

Missionaries Attacked, Arrested Just Before Gift Distribution

Seven Gospel for Asia-supported missionaries were robbed, beaten and arrested March 28 as they were preparing for a Christmas gift distribution event in South Asia. Normally these ceremonies are joyous occasions where missionaries distribute gifts purchased from the Gospel for Asia Christmas catalog by people around the world.

The events are usually celebrations that include traditional singing, dancing, speeches by local dignitaries and a presentation of the Gospel. Then the gifts—which range from blankets and sewing machines to pigs and water buffalo—are given to individuals and families in desperate need.

Before the event started, a mob of about 50 people descended on the scene to rob and brutally attack the missionaries. They took their money, their cell phones and then ripped their Bibles to shreds. They singled out one missionary and shaved his head, which is a sign of shame in their culture. They also damaged a vehicle that belongs to the ministry in that area.

Then the mob forced the beaten and bloodied missionaries to the local police station and tried to file a case against them, saying the missionaries were forcing people to convert to Christianity.

The seven missionaries remained in police custody until later that evening, at which time they were released. The men are now being treated for their injuries. The Christmas gift distribution event has been rescheduled. The missionaries involved in the incident shared the following prayer requests:

Pray for healing of their wounds

Pray that none of the missionaries will be charged with a crime.

Ask the Lord to embolden GFA workers with more courage and that the persecution they faced will help them do more for the Lord.

Pray that the Christmas gift distribution will be rescheduled quickly.

Ask the Lord to reveal Himself to the mob that attacked the missionaries and that they will choose to follow Jesus.