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RAIPUR: After the controversial gram sabha resolutions banning non-Hindu religious activity in villages in tribal Bastar, there was fresh tension in Madota village after local Christians were assaulted allegedly by right-wing activists, leaving 12 people injured late on Saturday.

Eleven of the injured are still undergoing treatment at a hospital in Jagdalpur, where they were brought in a truck. While the police recorded their statement, senior civil and police officials are tight-lipped about the clash.

Chhattisgarh Christian Forum (CCF) president Arun Pannalal told TOI that the manner in which the attack was orchestrated raises suspicion that local officials were hand in glove with attackers.

"An announcement was made through drum beats that residents of Kotwar village should assemble at 9am on Saturday to meet the sub-divisional magistrate, deputy superintendent of police and town inspector to discuss ways to douse tension between the two communities. They waited till evening, but nobody turned up. By evening, right-wing activists came in a truck and attacked Christians, accusing them of promoting religious conversion," he said.

Quoting local Christians, Pannalal said, a week ago BJP MP Dinesh Kashyap had visited Bhanpuri village and met local Christians. The MP washed their feet and then made a public announcement that they had completed the process of "ghar wapsi" or home-coming to the Hindu fold. Since then tension has been brewing between Hindus and Christians over prayer meetings at the local church.

Pannalal said that Christian organisations have already moved high court challenging the resolutions adopted by the gram sabhas.

"Now our writ is pending in the high court. We see this latest attack as a pressure tactic," he said.

Tribal Bastar was in focus in May this year after a number of gram sabhas, powerful bodies under the provisions of Panchayati Raj Act, adopted resolutions under section 129 (G) of State Panchayati Raj Act, banning "non-Hindu religious propaganda, prayers and speeches in villages".

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