

	Proposal for Paper at 15th IAMS Assembly, Sydney
Proposed Study Group	Religious Freedom, Persecution and Mission
Proposed Topic	Locating Christian Mission in India in the Context of Hindutva
Author	Rev Dr Abraham Mathew
Abstract	<p>Locating Christian Mission in Indian in the Context of Hindutva</p> <p>This study is an exposition of how mission can be imagined in the contemporary Indian situation. In India Hindutva is becoming a mission stream by making use of classical Hindu religious scriptures, its symbols and its customs. Making Hinduism missional Hindutva is striving to control the state, as it had been in the case of colonial mission, by propagating its idea in the name of ‘Sanatan Dharma’. The peripheral reading of this phenomenon highlights its association with the political process in India and hence is tempted to call it ‘fascist’. By calling this phenomenon, fascist, it is easy to dismiss Hindutva as a non-religious category. However, on the other hand there is a tendency to argue that religion should divorce from politics. This attempt will in effect make the way to push religion from public space saying that religion is a private affair which again is a challenge to religion itself by dismissing its prophetic voice.</p> <p>In this paper the researcher is arguing that in contemporary world religions are reconstituting themselves centered around identities. Therefore, Hindutva can be seen as a parallel religious stream which even questions the classical Hindu views and its doctrines. Also, it harms the primordial views within so called Hindu streams which holds communities together by highlighting the cosmic content of life world. Hindutva’s camouflage nature and its identity-oriented affirmations are placing ‘Hindu’ identity as different from all other religious expressions and religious categories by creating divisions among people. Therefore, it is imperative to understand that Hindutva has to be engaged religiously. Engaging with ‘Hindutva’ is a real challenge before Christian mission in India and some ways to initiate this engagement is imagined in this paper. Along with an analysis of Hindutva and its impact in the society in the form of violence the content of religion and the role of religion are also discussed.</p>
Educational Background	<p>Ph.D from Bristol University, UK (Supervisor Dr Kirsteen Kim)</p> <p>Masters in History from Agra University, Agra, India</p> <p>Batchelor of Divinity from United Theological College, Bangalore, India</p>
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Secretary, National Council of Churches in India (Supervisor of the project called Freedom of Religion or Belief in India) • Former Professor of Mission Studies at Dharma Jyoti Vidya Peeth Seminary, Faridabad, Delhi which comes under Serampore University. • Former Registrar of Nav Jyoti Post Graduate Research Centre, New Delhi. • Ordained Clergy of the Malankara Mar Thoma Syrian Church, India.
Contact details	Rev Dr Abraham Mathew, Executive Secretary, National Council of Churches in India, NCCI Office, 403, CNI Bhavan, 16 Pandit Pant Marg, New Delhi – 1 India.