

## Open Doors Releases Statement About Tennessee Pastor Detained by Authorities in India: 'A

SANTA ANA, Calif. (Open Doors) — Open Doors has learned that authorities in India have arrested and detained American pastor, Bryan Nerren. Nerren, who is from Tennessee, apparently drew attention from security agents because he was carrying money intended to cover the expenses of two conferences and the travel expenses of a few pastors. A customs agent called to the scene questioned Nerren about his faith for an hour straight, demanding to know whether the money would be used for Christian activities. Although Nerren was allowed to fly on to Bagdogra, the customs agent reportedly notified authorities at Nerren's destination who then arrested him upon landing.

Nerren is accused of not having appropriate documentation for the money he was carrying. After six days in jail, Nerren posted bail but his passport was retained by the judge so Nerren is unable to leave Siliguri. The pastor's first hearing, which was scheduled for October 22 was delayed until December 12.

"Given the currently hostile climate for Christians in India, it seems apparent that authorities targeted this American pastor because of his faith. Christians in India are regularly treated with this same disregard and denied basic human rights, while extremists are permitted to hunt Christians down and harass or assault them because of their faith. Now, the authorities have brazenly broadened their scope to detain an American whose only real crime is living out his faith in Jesus while on Indian soil. India must be pressured to immediately release Pastor Derren and to reform the current conditions for its minority Christian citizens," said David Curry, CEO of Open Doors USA. "This is why Open Doors has devoted this year's International Day of Prayer, which will be observed on November 3, to a day of prayer for India."

More information on the day of prayer can be found here:

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/day-of-prayer-india/>

India is #10 on Open Doors' World Watch List, a comprehensive annual report that ranks countries where it is most difficult to be a Christian. The current ruling party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), is considered the political wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)-a Hindu nationalist organization that has publicly declared its aim for India to be "free of Christians by 2020."

To help people know specifically how to pray, Open Doors launched the "Pray for the Persecuted" prayer app where people can receive prayer requests from persecuted Christians sent right to their phones 3-4 times per week. Some of the prayer requests now even include audio or video from affected believers. The app can be downloaded at [ODUSA.org/PRAYERAPP](http://ODUSA.org/PRAYERAPP).

### **About Open Doors USA**

*For more than 60 years, Open Doors USA has worked in the world's most oppressive and*

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restricted countries for Christians. Open Doors works to equip and encourage Christians living in dangerous circumstances with the threat of persecution and equips the Western church to advocate for the persecuted. Christians are one of the most persecuted religious groups in the world and are oppressed in at least 60 countries. For more information, visit [OpenDoorsUSA.org](http://OpenDoorsUSA.org).