



## **ASIA/INDIA - The Church calls for a Commission to monitor the status of Christians in India**

News Delhi (Agenzia Fides) – The Catholic Church is calling the federal Government to establish a special Commission to monitor the numbers, social conditions, and the problems experienced by Christians in India. The Commission should be created using the model of the “Sachar Commission” - named after the judge Rajindar Sachar, who was the head of the Commission for monitoring the status of Muslims in India, established in 2006 by the Government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The proposal to establish a new Commission is supported by Archbishop Vincent Concessao of Delhi, other Christian leaders and organisations such as the All Indian Christian Council (AICC), which announced to Fides that it has launched a signature campaign at all levels, to ask the Government to institute this. In the coming days, the AICC will also submit a Memorandum containing the request to the National Commission for Minorities, government agencies and the Office of the Prime Minister of India.

“We want the Government to be aware of the marginalisation of Christians in terms of poverty, land ownership and education, as happened with the Sachar Commission for the Muslim faithful,” the AICC said in a statement sent to Fides. Christians want the Government to be officially aware of the difficult living conditions of Dalit Christians, especially in some states like Orissa and Gujarat. “The Dalit Christians suffer patent discrimination,” emphasizes the organisation, requesting that the issue of development and protection of Indian Christians is firmly placed on the federal Government's agenda. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 9/2/2011)