



Stiftelsen BRÖDET

Newsletter
September 2022

INDIA/Kashmir

*Dear Friends and
Supporters,*



More and more people come to this place of worship and other places in Kashmir to listen to the Christian message.



India is the seventh largest country, by land area, and is the second most populated with 1.38 billion inhabitants (2020).

The Swedish Foreign Office (UD) writes on its home page: *India is the world's largest democracy; just and free elections are held regularly. The country has comprehensive legislation for the protection of human rights. The ancient Indian traditions of dividing people into castes negatively impacts the, so called, lower castes' ability to enjoy their human rights. Even though living conditions have improved in the last decades and abject poverty has decreased, hundreds of millions of people still live in poverty. A large portion of the population lacks access to food, housing, clean water, health care, and education. Women, children, people of lower castes, indigenous people, people belonging to ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities, as well as people with disabilities are most vulnerable. ... The judicial system is overextended and about 70 percent of individuals detained in custody are awaiting trial. Corruption is widespread and present in the judiciary and the police force. Torture and death occur in detention centers and prisons. India has the death penalty. ... The military is reported to have violated human rights in the context of fighting terrorism and maintaining domestic security. This is especially true in the northeast of the country and in the Jumma and Kashmir region, which is, in part, subject to special legislation. ... Militant groups in these areas are guilty of significant abuse of the civilian population. ... The right to practice one's religion is generally respected. Nevertheless, Christians and Muslims experience that crimes and threats against them have increased in recent years and reports by international human rights organizations point to an increase in hate crimes.*



During his time as a student, Narendra Modi, who has been the country's Prime Minister since 2014, started a far-right National Hindu organization, which actively fights for Hindutva, i.e., that India is and should be a homeland for Hindu people. During his reign the position of Hindus has strengthened, while conditions for Christians and Muslims have been made more difficult. SB Foundation, which several years ago supported several Christian "self-help" projects in Kashmir by purchasing sewing machines and promoting sheep farming, has now received a timely greeting from a pastor who works in Kashmir. He writes that the projects admittedly are

doing well, but recently another Christian congregation was suspended and the concern is great that the same will befall also other congregations. "Think about us and pray for us," the pastor pleads.

Greetings from SB Foundation and us at the Board, *Arne, Elisabeth, Gloria, Ivar, Lena, Roger*

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