

GERMANY: Anti-Semitism: Germany sees '10% jump in offences' in 2018

The German government has revealed a sharp increase in the number of anti-Semitic offences recorded last year.

BBC (13.02.2019) – <https://bbc.in/2IetSIe> – Crime data, detailed in German media on Wednesday, says 1,646 crimes were linked to a hatred of Jews in 2018 – showing a yearly increase of 10%.

It comes just a day after French politicians spoke out about a sharp rise of incidents in their own country.

French Interior minister, Christophe Castaner, has warned that anti-Semitism is “spreading like poison”.

Over the weekend there were a series of anti-Semitic incidents reported in central Paris – including Swastika vandalism on post-boxes featuring a holocaust survivor’s portrait.

The latest data from Germany was released after a request from a member of the far-left Die Linke party. **That information was then shared with German newspaper, Der Tagesspiegel.**

The government have said the final totals may still increase – but the latest collation of data revealed a total jump in anti-Semitic offences of about 10%.

It also revealed a 60% rise in physical attacks – with 62 violent incidents recorded, up from 37 in 2017.

Josef Shcuster, the head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, said the news shows that government action is “urgently needed”.

“The latest numbers are not yet official, but at least they reflect a tendency – and that’s scary,” he said in a statement to the BBC.

“What had already solidified as a subjective impression among Jews is now confirmed in the statistics.

“Considering that acts below the threshold for criminal liability are not covered, the picture becomes even darker.”

Jewish groups have warned about the rise of far-right groups in fostering anti-Semitism and hatred of other minorities throughout Europe.

Last year, a survey of thousands of European Jews revealed that many were increasingly worried about anti-Semitism.

Since 2017, the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) have been country's main opposition party.

AfD are openly against immigration, but deny holding anti-Semitic views.

However, a number of **comments from their politicians, including about the Holocaust, have drawn scorn from Jewish groups** and other politicians.

Last year the German government announced that a specialist team would be sent into German schools to try and combat anti-Semitism.

There have also been calls for special classes about anti-Semitism to be provided for some immigrants.

The Central Council of Jews in Germany said the classes were needed after a large increased in immigration from Muslim-majority countries.

It came after a video went viral showing a man, shouting in Arabic, attacking two Jewish men in Berlin.

Last month, Chancellor Angela Merkel has said it was the responsibility of everyone to have a "zero tolerance" approach

to anti-Semitism and other forms of xenophobia.

“People growing up today must know what people were capable of in the past, and we must work proactively to ensure that it is never repeated,” Merkel during a video address to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

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