

Missionary Answers Bribery Accusations

✖ Gospel for Asia-supported missionary Vin Kumal was the subject of a police inquiry after someone in his village accused him of bribing people and forcing them to convert to Christianity.

Kumal was summoned and met with a local police officer who asked him a lot of questions regarding the complaint. Kumal told the truth—that he is not offering bribes or forcing anyone to change their religion against their will. He shared the love of Jesus and the story of the gospel, telling the officer that the love of Jesus is a free gift that can only be accepted by a willing heart.

The officer was satisfied with Kumal's answers and released him.

Gospel for Asia-supported missionaries frequently face accusations of bribery and forced conversions. The allegations usually arrive when the person making the accusation sees many people turn to Christ. The complaints must be investigated because many areas of South Asia have so-called "freedom of religion" laws. These laws spell out stiff penalties for anyone convicted of converting someone by means of "fraud or

allurement.” Christians are often accused of breaking these laws.

The complaints can also come after local people witness believers offering physical help to individuals or families. This causes problems for missionaries who serve on Compassion Services teams providing food and shelter during a crisis situation. The accusations have also been leveled against GFA-supported missionaries who give villagers gifts from the *Gospel for Asia Christmas Gift* catalog.

The area where Kumal ministers is home to thousands of people who are strict adherents to their traditional religions. He and his family have served in the area for a number of years. They share the love of Jesus in open-air meetings, home prayer fellowships, house visitations and distribution of Bibles and gospel tracts.

Kumal asks for prayer that the complaint will formally be dropped and that the person who filed it will truly understand the love of Jesus.