the Sangh Parivar believe in thriving on rumours. Remember the source of this inspiration is Mr. Gobbles - Hitler's Information Minister — who believed that "a lie repeated ten times turns into truth". One of the rumours spread by the Sangh Parivar in Chhattisgarh related to Mr. Jogi's election as the first Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh state is: *"That Sonia Gandhi had appointed Ajit Jogi as the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh at the behest of Pope John Paul II"*. One heard of the same rumour being repeated from Raipur to Delhi, cutting across class and creed lines !

Naturally, such an argument would not fit into the frame of common sense or political science. We all know that falsehoods are not spread on rationality. But, it does fit into the propaganda machine of Sangh Parivar. If you say so, then it becomes easier to link up conversion by Churches in Chhattisgarh with Pope's call for Conversion in India during his 3rd visit to India in 1999 (Please see Arun Shourie's book: "HARVESTING OUR SOULS - Missionaries, their design, their claims" published in 2000). Thus, the ultimate objective of transforming Chhattisgarh into "Christi-garh" (meaning a land belonging to Christ) !!

## Historical Background

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It would be worth noting here that Madhya Pradesh (MP) has always been a stronghold of proponents of Hindu Rashtra. It was part of the Central Provinces & Berar (CP & Berar), with its headquarters at Nagpur, birthplace of the Hindu Mahasabha, founded in 1923 and later of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded in 1925 by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar. Nagpur was the capital of MP till it became part of Maharashtra in November 1956 after the reorganisation of the states in independent India.

From its beginning, the RSS promoted the doctrine of "Hindu Rashtra". According to Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (the first exponent of the doctrine of Hindutva), those who regard this land as their "father-land" and "holy-land" are the only ones who are Hindus and, thereby, the people to whom this land belongs. In his book entitled: "Hindutva: Who is Hindu" (written in 1923, it became and remains the basic text defining this political concept,) he maintains that this land belongs to Hindus and so, by implication, Muslims with Holy Land in Mecca and Christians with Holy Land in Jerusalem can not have equal status to "Hindus". This concept was later made more explicit by M S Golwalkar, who despite adoring Adolf Hitler, the Nazi Dictator, was 'generous' and 'kind' enough to these 'aliens' by granting them the status of second-class citizens in the Hindu Rashtra. In his book "We or our Nationhood Defined" becomes more explicit by declaring and describing three enemies of the Hindu Rashtra: a) Muslims; b) Christians; and c) Communists (in that order, of course!). Thus, the target of their hate campaign and violent attacks are summed up in the Sangh Parivar's slogan: " Pahle Kasai, phir Isai, phir CPI" (i.e. the Communist Party of India)!

It may also be of interest to note that the exponents of the "Hindu Rashtra" neither use nor believe in "mother-land", but "father-land" for two basic reasons. One, the Manuvadis do not believe in "woman" as having an independent "status" or "self", as she is born subservient to "man"- the swamy! Two, the "alien" invaders and armies came to Hindu Land without their women and, subsequently, married the local women. Thus, it would be safer to use the term "father-land" rather than "mother-land". This also coincides with the description of Nazi's Germany as "father-land" by Hitler !

The Hindutva-vadis had made increasing attempts prior to Independence to prohibit conversion in various parts of India. The focus of missionary activities was the tribals and dalits, the deprived and marginalized of the Hindu society. Although it is a fact that Christianity entered into India in the 52 AD, it also came as a package of

Colonialism. However, it also brought with it liberal values like equality, liberty and fraternity etc., through education, ultimately leading to social upliftment of the rejected and neglected masses. Thus conversion in the earlier period of Christianity resulted in providing an entirely new identity to the outcastes, and enabled them to assert their self-hood.

As a result of the passing of the **lex loci**, the “Regulation Law” in 1832 and the amendment to it in 1850 known as the “Caste Disabilities Removal Act” or the “Freedom of Religion Act”, the disadvantages caused by change of religion had been largely removed in British India. However, this did not apply in the princely states, where Hindu or Muslim law was practised and, in the period before Independence, various restrictions concerning conversion were passed in these states.

Another reason why the princely states were openly active in opposing the missionary activities was related to their desire of maintaining the status-quo, the control over their subjects, who were, through missionary activities (like schools & hospitals etc.) getting aware about their rights and freedom, and moving into the mass movements led by the freedom fighters. Thus, a number of princely states were not only opposed to the missionary activities but the freedom movement led by Gandhi ji, who had adopted unique and novel ways to ensure that vast masses of peasantry and other downtrodden segments of society - women, harijans and adivasis - became a part of it. That is one of the reasons why a large number of princely states were hesitant to merge with the Indian Union after Independence. Even after Independence, the heads of the princely states, along with Zamindars, moved mostly to the Hindutva parties like Jan Sangh, which later became Bhartiya Janata Party.

After the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by Nathuram Godse on 30th January 1948, the RSS was banned. The RSS eventually launched its political party - Jan Sangh during early 1950s. Initially it was led by S P Mookerjee, and later emerged as the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP). Jan Sangh had launched an “Anti-Foreign Missionary Week” in November 1954.

It may be worth noting that in Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh), the Raigarh princely state had brought into force the Raigarh State Conversion Act way back in the year 1936, followed by the Surguja State Apostasy Act in 1945. Both these districts are presently at the hub of the conversion controversy, and the “operation home coming” is being led by one of the former Rajas of Jashpur State. The Central Provinces and Berar Public Safety Act was also introduced in 1947, which stated that any

conversion had to be validated before a District Magistrate. However, this clause was deleted because of strong opposition from Christians.

While on the one hand, the princely states were vehemently opposed to missionary activities, on the other hand, they were not shy of inviting Englishmen (almost all of them Christians), to run the institutions providing exclusive elitist education to their siblings. The Rajkumar College at Raipur is one such example in Chhattisgarh. It was founded in 1882 at Jabalpur with just five students, who were heirs to the princely states of the Madras Province and the Eastern State Assembly -- now Bihar ( Jharkhand), Orissa and Chhattisgarh. Founded by Andrew Frasaer, the then Chief Commissioner of C.P & Berar, admission was restricted to the sons and relatives of the ruling chiefs and zamindars of the Eastern states. It was shifted to Raipur in 1894.

A residential school providing all aspects of education in English medium ranging from history to horse riding to being trained in the western ways of life, the Rajkumar College has come to be recognized as the Oxford of Chhattisgarh. The motto reads: "A raja is honoured in his own country. A learned man throughout the world". The School magazine is titled: "Mukut", meaning crown. Such contradictions in the practices of princely states could be explained only in terms of their desire to maintain social and political dominance over their subjects.

The Constitution of India came into full force in January 1950. Thereafter, some of the princely states were amalgamated into Madhya Pradesh. As a result of it, the 'anti-conversion' laws of these states had become invalid. Thus, the Christian missionaries began their work among the tribals, including social service and proselytising. However, the former Maharajas continued to resist the entrance of the missionaries, and considered it as an attack on the autonomy of these former princely states that they had enjoyed during the British Raj.

The socio-cultural factor that resulted in resistance to missionary activities by the 'elite' of the Hindu society in Madhya Pradesh was the fact that it had a significant tribal population (18 per cent in 1950), which went up to 23.22 per cent in 1994. Chhattisgarh also has a considerable large proportion of tribals and dalits i.e. 10.52 per cent of scheduled tribes, and 35.41 per cent of scheduled castes.

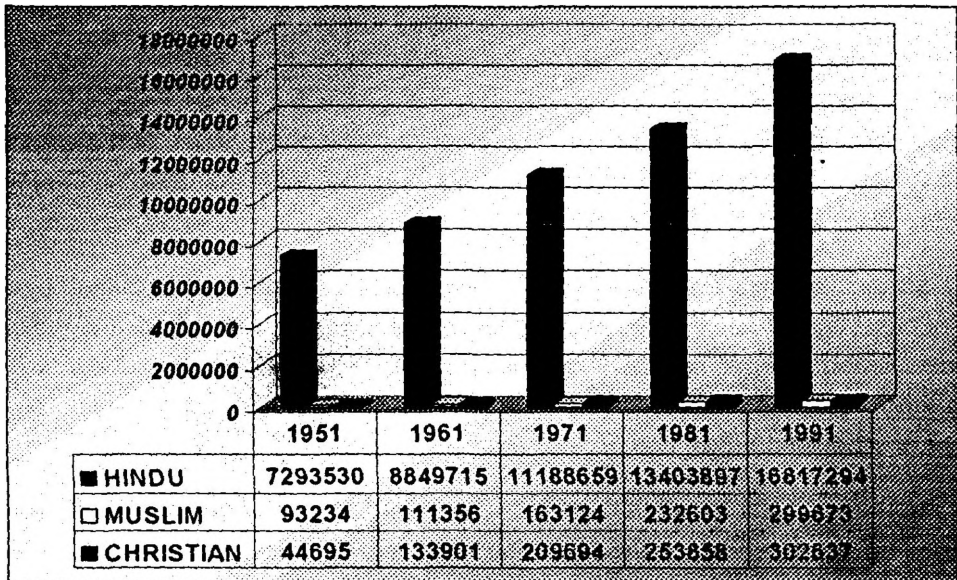
Yet another political factor that led to increased demand by the dominant classes for curtailing the freedom of the Christian missionaries was the uprising of tribals demanding a separate state for themselves called Jharkhand. It covered the adjoining

districts of Raigarh (in MP), Ranchi (in Bihar) & Sundergarh (in Orissa), which witnessed a high growth in Christian population. As has already been mentioned elsewhere in this booklet, the Christians form less than one per cent of the population in the entire region, and their absolute numbers amount to just about 3 lakhs. But, Christians form about 14.5 percent of the population of these three districts.

The high rate of conversion among the tribals in this area was seen with suspicion by the Hindutva forces because of the political demand for Jharkhand. However, it must be understood that any form of people's movement for asserting their political and cultural identity, and self-hood (sometimes, the right to self-determination) has always been opposed by the dominant classes/castes in India. It is another matter that in the later years, the demand for a separate state for Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand was politically encashed by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), as it conceded to the popular demand in the year 2000.

Thus, the fact that the resistance to missionary activities in Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) was not only because of the increase in Christian population in the area but mainly due to the state's particular socio-political background.

### **Religious composition of Chhattisgarh : 1951-1991** (In Absolute Numbers)





## Facts & Myths

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The Sangh Parivar oft-repeated refrain is about an unprecedented rise in the Christian population in Chhattisgarh due to large-scale conversion, especially among the tribals and dalits, who are immune to such designs of the Christian missionaries out and out to evangelise the entire state, and turn it into “Christi-garh”!

Such a refrain has become all the more frequent and louder in the context of the coming state assembly elections. However, nowhere the Sangh Parivar and/or the BJP leaders have either come out with facts and figures in support of such a serious statement. Even their publications are full of rhetoric regarding Conversion, but no instances or facts about actual conversion. Nor have any cases been filed in support of such charges against the Church and Christian missionaries under the Madhya Pradesh Dharm Swatantra Adhiniyam 1968. A few stray cases that were filed have not necessarily met in conviction of the 'converting' or 'converts'.

The failure of the BJP leaders in not confronting even the official version regarding Conversion in Chhattisgarh in the State Assembly on 5th March 2003 gives credence to the belief that the bogey of large-scale conversion by Christians is being raised more to gain political mileage out of it, rather than seriously base their allegations on facts and figures either official or collected through their own sources. During the debate in the Vidhan Sabha, Sri Shivratn, BJP member claimed that since the Congress government led by Sri Jogi came to power in the state, the conversion to Christianity has increased by ten times. But, he did not produce any figures when challenged by the Home Minister. They also staged a walkout.

In the reply to the question the Home Minister of Chhattisgarh Government. Sri Nand Kumar Patel put forward the following facts in the Vidhan Sabha:

Total Conversion:	424
Conversions From Hinduism to Christianity :	268
Conversions From Christianity to Hinduism :	138
From Muslim to Christianity :	001
From Hinduism to Sikhism :	001
From Hinduism to Muslim :	013

District wise distribution was also provided : 220 in Dantewada, 22 in Beejapur, 113 in Mahasamund, 19 in Raigarh, 20 in Rajnandgaon, 6 in Durg, 9 in Bilaspur and 3 in Sarguja. The Home Minister also stated that all these persons had voluntarily converted themselves to follow another religion.

Why don't they rely on the Census of India reports in this regard? Because, the demographic figures found in the Census of India (Government of India) reports would expose their fallacy in regard to their claim of conversions to Christianity. Let us, therefore, examine these facts and figures based on the Census of India Reports. We would like to refer to the figures for the period 1951 and 1991, as the figures for the religious composition of population in 2001 are not yet available with the Census of India.

The Christian Population in Madhya Pradesh (and in Chhattisgarh) has been less than the national average of Christian population all throughout the Independent India:

Madhya Pradesh	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
Hindu	95%	93.99%	93.68%	92.96%	92.99%
Muslim	4.03%	4.07%	4.36%	4.8%	4.96%
Christian	0.31%	0.58%	0.69%	0.67%	0.64%

From the above figures, it is clear that the Christian population in Madhya Pradesh has never been more than one per cent of the total population. Even in absolute numbers it reached the figure of 4,26,600 in the year 1991, which was only 0.64 per cent of the total population. Even if one studied carefully the Christian population for each district, it would become clear that out of 45 districts in Madhya Pradesh, only three recorded a percentage population of Christians above one per cent of the total population (Raigarh, Sarguja and Jhabua). That too, except Raigarh (9.92% in 1991), the Christian population in Sarguja (2.31% in 1991) and Jhabua (1.32% in 1991) have been only marginally above one percent. Thus, it is difficult to deduce from the above facts and figures as to the dire necessity for the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swaytantra Adhiniyam in 1968.

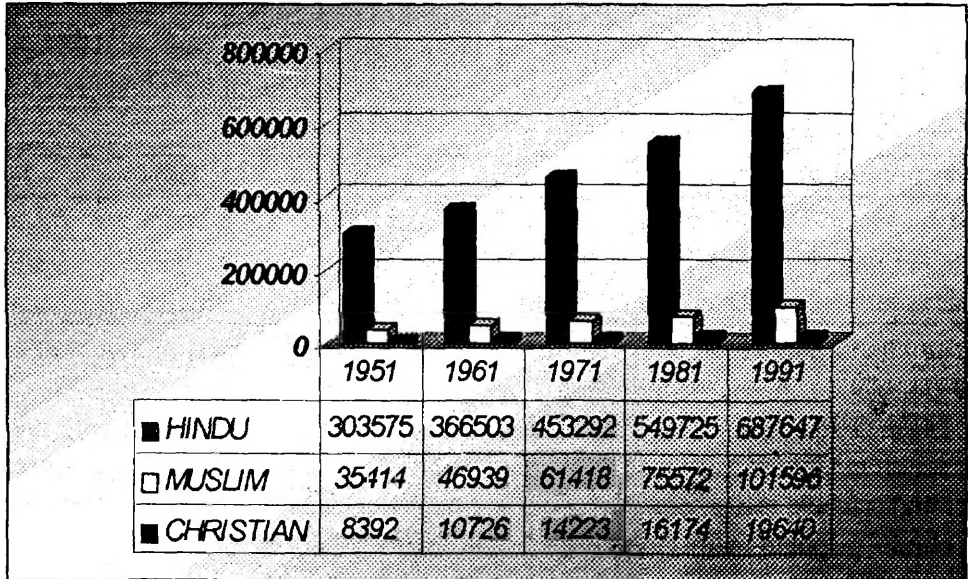
And, so has been the case in Chhattisgarh. While the national average of Christian population in 1991 was 2.32 per cent, in Chhattisgarh it was 1.71 per cent. In 1981 it was 1.80 per cent over against the national average of 2.43 per cent. Even in absolute numbers the Christian population in Chhattisgarh is merely 3 lakhs out of a total population of 17.61 lakhs in 1991.

Chhattisgarh	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
Hindu	97.81%	96.67%	96.14%	95.13%	95.47%
Muslim	1.25%	1.21%	1.40%	1.65%	1.70%
Christian	0.59%	1.46%	1.80%	1.80%	1.71%

## Religious composition of Indian Union : 1951-1991

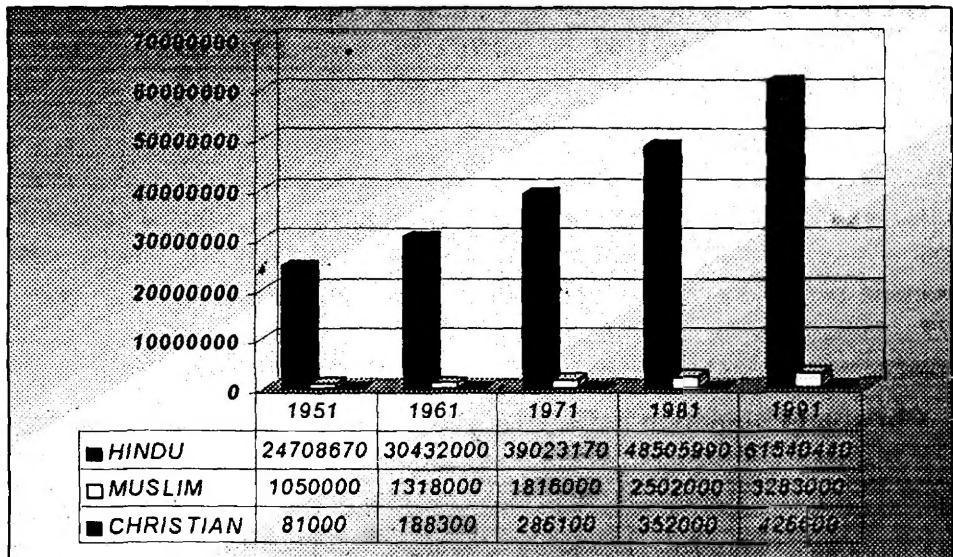
(for the total enumerated population, in thousands)

(In Absolute Numbers)



## Religious composition of Madhya Pradesh : 1951-1991

(In Absolute Numbers)



In comparison, the Hindu population in Chhattisgarh has been above the national average, by about 10 to 15 per cent. Take for example, when in 1991, the Hindu population was 82% of the total population in India as a whole, in Chhattisgarh the Hindu population was 95.47 per cent, in 1981 when the national average was 82.63 per cent, in Chhattisgarh it was 95.12 per cent. And, so was the case in Madhya Pradesh. The Hindi population in MP in 1991 was 92.99 per cent, in 1981 it was 92.96 per cent. For a detailed account of the percentage share of the Hindu population in India, MP and Chhattisgarh, please see the Table below :

Hindu population	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
India	84.98%	83.51%	82.73%	82.63%	82.00%
Madhya Pradesh	95%	93.99%	93.68%	92.96%	92.99%
Chhattisgarh	97.81%	96.67%	96.14%	95.13%	95.47%

The Hindu population in Chhattisgarh has never been less than 95 per cent of the total population in any of the Census years: 1951 (97.81%), 1961 (96.67%), 1971 (96.14%), 1981 (95.13%), 1991 (95.47%). Thus, the statement that "Christian population in Chhattisgarh (and in Madhya Pradesh) is rising with alarming proportions that Hindus would vanish one day", does not hold any water. Even in absolute numbers, the Hindu population in Chhattisgarh has increased from 72,93,530 in 1951 to 1,68,17,294 in 1991. The decadal growth recorded by the Hindu Population in Chhattisgarh has been on par with the national average, as is evident from the Table below:

**Decadal Growth of Hindu Population in Chhattisgarh ( In percentage )**

	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91
In India ( Total )	21.64%	24.8%	24.66%	23.86 %
In Chhattisgarh (Hindu Population)	21.33%	26.42%	19.79%	25.46%

A deeper analysis would also bring home the point that the Christian population in five out of seven districts of Chhattisgarh has never been more than one per cent. Let us examine percentage figures for Christian population in Raipur, which are: 1991 (0.47%), 1981 (0.60%), 1971 (0.59%), 1961 (0.57%), 1951 (0.93%), 1941 (0.54%). The percentage figures for the years 1991 and 1981 are as follows:

**Christian Population in Chhattisgarh- District Wise ( in Percentage)**

	Raipur	Bilaspur	Durg	Rajnandgaon	Bastar	Sarguja	Raigarh
1981	0.60 %	0.66%	1.05%	0.19%	0.60%	2.31%	9.63%
1991	0.47%	0.73%	0.86%	0.20%	0.62%	2.31%	9.92%

Even in absolute numbers, a comparison of Census figures for the Hindus and Christians does not give credence to the propaganda spread by the Hindutva forces that "the Hindu population is fast dwindling, and one day (by 2055), it would become less than the Christians & Muslims". The comparative figures for Hindus, Christians and Muslims in Chhattisgarh are produced below to bring home the point that such a threat does not exist.

### **Population of Chhattisgarh ( Hindus, Christians & Muslims)**

	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
Christians	44,695	1,33,901	2,09,694	2,53,858	3,02,637
Muslims	93,234	1,11,356	1,63,124	2,32,603	2,99,673
Hindus	72,93,530	88,49,715	1,11,88,659	1,34,03,897	1,68,17,294

A cursory glance at the national figures would also render such a claim on conversion misleading. Whereas during the forty years (1951-1991), the population of Hindus has recorded a growth of 126.51 percent, the Christian population increased by 134.03 per cent. In absolute numbers, these figures are: for Hindu population the increase in forty years has been 38,40,72,000, and for Christian population for the same period has been 1,12,48,000.

If one studied the religious population in total districts of India, then the fact of the matter is that out of a total of 452 districts in India in 1991, in 398 districts the Hindu population was above fifty per cent, and only in 21 districts the Christian population was above fifty per cent, and Muslim population was more than fifty per cent merely in 8 districts.

Out of the 21 districts in which Christian population recorded more than fifty per cent population in 1991, twenty are in North-East States (Manipur-4, Meghalaya-5, Mizoram-3, Nagaland-8), and the remaining one is Andaman-Nicobar Islands. Of the 8 districts in which Muslim population was more than fifty percent, 4 are in Assam, one each in Bihar, Kerala, Lakshwadeep and West Bengal. In the same manner, it may be noted that out of 66 districts in which the Hindu population is less than fifty percent, none are in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

## **DECADAL GROWTH OF CHRISTIAN POPULATION IN CHHATTISGARH**

An in depth analysis of the decadal growth (also in percentage) of various segments of population would make the position crystal clear regarding the conversion in Chhattisgarh.

While the average Decadal Growth in percentage in India, Madhya Pradesh (and in Chhattisgarh) between 1951 and 1991 has been to the tune of 20 to 25 per cent, the percentage decadal growth among Christians in Chhattisgarh has been unusually high between the decades 1951-1961 (199.58%) and 1961-1971 (56.60%). In absolute numbers also, the decadal growth among Christians in Chhattisgarh during these two decades has been 89,206 during 1951-1961, and 75,793 during 1961-1971.

However, during the next two decades, the decadal growth of Christian Population in Chhattisgarh, both in terms of absolute numbers and percentage, had drastically reduced from earlier decades. In fact, during 1971-1981 it was 44,164 (21.06%), much below the percentage decadal growth in India (24.66%) and in Madhya Pradesh (27.2%), but almost on par with that of the Chhattisgarh (20.67%). And, in 1981-91 it became 48,779 (19.21%), which was much less than the percentage decadal growth recorded in India (23.86%), Madhya Pradesh ( 24.3%) & Chhattisgarh (25.7%).

The unprecedented decadal growth both in absolute numbers and percentage during the two decades 1951-1971 possibly explains the mass conversions to Christianity in Chhattisgarh. A further analysis of study of the decadal growth in each district of Chhattisgarh brings home the point that the mass conversions to Christianity took place basically among the tribals in the districts of Sarguja and Raigarh, former princely states that had earlier restricted the entries of Christian missionaries through legislation (Please note that way back in 1936, the Raigarh State Conversion Act was passed, which required that a person seeking conversion needed to obtain a certificate of conversion from the authorities and disallowed preaching for the purpose of conversion. Followed by it, the Sarguja State Apostasy Act was also passed in 1945).

### **Christian Population in Chhattisgarh ( Decadal Growth)**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
Raigarh	76,486 (551.32%)	41,841 (46.30%)	12,546 (9.49%)	26,177 (18.08%)	NA
Sarguja	8,240 (1511.92%)	16,158 (183.92%)	13,267 (53.19%)	9,900 (25.90%)	NA
Bastar	717 (17.53%)	1,920 (39.95%)	4,346 (64.62%)	2,960 (26.73%)	NA

**DECADEL GROWTH**  
**Total Population in Chhattisgarh (District Wise)**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91
Surguja	214,697 26.12%	289,701 27.94%	327,504 24.69%	428,687 25.92%
Raigarh	121,706 13.24%	237,479 22.81%	224,492 17.56%	219,094 14.58%
Bilaspur	342,156 20.37%	419,169 20.73%	512,404 20.99%	840,200 28.45%
Durg	403,480 27.23%	576,665 30.59%	-571,717 -23.22%	506,950 26.82%
Rajnandgaon			1,167,501 100%	272,450 23.33%
Raipur	361,996 22.07%	611,529 30.55%	465,945 17.83%	828,566 26.91%
Bastar	253,755 27.77%	348,455 29.85%	325,909 21.50%	429,449 23.32%
<b>Total :</b>	<b>16,97,790</b> <b>22.76%</b>	<b>24,82,998</b> <b>27.12%</b>	<b>24,52,038</b> <b>21.07%</b>	<b>35,25,396</b> <b>25.02%</b>

**Note :** The minus growth in Durg district during the decade of 1971-1981 has been recorded due to the bifurcation of the district and creation of Rajnandgaon district in 1973.

An inference could, thus, be drawn that after the Constitution of India was inaugurated in 1950, and with the amalgamation of the princely states in the Union of India, these laws were withdrawn that created obstacles in the way of the would-be converts and the one propagating the message, Christian missionary activities (including conversion) were increased in these two districts. And, the subjects of these two former princely states (mostly tribals), were drawn into the Christian Church, including educational institutions.

However, it is worth noting that even in these two districts of Raigarh and Surguja, the decadal growth had stabilized in the next two decades ( 1971-91), and almost came on par with the national and state figures in terms of percentage decadal growth.

For the purposes of argument, it could be also stated that in absolute numbers, the decadal growth in these two districts did not record any unprecedented growth in Christian population except in Raigarh district for only two decades i.e. in 1951-61 (76,486) and in 1961-1971 (41,841). For the remaining decades and districts, the decadal growth in absolute numbers is very insignificant. Take for example, for Sarguja district these were: 8,240 (1951-61); 16,158 (1961-71); 13,217 (1971-81); 9,900 (1981-91). And, for Raigarh these were: 12,546 (1971-81); 26,177 (1981-91).

As compared to these two pre-dominantly tribals districts, Bastar stands out as an exception. The decadal growth both in absolute numbers and in percentage, does not explain the allegation against the Christian missionaries that they were interested in targeting the tribal population. Bastar has not only been one of the biggest districts of India with a tribal population of 67.7 percent, but has been also a center for studies for anthropology. The world famous anthropologist, Varrier Alvin, who was also a Christian Priest of the Anglican Church of England, worked in Bastar for many years studying the lives, customs and cultures of tribals in Bastar. Why were mass conversions to Christianity not carried out in pre-dominantly tribal district of Bastar, and in other tribal belts of Chhattisgarh to the exclusion of Raigarh & Sarguja is a subject matter for further studies. Suffice to say here, that the restrictions on conversions in the former princely states probably led to asserting the religious freedom and the rights of the Christian minority in independent India, immediately after these restrictions were removed.

There probably is need or an explanation for the unprecedented decadal growth in percentage among the Christian population in the district of Durg. The reason seems to be the influx of working class population from various parts of the country due to



**DECADEL GROWTH**  
**Hindu Population in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91
Madhya Pradesh				
Sarguja	198825 24.54%	261257 25.89%	276456 21.76%	417163 26.97%
Raigarh	42360 4.70%	192956 20.46%	146387 12.89%	246702 19.24%
Bilaspur	340662 20.76%	401512 20.27%	483650 20.30%	797385 27.82%
Durg	353673 24.22%	549684 30.30%	-570217 -24.12%	479428 26.73%
Rajnandgaon				249535 22.14%
Raipur	369428 23.43%	593136 30.48%	438041 17.25%	804717 27.03%
Bastar	251237 27.76%	340399 29.44%	314042 20.98%	418467 23.11%
<b>Decadel Growth (Percentage)</b>	<b>1556185 21.33%</b>	<b>2338944 26.42%</b>	<b>2215238 19.79%</b>	<b>3413397 25.46%</b>

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**Note :** The minus growth in Durg district during the decade of 1971-1981 has been recorded due to the bifurcation of the district and creation of Rajnandgaon district in 1973.

industrialization resulting in the establishment of Bhilai Steel Plant (a public sector undertaking established in 1956 - 57 in collaboration of the then USSR), and other ancillary industries. That is why after recording an unprecedented decadal growth in percentage during the first two decades (1951 - 1971), it has drastically dipped below national and state (Madhya Pradesh, including that of Chhattisgarh) average. And, so appears to be the case with Bilaspur, which became the center for the South Eastern Railways, and also various industrial activities including the power plant and collieries, etc.

**Christian Population in Urban-Industrial Districts  
(Decadal Growth)**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
Durg	6,049 (303.20%)	8,497 (105.63%)	3,236 (19.56%)	852 (4.30%)	NA
Bilaspur	1,443 (16.02%)	3,451 (33.07%)	5,493 (39.51%)	8,463 (43.63%)	NA

There still remains the need to understand the unusual decline in the Christian population in the district of Raipur, which was earlier considered and later became the capital of Chhattisgarh. Its population went down from 15,188 in 1951 to 11,459 in 1961 i.e. registering the minus decadal growth (-3729).

The main reason for this decline in the Christian population in Raipur was due to the migration of Christians from Raipur district in the wake of communal violence in 1957. It may be recalled that due to some misunderstanding, the Gass Memorial Centre (a Christian Institution built up on the patterns of Young Men's Christian Association - YMCA) near Jaistambh Chawk at Raipur was burnt by the mob agitating against the "alleged insult of a Hindu deity" by the GMC authorities. During this agitation on 27th August, 1957, police opened fire to control the mob which had set up the GMC on fire, and many people (including its then Director and other senior staff) were trapped in the basement, where they had taken cover to save themselves from the fury of the agitating mob. A student named Krishna Kumar was killed in the police firing. The present KK Road is named after him.

This was also the period (1954-57) that the then Madhya Pradesh Government had set up the Christian Missionary Activities Enquiry Committee (Niyogi Committee). Thus,

**DECADEL GROWTH**  
**Christian Population in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91
Madhya Pradesh				
Sarguja	8240 1511.93%	16158 183.93%	13267 53.19%	9900 25.91%
Raigarh	76486 551.33%	41841 46.31%	12546 9.49%	26177 18.08%
Bilaspur	1443 16.02%	3451 33.03%	5493 39.52%	8463 43.64%
Durg	6049 303.21%	8497 105.63%	3236 19.56%	852 4.31%
Rajnandgaon			2187 100%	669 30.59%
Raipur	-3729 -24.55%	3926 34.26%	3089 20.08%	-242 -1.31%
Bastar	717 17.54%	1920 39.96%	4346 64.62%	2960 26.74%
<b>Total</b> (%)	89,206 <b>199.58%</b>	75,793 <b>56.60%</b>	44,164 <b>21.06%</b>	48,779 <b>19.21%</b>

as a combined result of both the burning of the GMC and the Niyogi Enquiry in the missionary activities and conversion, the Christian population of Raipur had fled to other neighbouring districts of Chhattisgarh. This is how one can understand the sudden decline in the Christian population in 1961, going down by 3729 in absolute numbers from the previous census year i.e. 1951. It is also of utmost significance to note that Raipur district never registered an unprecedented decadal growth among the Christian population, except during the decade of 1961-71 (34.26%), when these Christian families returned to their homes who had fled in the wake of communal tension in the earlier decade. Otherwise its decadal growth has been much below the national and state averages both in absolute numbers and percentage. So much so that it, once again, recorded a negative rate of decadal growth both in numbers and percentage in 1981-1991 i.e. (-) 242 and (-) 1.30 per cent.

### **Christian Population in Raipur District ( Decadal Growth)**

District	1951-61	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
Raipur	-3729 (-24.55%)	3,926 ( 34.26%)	3,089 (20.07%)	-242 (-1.30%)	NA

From the above facts and figures, it is crystal clear that there is not an iota of truth in the allegations by the BJP ( Sangh Parivar) that Christian Church in Chhattisgarh and/or Madhya Pradesh is carrying out Conversion in large numbers. And that there has not been any abnormal/usual growth in the Christian population in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in the recent past i.e. almost three decades. On the contrary, the way in which there has been a gradual and regular decline in the percentage share of Christian population in Chhattisgarh and in India, establishes that conversion does not appear to be the agenda of the Christian Church in Chhattisgarh & India. Sangh Parivar and its political wing, The Bhartiya Janata Party, along with its associate organisations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Bajrang Dal, Hindu Jagran Manch, etc., are targeting the Christian Church as part of their overall objective of creating the "Hindu Rashtra" based on fascist ideology. In which spreading falsehoods and rumours regarding Conversion in Chhattisgarh is part of this strategy.

## **CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON “CONVERSION”**

It may be worth glancing through the debates and discussions in the Constituent Assembly. It was primarily focused on the inclusion of the freedom to “propagate” as one of the fundamental rights. The contradiction between Hindu and Christian views on conversion became clear in the course of this debate. While Christians based their argument for conversion on its being a basic tenet of Christian faith and on the individual human right to freedom, Hindus argued that conversion was against Hindu dharma, which was an integral part of Hindu tradition. Hindu objections to conversion were concretised in three main ways: one, by the introduction of Hindu ‘personal laws’, which were disadvantageous for caste Hindus who converted to another religion; two, by the limitation of the social benefits of converts from Scheduled Caste backgrounds; and three, by the passing of the ‘freedom of religion’ acts.

The Constituent Assembly started functioning on 9th December 1946 with the objective of formulating the Indian Constitution. The first meeting of the Assembly was held on 24 January 1947, to set up an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee, in turn, had set up five sub-committees including : The Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee, and the Minorities Sub-Committee.

The Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee, dealt with the issue of Conversion. Its Chairman was Sri J B Kripalani, who was also the then Congress President. Several drafts were submitted on the subject of religion, but the draft articles by Sri K M Munshi and Dr B R Ambedkar basically dealt with the question of conversion. Sri Munshi, being the former Home Minister of Bombay, emphasized that ‘duties’ were inseparable from ‘fundamental rights’ and that the law of the Union should be able to prevent the misuse of rights. He included in his draft a preventive measure on conversion in the section on “The Right to Religious and Cultural Freedom”: ‘Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion, undue influence or the offering of material inducement is prohibited and is punishable by the law of the Union’.

On the other hand, Dr. Ambedkar saw the main purpose of the section on religious freedom as ‘the right of every subject to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and to free speech and free exercise of religion’. His draft section on ‘Fundamental Rights of Citizens’ stated: “The State shall guarantee to every Indian citizen liberty of conscience and the free exercise of his religion including the right to profess, to preach and to convert within limits compatible with public order and morality”. He further argued that there should be no compulsion to participate in any religious act. Sri Munshi expressed

concern about protecting the rights of those who would be exposed to conversion activity. On the other hand, Dr. Ambedkar stressed that conversion was the right of each individual to exercise his or her freewill.

The Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee on 24th March decided to take up Munshi's draft and examine it in relationship to other drafts. After a long discussion, the report of the Sub-committee was submitted to the Advisory Committee on 16th April 1947. This included Clause 16 on religious freedom, and Clauses 21 and 22 regarding the prohibitions on conversion, which were basically the same as in Munshi's original draft.

The Minorities Sub-Committee met on 17th April for the first time, and went through these recommendations by the Fundamental Rights Sub-committee for the purpose of protecting minority rights. In this meeting, M. Ruthnaswamy proposed that certain religions were 'proselytizing religions' in their doctrine, so propagation of their faith should be permitted as a fundamental right. The Sub-Committee sent its report and recommendations to the Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee on 19th April.

The Report of the Minorities Sub-Committee consisted of two main recommendations. Firstly, the phrase 'the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion' was inserted in Clause 16 in place of 'freedom of religious worship and to freedom to profess religion'. Thus, the right to 'propagate' was recognized. And secondly, they proposed amendment to Clause 21 with restrictions on conversion. The conversion of minors was prohibited, except in the case of following the decision of their parents to change religion, and any conversion of an adult had to be recognized by a Magistrate. Thus, in a way both points of view were balanced in these clauses: the Christian view on the right to propagation, and the Hindu desire at prevention of conversion.

The Advisory Committee then examined both the draft and the amendments. Regarding Clause 16, there were both strong objections and support to the word 'propagate'. The Chairman therefore took a vote on the clause and the amendment to add the word 'propagate' was accepted.

The clauses on fundamental rights finally sent by the Advisory Committee to the Constituent Assembly on 23rd April 1947 included the following:

"(13) All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion subject to public order, morality or health, and to the other provisions of their chapter.

(17) Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion or undue influence shall not be recognized by law.”

The Constituent Assembly report was prepared and presented to the Drafting Committee on 27th October 1947. Dr. Ambedkar headed the Drafting Committee. It went through it clause by clause and submitted their revised draft Constitution to the President of the Constituent Assembly on 21st February 1948. The clause allowing the right of conversion was as follows:

"Article 19 (1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all person are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion”.

The draft Constitution was then published. The people and organisations of India had an opportunity to express their views before it was adopted by the Constituent Assembly. Once again on 3rd December 1948 there was a debate in favour and against the inclusion of the word 'propagate' in the article.

During this debate, Sri TT Krishnamachari, argued convincingly for the need and significance of accommodating the concerns of the minorities unless they clearly restricted the rights of others. He argued that the right to propagate was meant for all citizens. He mentioned about the members of Arya Samaj, who had started the 'Operation home coming' i.e. bringing back converts to Hinduism. According to him, as long as the right to propagate was subject to public order, morality and health, as was already stated in the article, it should be granted. He said that we must be humble enough to openly acknowledge that Untouchables were accepting Christianity more for social reasons, and purely religious motive was not behind their conversion. Under this Constitution, all were equal and this equal right should be given equally to anyone to 'propagate his religion, and to convert people' if a person should be convinced that this was his 'duty towards his God and his community'.

Sri K M Munshi insisted that the fears of a few were ill founded that conversion in independent India could cause a political instability as was noticed during the freedom struggles. Such a possibility did not exist in Independent India. He realized that this issue would have to be solved by compromise and he expressed his sympathy with Christians:

“.....it was on this word that the Indian Christian community laid the greatest emphasis, not because they want to convert people aggressively, but because the word

'propagate' was a fundamental part of their tenet....So long as religion is religion, conversion by free exercise of the conscience has to be recognized."

Sri Munshi's speech made all the difference, although still there were attempts to delete the word 'propagate' or to add provisos to it. In the ensuing votes on each amendment, the Constituent Assembly opted to retain the word 'propagate', and the article was included in the Constitution as Article 25 in the section on 'The Right to Freedom of Religion'. The Assembly finally adopted it on 26th November 1949.

It must not be forgotten that the United Nations Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10th December 1948. This is the time when the Constituent Assembly in India was also shaping up the Indian Constitution. It is, therefore, not without any reason arguments are being offered that this had its own impact on the debate on religious freedom as a fundamental human right in India in the Constituent Assembly. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated "the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion" which includes the freedom of 'everyone' 'to change his religion or belief' and 'to manifest his religion or belief'.

Dr. Ambedkar had taken such a liberal position vis-à-vis the religious freedom, because he, along with thousands and thousands of outcastes in India, was seriously considering conversion as 'social uplift', 'caste mobility' or 'social protest'. And, ultimately, Dr. Ambedkar led hundreds and thousands of dalits, including his own community (Mahars) to accept Buddhism. Thus, they came to be recognized as "neo-Buddhists", and are even today considered to be at the forefront of the socio-political movement which is symbolic of struggling for Dalit dignity and asserting self-hood.

In connection with the conversion by untouchables (dalits) to Buddhism in India, it may be noted that although this has taken place in substantial size and numbers, still the Buddhist population in India in 1991 has been merely 0.8 per cent of the total population in India. By comparison, the Buddhist population and the spread of Buddhism in the South East and Far East countries of Asia has been remarkable. Note the Buddhist population in 1991 in Tibet (97 %), in Myanmar (89%), Thailand (94.4%), Sri Lanka (74%), Bhutan (75%), Malaysia (28%), South Korea (47%), Japan (20%). An obvious question arises out of such a rise of Buddhism in countries far and near to India than in India itself, where Buddha was born, and Emperor Ashoka used the state machinery for its spread. Buddhism believes in equality and peace and non-violence, all are basic tenets of Indian culture and human society. May be the search for the answers to these questions would be a subject matter of another study!



During the debate on Reservation Policy for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, Dr. Ambedkar himself argued, "the untouchables are not Hindus, but a separate element". In an article that he wrote during this debate argued "The whole tradition of the Hindus is to recognize the untouchable as a separate element and insist upon it as a fact..... For Caste is another name for separation and untouchability typifies the extremist form of separation of community from community." He comes out strongly in favour of reservation policy by stating that: " If there is a real separation between the Hindus and Untouchables and if there is the danger of discrimination being practiced by the Hindus against the Untouchables then the Untouchables must receive political recognition and must be given political safeguards to protect themselves against the tyranny of the Hindus. The possibility of a better future cannot be used as an argument to prevent the Untouchables from securing the means of protecting themselves against the tyranny of the present".

It is, therefore, of great interest to note that the Rashtriya Swamsevak Sangh was established at Nagpur in 1925, which became the centre for the dalit mukti movement led by Dr. Ambedkar, basically targeted against the humiliation and indignities they were suffering from the high caste Hindus.

The Constituent Assembly debates on the "religious freedom" must be seen also in the context of these movements among the socially outcastes, who were struggling for dalit mukti.

**Religious composition of Indian Union : 1951-1991**

(for the total enumerated population, in thousands)

Year	Hindus	Sikhs	Jains	Buddhist	Muslims	Christians	Others	Total
1951	3,03,575 84.98%	6,219 1.74%	1,618 0.45%	0,181 0.05%	35,414 9.91%	8,392 2.35%	1,848 0.52%	3,57,247 100%
1961	3,66,503 83.51%	7,845 1.79%	2,027 0.46%	3,250 0.74%	46,939 10.69%	10,726 2.44%	1,607 0.37%	4,38,897 100%
1971	4,53,292 82.73%	10,379 1.89%	2,605 0.48%	3,812 0.70%	61,418 11.21%	14,223 2.60%	2,221 0.41%	5,47,950 100%
1981	5,49,725 82.63%	13,078 1.97%	3,193 0.48%	4,720 0.71%	75,572 11.36%	16,174 2.43%	2,827 0.42%	6,65,289 100%
1991	6,87,647 82.00%	16,260 1.94%	3,353 0.40%	6,388 0.76%	1,01,596 12.12%	19,640 2.34%	3,685 0.44%	8,38,569 100%

(Table-2)

**Religious composition of Madhya Pradesh : 1951-1991**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>Sikhs</b>	<b>Jains</b>	<b>Buddhist</b>	<b>Muslims</b>	<b>Christians</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1951</b>	2,47,08,670 95%	39,910 0.15%	1,81,300 0.70%	2,290 0.009%	10,50,000 4.03%	81,000 0.31%	8,830 0.03%	<b>2,60,72,000</b> <b>100%</b>
<b>1961</b>	3,04,32,000 93.99%	65,720 0.20%	2,47,900 0.77%	1,13,400 0.35%	13,18,000 4.07%	1,88,300 0.58%	12,980 0.04%	<b>3,23,78,300</b> <b>100%</b>
<b>1971</b>	3,90,23,170 93.68%	98,970 0.24%	3,45,200 0.83%	83,820 0.20%	18,16,000 4.36%	2,86,100 0.69%	840 0.002%	<b>4,16,54,100</b> <b>100%</b>
<b>1981</b>	4,85,05,990 92.96%	1,43,000 0.27%	4,45,000 0.85%	75,310 0.14%	25,02,000 4.8%	3,52,000 0.67%	1,55,700 0.30%	<b>5,21,79,000</b> <b>100%</b>
<b>1991</b>	6,15,40,440 92.99%	1,61,100 0.24%	4,90,300 0.74%	2,16,700 0.33%	32,83,000 4.96%	4,26,600 0.64%	62,460 0.09%	<b>6,61,80,600</b> <b>100%</b>

(Table-3)

### Religious Composition of Chhattisgarh (Madhya Pradesh) : 1951-1991

Year	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religion	Not Stated
1951	7,456,706	7,293,530 97.81%	93,234 1.25%	44,695 0.59%	8,880 0.11%	1,034 0.01%	9,327 0.12%	6,006 0.08%	
1961	9,154,496	8,849,715 96.67%	111,356 1.21%	133,901 1.46%	16,497 0.18%	17,118 0.18%	15,754 0.17%	9,535 0.10%	620 0.00%
1971	11,637,494	11,188,659 96.14%	163,124 1.40%	209,694 1.80%	28,364 0.24%	20,389 0.17%	26,144 0.22%	15 0.00%	1,105 0.00%
1981	14,089,532	13,403,897 95.13%	232,603 1.65%	253,858 1.80%	104,021 0.73%	19,381 0.13%	37,289 0.26%	38,483 0.27%	
1991	17,614,928	16,817,294 95.47%	299,673 1.70%	302,637 1.71%	50,605 0.28%	48,651 0.27%	43,213 0.24%	17,370 0.09%	35,485 0.20%

(Table-4)

## Hindu Population in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh

Sl.	District	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
1.	Madhya Pradesh					
2.	Sarguja	810304 98.57%	1009129 97.34%	1270386 95.77%	1546842 93.52%	1964005 94.30%
3.	Raigarh	• 900582 97.94%	942942 90.56%	1135898 88.83%	1282285 85.3%	1528987 88.78%
4.	Bilaspur	• 1640560 97.67%	1981222 97.99%	2382734 97.61%	2866384 97.05%	3663769 96.58%
5.	Durg	1460387 98.56%	1814060 96.22%	2363744 96.01%	1793527 94.89%	2272955 94.82%
6.	Rajnandgaon				1126879 96.52%	1376414 95.59%
7.	Raipur	1576822 96.15%	1946250 97.22%	2539386 97.16%	2977427 96.69%	3782144 96.78%
8.	Bastar	904875 99.03%	1156112 99.02%	1496511 98.72%	1810553 98.3%	2229020 98.14%
	Total (In Percent)	• 7293530 97.81%	8849715 96.67%	11188659 96.14%	13403897 95.13%	16817294 95.47%

• Raigarh was part of Bilaspur district in 1951, once again for clarity it has been clearly specified.

(Table-5)

## Christian Population in Madhya Pradesh/Chhattisgarh

Sl.	District	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
1.	Madhya Pradesh	-	81,000 0.31%	1,88,300 0.58%	2,86,100 0.69%	3,52,000 0.67%	4,26,600 0.64%
2.	Sarguja	-	545 0.07%	8,785 0.85%	24,943 1.88%	38,210 2.31%	48,110 2.31%
3.	Raigarh	-	• 13,873 1.51%	90,359 8.68%	1,32,200 10.34%	1,44,746 9.63%	1,70,923 9.92%
4.	Bilaspur	-	• 9,006 0.54%	10,449 0.52%	13,900 0.57%	19,393 0.66%	27,856 0.73%
5.	Durg	-	1,995 0.13%	8,044 0.43%	16,541 0.67%	19,777 1.05%	20,629 0.86%
6.	Rajnandgaon	-	-	-	-	2,187 0.19%	2,856 0.20%
7.	Raipur	8,163 0.54%	15,188 0.93%	11,459 0.57%	15,385 0.59%	18,474 0.60%	18,232 0.47%
8.	Bastar	-	4,088 0.45%	4,805 0.41%	6,725 0.44%	11,071 0.60%	14,031 0.62%
	Total-Chhattisgarh Sl.No. 2 to 8		<b>44,695</b> 0.59%	<b>133,901</b> 1.46%	<b>209,694</b> 1.80%	<b>253,858</b> 1.80%	<b>302,637</b> 1.71%
9.	Bilaspur & Raigarh (Combined)	-	• 22,879 0.88%	1,00,808 3.29%	1,46,100 3.93%	1,64,139 3.68%	1,98,779 3.60%

• Raigarh was part of Bilaspur district in 1951, once again for clarity it has been clearly specified.

(Table-6)

## Muslim Population in Chhattisgarh

Sl.	District	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
1.	Sarguja	10,600 1.29%	17,252 1.66%	26,766 2.10%	40,556 2.61%	59,041 2.83%
2.	Raigarh	-	6,365 0.61%	8,792 0.69%	12,422 0.86%	15,441 0.90%
3.	Bilaspur	29,870 1.15%	25,641 1.27%	37,122 1.52%	47,962 1.62%	60,916 1.61%
4.	Durg	14,680 0.99%	26,120 1.39%	40,412 1.64%	42,423 2.24%	54,979 2.29%
5.	Rajnandgaon	-	-	-	19,715 1.69%	23,014 1.60%
6.	Raipur	34,140 2.08%	31,250 1.56%	42,564 1.63%	57,458 1.87%	71,034 1.82%
7.	Bastar	3,944 0.43%	4,728 0.40%	7,468 0.49%	12,067 0.65%	15,248 0.67%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>93,234</b>	<b>1,11,356</b>	<b>1,63,124</b>	<b>232,603</b>	<b>2,99,673</b>

## Census of Chhattisgarh - 1951

(Table-7)

District/ City	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others
Raipur	1640006	1576822 96.15%	34141 2.08%	15188 0.93%	5193 0.32%	1013 0.06%	4582 0.28%	3067 0.19%
Bilaspur	1679637	1640560 97.67%	27479 1.64%	9006 0.54%	1525 0.09%	1 0.00%	903 0.05%	163 0.01%
Durg	1481756	1460387 98.56%	14679 0.99%	1995 0.13%	1411 0.10%	3 0.00%	3242 0.22%	39 0.00%
Bastar	913746	904875 99.03%	3944 0.43%	4088 0.45%	84 0.01%	17 0.00%	410 0.04%	328 0.04%
Raigarh	919520	900582 97.94%	2389 0.26%	13873 1.51%	275 0.03%	N.A.	N.A.	2401 0.26%
Sarguja	822041	810304 98.57%	10602 1.29%	545 0.07%	392 0.05%	N.A.	190 0.02%	8 0.00%
Rajnandgaon	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
<b>Total -</b>	<b>7456706</b>	<b>7293530</b> <b>97.81%</b>	<b>93234</b> <b>1.25%</b>	<b>44695</b> <b>0.59%</b>	<b>8880</b> <b>0.12%</b>	<b>1034</b> <b>0.01%</b>	<b>9327</b> <b>0.13%</b>	<b>6006</b> <b>0.08%</b>



(Table-8)

## Census of Chhattisgarh - 1961

District/ City	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others Religion	Not Stated
Sarguja	1,036,738	1,009,129 97.34%	17252 1.66%	8,785 0.85%	1,077 0.10%	9 0.00%	361 0.03%	125 0.01%	0 0.00%
Bilaspur	2,021,793	1,981,222 97.99%	25641 1.27%	10,449 0.52%	2,535 0.13%	319 0.02%	1,285 0.06%	342 0.02%	0 0.00%
Raigarh	1,041,226	942,942 90.56%	6365 0.61%	90,359 8.68%	617 0.06%	5 0.00%	330 0.03%	608 0.06%	0 0.00%
Durg	1,885,236	1,814,060 96.22%	26120 1.39%	8,044 0.43%	7,653 0.41%	15214 0.81%	7,158 0.38%	6367 0.34%	620 0.03%
Raipur	2,002,002	1,946,250 97.22%	31250 1.56%	11,459 0.57%	4,269 0.21%	1247 0.06%	5,501 0.27%	2026 0.10%	0 0.00%
Bastar	1,167,501	1,156,112 99.02%	4728 0.40%	4,805 0.41%	346 0.03%	324 0.03%	1,119 0.10%	67 0.01%	0 0.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,154,496</b>	<b>8,849,715</b> <b>96.67%</b>	<b>111,356</b> <b>1.22%</b>	<b>133,901</b> <b>1.46%</b>	<b>16,497</b> <b>0.18%</b>	<b>17,118</b> <b>0.19%</b>	<b>15,754</b> <b>0.17%</b>	<b>9,535</b> <b>0.10%</b>	<b>620</b> <b>0.01%</b>

(Table-9)

## Census of Chhattisgarh - 1971

District/ City	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others Religion	Not Stated
Surguja	1,326,439	1,270,386 95.77%	26,766 2.02%	24,943 1.88%	2077 0.16%	1626 0.12%	641 0.05%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%
Bilaspur	2,440,962	2,382,734 97.61%	37,122 1.52%	13,900 0.57%	4999 0.20%	583 0.02%	1,619 0.07%	4 0.00%	1 0.00%
Raigarh	1,278,705	1,135,898 88.83%	8,792 0.69%	132,200 10.34%	1253 0.10%	59 0.00%	479 0.04%	11 0.00%	13 0.00%
Durg	2,461,901	2,363,744 96.01%	40,412 1.64%	16,541 0.67%	12116 0.49%	16124 0.65%	12,792 0.52%	0 0.00%	172 0.01%
Raipur	2,613,531	2,539,386 97.16%	42,564 1.63%	15,385 0.59%	6774 0.26%	1417 0.05%	8,001 0.31%	0 0.00%	4 0.00%
Bastar	1,515,956	1,496,511 98.72%	7,468 0.49%	6,725 0.44%	1145 0.08%	580 0.04%	2,612 0.17%	0 0.00%	915 0.06%
Total-	11,637,494	11,188,659 96.14%	163,124 1.40%	209,694 1.80%	28,364 0.24%	20,389 0.18%	26,144 0.22%	15 0.00%	1,105 0.01%

## Census of Chhattisgarh - 1981

(Table-10)

District/ City	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others
Sarguja	1653943	1546842 93.52%	40556 2.45%	38210 2.31%	3129 0.19%	1608 0.10%	971 0.06%	22627 1.37%
Bilaspur	2953366	2866384 97.05%	47962 1.62%	19393 0.66%	7106 0.24%	648 0.02%	2462 0.08%	9411 0.32%
Raigarh	1503197	1282285 85.30%	12422 0.83%	144746 9.63%	61889 4.12%	88 0.01%	756 0.05%	1011 0.07%
Rajnandgaon	1167501	1126879 96.52%	19715 1.69%	2187 0.19%	3329 0.29%	7984 0.68%	6808 0.58%	599 0.05%
Durg	1890184	1793527 94.89%	42423 2.24%	19777 1.05%	16488 0.87%	6378 0.34%	10835 0.57%	756 0.04%
Raipur	3079476	2977427 96.69%	57458 1.87%	18474 0.60%	10201 0.33%	2190 0.07%	11474 0.37%	2252 0.07%
Bastar	1841865	1810553 98.30%	12067 0.66%	11071 0.60%	1879 0.10%	485 0.03%	3983 0.22%	1827 0.10%
<b>Total-</b>	<b>14089532</b>	<b>13403897</b> <b>95.13%</b>	<b>232603</b> <b>1.65%</b>	<b>253858</b> <b>1.80%</b>	<b>104021</b> <b>0.74%</b>	<b>19381</b> <b>0.14%</b>	<b>37289</b> <b>0.26%</b>	<b>38483</b> <b>0.27%</b>

## Census of Chhattisgarh - 1991

Sl.	District/ City	Total Rural	Total Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Other Religion	Not Stated
1.	Sarguja	Total	2,082,630	1,964,005 94.30%	59,041 2.83%	48,110 2.31%	3,553 0.17 %	1,544 0.07%	1,318 0.06%	1,234 0.06%	3,825 0.18%
2.	Bilaspur	Total	3,793,566	3,663,769 96.58%	60,916 1.61%	27,856 0.73%	8,128 0.21%	4,183 0.11 %	2,942 0.08%	12,002 0.32 %	13,770 0.36%
3.	Raigarh	Total	1,722,291	1,528,987 88.78%	15,441 0.90%	170,923 9.92%	1,725 0.10%	240 0.01 %	827 0.05 %	275 0.02%	3,873 0.22 %
4.	Rajnandgaon	Total	1,439,951	1,376,414 95.59%	23,014 1.60 %	2,856 0.20%	3,535 0.25%	22,826 1.59%	7,299 0.51%	588 0.04%	3,419 0.24%
5.	Durg	Total	2,397,134	2,272,955 94.82%	54,979 2.29%	20,629 0.86%	19,367 0.81%	12,496 0.52%	12,873 0.54%	547 0.02%	3,288 0.14%
6.	Raipur	Total	3,908,042	3,782,144 96.78%	71,034 1.82 %	18,232 0.47%	12,062 0.31%	5,266 0.13%	13,228 0.34%	641 0.02 %	5,435 0.14%
7.	Bastar	Total	2,271,314	2,229,020 98.14%	15,248 0.67 %	14,031 0.62%	2,235 0.10%	2,096 0.09%	4,726 0.21%	2,083 0.09%	1,875 0.08%
	Total Percentage		17,614,928	16,817,294 95.47%	299,673 1.70%	302,637 1.71%	50,605 0.29%	48,651 0.27%	43,213 0.24%	17,370 0.098%	35,485 0.20%

**Enumerated Population of Sikhs, 1951-1991**  
(in thousands)

*(Table-12)*

	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
<b>Indian Union</b>	<b>6,219</b>	<b>7,845</b>	<b>10,379</b>	<b>13,078</b>	<b>16,260</b>
Punjab		6,178	8,160	10,199	12,768
Haryana		517.10	631.00	802.20	956.80
Himachal Pradesh		54.15	44.91	52.21	52.05
Chandigarh		28.32	65.47	95.37	130.30
Rajasthan	148.20	274.20	341.20	492.80	649.20
Delhi	137.10	203.90	291.12	393.90	455.70
Jammu & Kashmir		63.07	105.90	133.70	
<b>Uttar Pradesh</b>	<b>197.60</b>	<b>283.70</b>	<b>369.70</b>	<b>458.60</b>	<b>675.80</b>
<b>Madhya Pradesh</b>	<b>39.91</b>	<b>65.72</b>	<b>98.97</b>	<b>143.00</b>	<b>161.10</b>
Maharashtra	41.43	57.62	101.80	107.30	161.20
Bihar	37.95	44.41	61.52	77.70	78.21
West Bengal	30.62	34.18	35.08	49.05	55.39
Gujarat	7.03	9.65	18.23	22.43	33.04
Andhra Pradesh	5.17	8.56	12.59	16.22	21.91

**Enumerated Population of Buddhists, 1951-1991**  
(in thousands)

**(Table-13)**

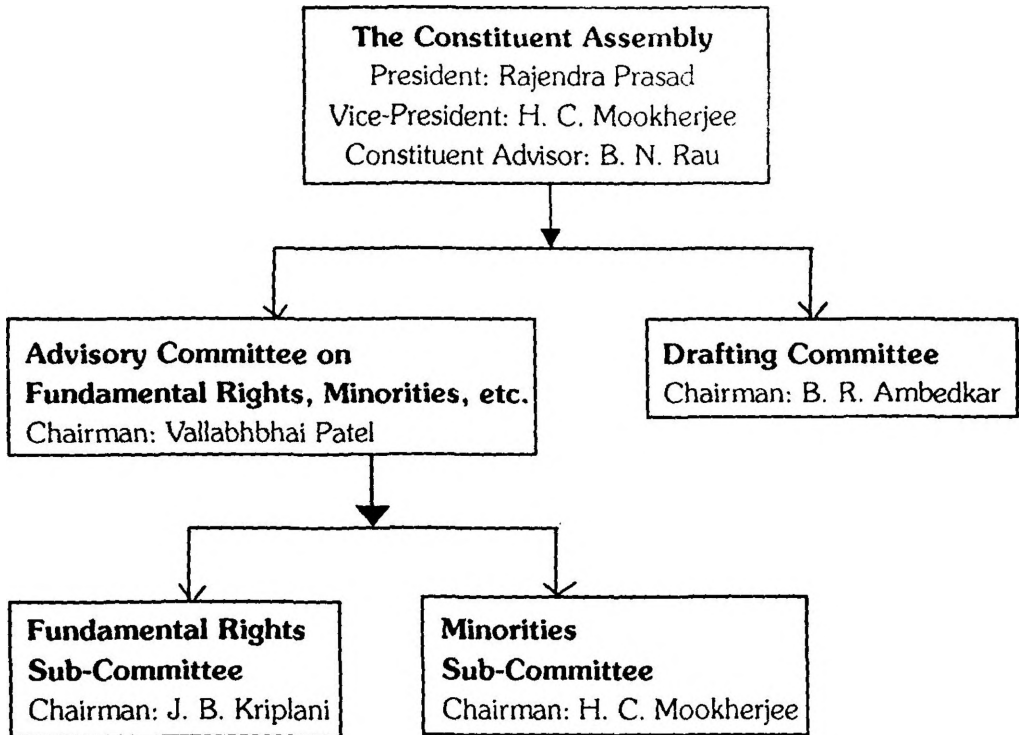
	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
<b>Indian Union</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>3,250</b>	<b>3,812</b>	<b>4,720</b>	<b>6,388</b>
Maharashtra	2.49	2,790	3,264	3,946	5,041
Madhya Pradesh	2.29	113.40	83.82	75.31	216.70
Karnataka	1.71	9.77	14.14	42.15	73.01
Andhra Pradesh	0.23	6.75	10.04	12.93	22.15
Delhi	0.50	5.47	8.72	7.12	13.91
Gujarat	0.20	3.19	5.47	7.55	11.62
Orissa	0.97	0.45	8.46	8.03	9.15
Uttar Pradesh	3.22	12.89	39.64	54.54	221.40
<b>Punjab</b>		<b>2.33</b>	<b>1.37</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>24.93</b>
Himachal Pradesh		18.09	35.94	52.63	64.08
Jammu & Kashmir		48.36	57.96	69.71	
West Bengal	81.67	112.30	121.50	156.30	203.60
Assam		16.78	22.63		64.01
Sikkim	39.40	49.89		90.85	110.40
Arunachal Pradesh			61.40	86.48	111.40
Tripura	15.40	33.72	42.29	54.81	128.30
Mizoram		18.72	22.64	40.43	54.02

**Enumerated Population of Jains, 1951-1991**  
(in thousands)

*(Table-14)*

	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991
<b>Indian Union</b>	<b>1,618</b>	<b>2,027</b>	<b>2,605</b>	<b>3,193</b>	<b>3,353</b>
Maharashtra	337.60	485.70	703.70	939.40	965.80
Rajasthan	359.80	409.90	513.50	624.30	562.80
Gujarat	374.90	409.80	451.60	467.80	491.30
Madhya Pradesh	181.30	247.90	345.20	445.00	490.30
<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>139.90</b>	<b>174.40</b>	<b>218.90</b>	<b>298.00</b>	<b>326.10</b>
Uttar Pradesh	97.74	122.10	124.70	141.50	176.30
Delhi	20.17	29.60	50.51	73.92	94.67
Punjab		21.51	21.38	27.05	20.76
Haryana		25.84	31.17	35.48	35.30
Tamil Nadu	22.17	28.35	41.10	49.56	66.90
Andhra Pradesh	4.89	9.01	16.11	18.64	26.56
Bihar	8.17	17.60	25.19	27.61	23.05
West Bengal	19.61	26.94	32.20	38.66	34.36

**The Proceedings of the Debate on Conversion  
in the Constituent Assembly, 1947 -9.**



**1. Draft articles by K. M. Munshi (17 March 1947) :**

VI (1) All citizens are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and to the right freely to profess and practise religion in a manner compatible with public order, morality or health: Provided that the economic, financial or political activities

VI (6) No person under the age of eighteen shall be free to change his religious persuasion without the permission of his parent or guardian.

VI (7) Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion, undue influence or the offering of material inducement is prohibited and is punishable by the law of the Union.



## **2. Draft articles by B. R. Ambedkar (24 March 1947):**

- (14) The State shall guarantee to every Indian citizen, liberty of conscience and the free exercise of his religion including the right to profess, to preach, and to convert within limits compatible with public order and morality.
- (15) No person shall be compelled to become a member of any religious association, submit to any religious instruction or perform any act of religion. Subject to the foregoing provision, parents and guardians shall be entitled to determine the religious education of children up to the age of sixteen years.

## **3. Report of the Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights (16 April 1947):**

- (16) All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, to freedom of religious worship and to freedom to profess religion, subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this chapter.
- (21) No person under the age of eighteen shall be made to join or profess any religion other than the one in which he was born or be initiated into any religious order involving loss or civil status.
- (22) Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion or undue influence shall not be recognised by law and the exercise of such coercion or influence shall be an offence.

## **4. Suggestions from the Minorities Sub-Committee (19 April 1947):**

- (16) All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this chapter.
- (21) (a) No person under the age of eighteen shall be made to join or profess any religion other than the one in which he was born, except when his parents themselves have been converted and the child does not choose to adhere to his original faith; nor shall such person be initiated into any religious order involving loss of civil status.
- (b) No conversion shall be recognised unless the change of faith is attested by a Magistrate after due inquiry.

## **5. Advisory Committee Reports on Fundamental Rights (23 April 1947):**

- (13) All persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this chapter.

(17) Conversion from one religion to another brought about by coercion or undue influence shall not be recognised by law.

## **6. Amendment brought by K. M. Munshi in the Constituent Assembly**

**(1 May 1947):**

(17) Any conversion from one religion to another of any person brought about by fraud, coercion or undue influence or of a minor under the age of eighteen shall not be recognised by law.

## **7. Draft Constitution prepared by the Drafting Committee**

**(21 February 1948) :**

Article 19: (1) Subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

## **8. Adopted into the Constitution of India by the Constituent Assembly**

**(26 November 1949).**

Article 25. Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.

(1) Subject to public order, morality or health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience, and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

(2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law-

(a) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;

(b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

Explanation I: The wearing and carrying of kirpans shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion.

Explanation II: In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly.

## **The Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam, 1968**

An Act to provide for prohibition of conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or inducement or by fraudulent means and for matters incidental thereto.

Be it enacted by the Madhya Pradesh Legislature in the Nineteenth Year of the Republic of India as follows:

**Note:** It is observed that large scale conversions are taking place mostly among the Adiwasis and persons belonging to other backward classes of the State. The illiteracy and poverty of the people is exploited and promises of monetary, medical and other aid are given to allure them to renounce their religion and adopt another religion. The Bill seeks to prohibit such conversions by use of force or by allurement or by any fraudulent means.

[Vide Statement of Objects and Reasons published in Madhya Pradesh Rajpatra (Asadharan) dated 6 September 1968 page 1391.]

### **1. Short title, extent and commencement:**

1. This Act may be called the Madhya Pradesh Dharma Swatantrya Adhiniyam, 1968.
2. It shall extend to the whole of the State of Madhya Pradesh.
3. It shall come into force at once.

### **2. Definitions:** In this Act unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) 'allurement' means offer of any temptation in the form of
  - (i) any gift or gratification either in cash or kind;
  - (ii) grant of any material benefit, either monetary or otherwise;
- (b) 'conversion' means renouncing one religion and adopting another;
- (c) 'force' shall include a show of force or a threat of injury of any kind including threat of divine displeasure or social excommunication;
- (d) 'fraud' shall include misrepresentation or any other fraudulent contrivance;
- (e) 'minor' means a person under eighteen years of age.

**3. Prohibition of forcible conversion:** No person shall convert or attempt to convert, either directly or otherwise, any person from one religious faith to another by the use of force or by allurement or by any fraudulent means nor shall any person abet any such conversion.

**4. Punishment for contravention of the provisions of section 3:** Any person contravening the provisions contained in section 3 shall, without prejudice to any civil liability, be punishable with imprisonment of either description which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees or with both;

Provided that in case the offence is committed in respect of a minor, a woman or person belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Schedule Tribes, the punishment shall be imprisonment to the extent of two years and fine up to ten thousand rupees.

**5. Intimation to be given to District Magistrate with respect to conversion:**

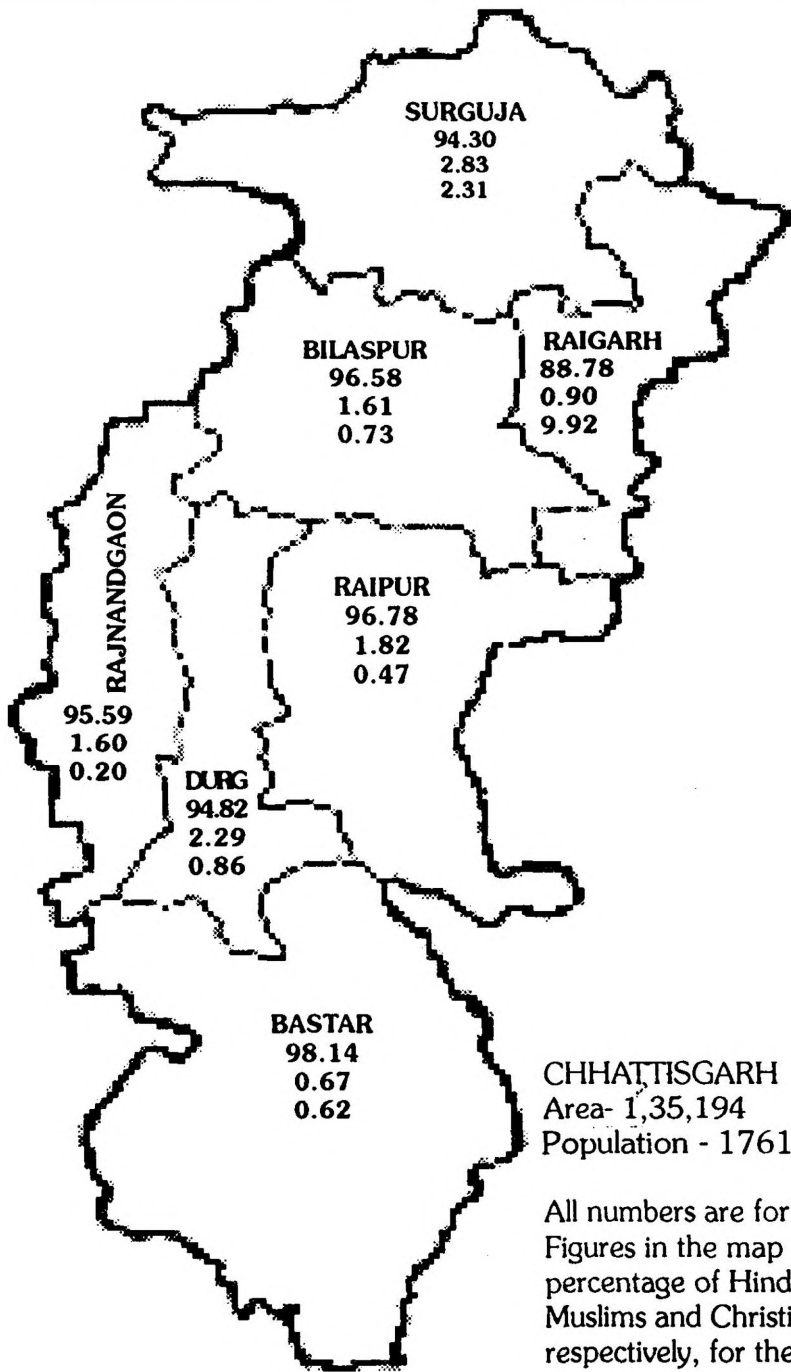
1. Whoever converts any person from one religious faith to another either by performing himself the ceremony necessary for such conversion as a religious priest or by taking part directly or indirectly in such ceremony shall, within such period after the ceremony as may be prescribed, send an intimation to the District Magistrate of the district in which the ceremony has taken place of the fact of such conversion in such form as may be prescribed.

2. If any person fails within sufficient cause to comply with the provisions contained in sub-section (1), he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or with both.

**6. Offence to be cognisable:** An offence under this Act shall be cognisable and shall not be investigated by an officer below the rank of an Inspector of police.

**7. Prosecution to be made with the sanction of District Magistrate:** No prosecution for an offence under this Act shall be instituted except by, or with the previous sanction of the Magistrate of the District or such other authority, not below the rank of a Sub-Divisional Officer, as may be authorised by him in that behalf.

**8. Power to make rules:** The State Government may make rules for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act.



**CHHATTISGARH**  
 Area- 1,35,194  
 Population - 17614928

All numbers are for 1991.  
 Figures in the map give  
 percentage of Hindus,  
 Muslims and Christians,  
 respectively, for the district.

## **Acknowledgement**

This booklet is a result of research, hard work and commitment of many. Prominent among them are Aagney Sail, Akshay Sail and Anil Chaudhary who assisted in collecting Data and Background information. S K Pandab, Bijay Deep, Manharan Sahu, who checked and cross checked the statistics, prepared Tables and designed Graphics. Ramesh Pancheshwar and B C G Suresh, who worked day and night to compos the matter. Rajendra Namdeo & Pawan Sahu, who provided the necessary physical conditions during odd working hours too. Lillykutty Micah and Shweta Soni who provided the necessary Secretarial support. And finally Shashi Sail, who corrected the manuscript. Thus, this booklet could be called a combined effort. I am grateful to all of them for facilitating this endeavour.

*Adv Rajendra K. Sail is a human rights and social activist, who has been working among the poor and oppressed in Chhattisgarh for the past 30 years. During the Emergency Rule in India, he was the first Secretary of the Chhattisgarh Unit of the People's Union for Civil Liberties & Democratic Rights (PUCL & DR) formed by Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narain in October 1976. He was elected as the General Secretary of the MP - PUCL in March 1981, and later in 1986 the Organizing Secretary of the National PUCL. During this period he played a crucial role in the identification, release and rehabilitation of about 4000 bonded labourers in Raipur district, who were released by an Order of the Supreme Court of India in April 1988.*

*Through an ecumenical development organisation called the Mukti-Niketan, Pithora, Adv Sail has been instrumental in shaping up the self-development of these released bonded labourers, who were unionised and led the struggles for jal, jangal aur jameen in seven development blocks of the then Raipur district.*

*Adv Sail has also been instrumental in the formation of INSAF (Indian Social Action Forum), a national forum bringing together some 550 social action groups, social movements and progressive intellectuals from almost 20 states in the country to resist globalization, combat communalism and defend democracy. He is presently its National Organizing Secretary.*

*Adv Sail has struggled to associate himself with the worker's movement for the Right to Life & Livelihood, both as a lawyer and as an activist.*

*As a Christian, Adv Sail has been recognized for his critical ideas and radical action against the institutionalised Church structures that stifle the basic tenets of Christianity based on Christ's teachings about justice, peace, freedom, equality and human dignity.*

*He has written this booklet with the primarily objective of bringing forth the facts about the Conversion Controversy in Chhattisgarh, and also makes a meaningful contribution to fight fascist forces that thrive on spreading falsehoods and rumours. And, in turn, strengthen the secular-democratic fabric of Indian society.*

# Conversion in Chhattisgarh

According to the Census of India,

The Christian population in Chhattisgarh has always been less than the national average:

<b>Christian Population</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
<b>Population in (%)</b>					
In India	2.35	2.44	2.60	2.43	2.32
In Chhattisgarh	0.59	1.46	1.80	1.80	1.71

The figures clearly defy the false propoganda about the unprecedented rise in the Christian population due to conversion. In fact, the above figures only demonstrate a gradual decline in the percentage share of Christian population.

The Hindu Population in Chhattisgarh has always been much higher than the national average, almost by 10 to 15 per cent:

<b>Hindu Population</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
<b>Population in (%)</b>					
In India	84.98	83.51	82.73	82.63	82.00
In Chhattisgarh	97.81	96.67	96.14	95.12	95.47

The above figures belie the threat perception being built up by the propagandists that the Hindu population is fast declining in Chhattisgarh due to conversion.

The Christian population has been much less than one per cent in five out of seven districts of Chhattisgarh. It has not recorded a considerable increase in these districts so as to give credence to the claim of conversion at high scales:

**Christian Population in percentage:**

	<b>Raipur</b>	<b>Bilaspur</b>	<b>Durg</b>	<b>Rajnandgaon</b>	<b>Bastar</b>	<b>Sarguja</b>	<b>Raigarh</b>
1981	0.60%	0.66%	1.05%	0.19%	0.60%	2.31%	9.63%
1991	0.47%	0.73%	0.86%	0.20%	0.62%	2.31%	9.92%

Even in sheer numbers, the Christian population hardly matters in Chhattisgarh:

	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
Christians	44,695	1,33,901	2,09,694	2,53,858	3,02,637
Hindus	72,93,530	88,49,715	1,11,88,659	1,34,03,897	1,68,17,294