

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 434

Condemning the recent religious violence in India and calling on the Government of India to stop the violence and address its root causes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

Mr. AKIN (for himself, Mr. WOLF, Mr. PITTS, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. MCCOTTER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the recent religious violence in India and calling on the Government of India to stop the violence and address its root causes.

Whereas India is the largest democracy in the world, with a Constitution that provides for the protection of religious freedom and the fundamental rights of all citizens;

Whereas the United States respects and admires the commitment of India's present government and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to preserve pluralism and religious diversity in India;

Whereas the murder of Swami Laxmananand Saraswati was a hideous act of violence;

Whereas an act of violence should never lead to violent retribution or mob governance;

Whereas recent violence in the state of Orissa has resulted in the deaths of significant number of Christians and Hindus, the burning of churches, Christian institutions and homes, and has forced tens of thousands of Christians to flee their homes;

Whereas the violence in the state of Orissa continues to flare and is spreading to other states such as Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh;

Whereas this is the second major outbreak of religious violence against Christians since December of 2007;

Whereas the efforts of the state governments have had little effect in preventing the continuing violence;

Whereas certain leaders belonging to the ruling parties in the states are publicly encouraging such violence against Christians to create animosity between the Hindus and others;

Whereas the Supreme Court of India has ordered the state government of Orissa to detail its efforts to stop the violence;

Whereas India's National Human Rights Commission, an official body, is sending a team to investigate the origins of the violence in Orissa;

Whereas the National Commission for Women has expressed shock at the level of violent crimes committed towards the Christian women by police forces;

Whereas the Government of India has not moved quickly to prevent further violence or address the root causes of the violence;

Whereas maintaining the rule of law, rather than mob rule,
is of vital importance to building a strong democratic
government; and

Whereas it is in the interest of the Government of India to
prevent tension between different religious groups, pro-
mote religious liberty and freedom of peaceful religious
expression in India: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) strongly condemns the religious violence in
4 India, including the killings, rapes, and home and
5 church destruction;

6 (2) calls on the Government of India to take all
7 necessary steps to restrict the reach and resources
8 of the radical religious party elements that cause
9 such violence regularly, including the direct incite-
10 ment to violence against Christians;

11 (3) calls on the Government of India to take
12 strong steps to prevent ongoing and future violence,
13 including the provision of adequate police protection
14 for targets of violence, and active prosecution of per-
15 petrators of violence;

16 (4) calls on the state governments of India and
17 elected bodies in all levels of government to protect
18 all their citizens regardless of their religious beliefs;

19 (5) condemns the implementation of any laws
20 restricting the freedom of religion or the freedom to

1 change one's religion, the fundamental rights in any
2 democracy; and

3 (6) urges the people of India to respect all
4 peaceful religious beliefs and live together as a
5 model to the rest of the world.

○