

## News and Current Events :: Anti-Christians Close Bridge of Hope Centre, Make Death Threats - November 19, 2013

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A Gospel for Asia Bridge of Hope centre was closed November 17 after extremists forced the landlord to stop renting space to the program. They also threatened to kill staff members if they stay in the area.

On November 16, the centre's staff held a medical camp for the students, followed by other activities. At around 4:30 p.m., a group of more than 300 people from a nearby village came to the Bridge of Hope centre and told the staff to leave the cluster of local villages as soon as possible.

"We will not allow any Christian activity in our village, even if it is social work," they said, while others shouted anti-Christian slogans and verbally abused the staff.

The staff talked with the protestors for nearly an hour, explaining the activities of the centre and how they help impoverished children, but the crowd was unmoved. They called the landlord of the house and threatened to banish him from the village if he continued to allow the program to operate in his building.

At the homeowner's request, the staff brought all the centre's supplies to a local believer's house. The following afternoon, however, more anti-Christian groups arrived in the village, many bearing weapons.

They told the staff to leave the area, saying, "We will not allow any work of Christians in this area. If you do not obey, we will take your lives."

Upper caste groups, who are a minority in India, often oppose the education of lower caste and Dalit ("Untouchable") children. However, this is the first time such a severe campaign has been mounted against a Bridge of Hope centre, marking an increase in persecution.

The centre's closing means a loss of free education, food and medical care to more than 100 local children, many of whom come from Dalit backgrounds and will be unable to receive educations apart from the Bridge of Hope program.

"It breaks our heart to see adults who should be the protectors of these children become the roadblocks to their future and hope of a better life," said K.P. Yohannan, the founder and international director of Gospel for Asia.

The Bridge of Hope staff and local church ask for the prayers of fellow believers as they determine how to serve the community at this time.

"We will do all we can to ensure that these children will continue to have the future they deserve," Yohannan said.

Please pray for:

Protection of the Bridge of Hope staff, local believers and everyone in the area who stands in support of the Bridge of Hope.

Wisdom as our staff determines its response to the anti-Christians' demands.

Open eyes and softened hearts in the people who are making threats against our believers.

**Re: Anti-Christians Close Bridge of Hope Centre, Make Death Threats - November 19, 2013 - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2013/11/21 16:45:01**

Maybe they just need to shake their shoes at them upon leaving...

**Re: - posted by Lordoitagain (), on: 2013/11/21 19:48**

by ginnyrose on 2013/11/21 16:45:01

"Maybe they just need to shake their shoes at them upon leaving..."

Sister Ginnyrose,

It is not the group that is running them out that is getting ministered to ... The rich upper caste minority is prohibiting them from ministering to the poor lower caste majority. The poor lower caste majority would love for them to stay and keep ministering to them! They would be shaking the dust off of their shoes at the wrong people.

This is truly a sad and horrible situation that needs much prayer. Oppression of the poor has always angered the heart of God. We need to join these poor people in praying that their oppressors will be stopped. When Christianity lifts the poor out of their poverty, their wealthy oppressors get upset!

It makes me think of when Paul cast the evil spirit out of the young girl ... her users who were profiting from her were upset! We need to sing and pray in the midnight with our Gospel For Asia fellow ministers and believe God for an earthquake!