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NEPAL CSW concerned latest Hindu extremist violence indicates rising threat

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) is concerned afresh by the threat of Hindu extremist violence in Nepal, following a bomb blast for which the Nepal Defense Army (NDA) has claimed responsibility, and urges the government of Nepal to ensure that recent incidents are thoroughly investigated and their perpetrators brought to justice.

On November 22, a crude bomb was detonated outside the Kathmandu offices of the United Mission to Nepal (UMN), a Christian charity. There were no casualties or damage to the building. According to news reports, leaflets found at the site had been signed by a senior member of the NDA, named as Aditya. On November 28, 2011, security personnel defused a more powerful bomb outside the entrance to the Assemblies of God Navajivan Church of the in Kupondole district of Kathmandu, although nobody has claimed responsibility for this bomb.

NDA chief, Ram Prasad Mainali, is currently serving a life sentence for his role in the bomb blast in the Catholic Church of the Assumption, Kathmandu, on 23 May 2009, in which three people died. The NDA earlier claimed responsibility for a failed attack on a Christian orphanage on 26 April 2007 and a for bomb blast in a mosque in Biratnagar in April 2009, in which two died. NDA pamphlets were also left at the scene of a murder of a Catholic priest, Father Moyalan, on July 1, 2008. On 4 March 2011, police arrested six people connected with the NDA who had come to Kathmandu allegedly to plant bombs.

There have been some indications that Mainali could be offered an amnesty and the NDA recognized as a legitimate political party, in exchange for giving up arms. Mainali himself has expressed intentions to enter politics as leader of the NDA, although it also appears he has been encouraged by members of Hindu extremist groups in India not to renounce violence.

One of the major issues highlighted in the Universal Periodic Review of Nepal at the UN in January 2011 was the need to “ensure that perpetrators of human rights violations ... are brought to justice”. The Nepal office of the UN human rights body, OHCHR, expressed concern in a statement on November 10 about recent government decisions to appoint, promote and pardon officials implicated in serious human rights violations.

CSW’s Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, “These recent incidents are indicative of a rising threat from Hindu extremist violence in Nepal, and we urge that they are taken seriously for the good of the nation as a whole. The NDA has been implicated in a series of terrorist attacks, and its leaders must be held to account for each incident. CSW highlighted the threat of Hindu extremist violence in a briefing two years ago, and we maintain similar concerns today.”

Notes to Editors:

1. CSW raised concern about the threat of impunity in cases of religiously-motivated violence by the NDA and other groups in an October 2009 briefing, [‘Nepal: Emerging threat of Hindu extremism’](#).

2. The 'Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review' for Nepal (A/HRC/17/5) included a recommendation from Sweden that "the perpetrators of human rights violations, both past and present, are brought to justice in proceedings which meet international standards of fairness" (paragraph 106.35).
3. Click [here](#) for the OHCHR statement released on 10 November.