

Diaspora Ministry Works: Sharks turned Fishermen

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FROM LOAN SHARKS TO FISHERS OF MEN

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I grew up in the Philippines seeing men in motorcycles wearing turban and long beard. We call them ?Bumbay? when we were growing up. Sometimes adults would scare us that if we are not obedient the ?Bumbays? would get us. These men are South Asians mostly from India who have migrated in the Philippines to do business. Many would call them "loan sharks" because of their five-six (5/6)business. Long before micro-financing were introduced and became popular, these migrants have seen its potential and have employed 5/6 to farmers, street vendors, market and ambulant vendors and the common people. Many of these financiers have grown their businesses from 5/6 to become giant corporations in the Philippines. Not anymore they ride motorcycle, spare some new comers, but Benzes and BMW?s.

Our country has welcomed tourists, students, business people and workers in our country. Next to Chinese and South Koreans, South Indians could be the third or fourth largest population of immigrants in the country. Millions from different countries have migrated in the Philippines.

In Metro Manila (the capital) alone, there are approximately forty thousand South Asians. You do not need to go to India or Pakistan to meet Sindhis and Punjabis. They roam the streets of Manila, or in classrooms of our universities and thousands in the call centres serving the global economy.

Recently, our church association, the Conservative Baptists of the Philippines, Christar organization and the Fil-Indian believers launched a partnership ministry to reach these people group. Today, a vibrant and growing congregation is worshipping the true Living God and ministering to South Asians in the heart of the business Capital of the Philippines ? Makati City. CBAP has invited and commissioned couple from India to serve the growing ministry as their pastor.

Today many of the former loan-sharks are dedicated fishers of men who have joined the followers of Jesus Christ to disciple this people group in diasporas. We are also praying for new ministries to be started among Koreans, Malaysians, Indonesians and Chinese in the Philippines.

I join the hundreds of believers in this cause for the diasporas.

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