

After Miracles, Peter Youngren Charged With 'Practicing Medicine Without a License'

World Impact Ministries just wrapped up a dramatic Gospel Friendship Festival in India. But not without opposition.

Before the six-day event was to start, newspapers and television reported on a court challenge to cancel the Nagpur Friendship Festival. Charges had been laid that **Peter Youngren** was planning to do "mass conversion," which is illegal in India. After a three-hour meeting with the city commissioner of police, the local organizing committee was given severe restriction that Youngren was not to speak or pray using the **name of Jesus**. On their way from the police, they were suddenly called back. There had been a change of heart, and now the police had given freedom to Youngren to speak freely.

In spite of clearance from the police, on the day the event was scheduled to start, there was still much uncertainty. Several groups with strong anti-Christian agendas were in the high court arguing for an injunction against the gospel campaign. With just one hour to go before the opening service, the judge dismissed their claims.

With the battle concerning mass conversion over, newspapers reported a new challenge, this time charging Youngren with practicing medicine without a license. Newspapers reported astounding healings of people, who were deaf, blind and handicapped, citing specific names and cases, claiming that massive crowds were in attendance. Again this challenge was unsuccessful.

In an effort to refute the miracle accounts now widely circulated in the city, one of the anti-Christian groups offered Youngren 1.5 million rupees (\$30,000) to prove that his prayers could cure ailments. That night, in typical style, Youngren told the crowd that his prayers are very weak and that not much should be expected from them, that he has no special gifts for miracles but that he has a very strong Jesus. The meeting ended with 70 minutes of nonstop healing testimonies, including one from a young Hindu boy, Sushil, who was born blind. The local Christian rejoiced, especially when a politician from the very party that caters to the anti-Christian groups was on the platform testifying that the tumors across his stomach and chest had been removed by Jesus.

To the amazement of almost everyone, none of the promised attacks from militant groups materialized, and the Friendship Festival as well as pastors' seminar proceeded without interruption. The highlight each day was the prayer where tens of thousands acknowledged Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Nagpur is a city of almost 3 million, located in the geographical center of India. The Friendship Festival was supported by almost all Christian organizations and churches in the city.

Youngren has Friendship Festivals scheduled for Congo, Indonesia and Pakistan before returning to India later this year to the "holy" city of Allahabad.