

India Crisis: Open letter to the Dutch Staff Bart Hartemink, Martin Roest and Wim Ruvenkamp

Anyone who has the above email addresses of Bart, Martin and Wim please forward this message to them

Dear Bart, Martin and Wim,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding Martin's planned visit to India. While I understand your intention to support and encourage sincere souls, I believe your presence may inadvertently lend legitimacy to serious issues plaguing the church in India.

The church in India is currently facing allegations that go far beyond isolated incidents of misconduct. There are widespread reports of sexual abuse, including child sexual abuse, as well as financial improprieties such as money laundering. These are not minor issues that can be addressed through encouragement alone, but systemic problems that require decisive action and accountability.

By proceeding with your visit, you risk sending a message that these grave matters are not significant enough to warrant a strong response. Your presence may be interpreted as tacit approval or willingness to overlook serious wrongdoing. This could further discourage victims from coming forward and embolden those engaged in misconduct.

While I appreciate your desire to offer spiritual support, I urge you to reconsider your approach. Instead of a visit that may be seen as business as usual, perhaps you could:

1. Publicly call for a thorough, independent investigation into all allegations
2. Advocate for concrete reforms to prevent future abuses
3. Meet with victims and survivors to hear their stories directly
4. Work with local church leaders to implement strict accountability measures

True spiritual leadership in this situation requires confronting uncomfortable truths and taking a stand against corruption and abuse, even when it's difficult. By addressing these issues head-on, you have an opportunity to demonstrate real moral courage and help guide the church towards genuine reform and healing.

Furthermore, I urge you to consider the plight of those who have left the church due to these ongoing issues. These individuals, whose souls and spiritual well-being should be of utmost concern, have been deeply hurt and disillusioned by the corruption they've witnessed. If you do proceed with your visit, will you make an effort to reach out to these former members? Their experiences and perspectives are crucial in understanding the full impact of the church's failings. By engaging with them, you could gain valuable insights into the depth of the problems and potentially help in the healing process for those who feel abandoned or betrayed by their spiritual community.

Furthermore, your planned visit to India appears to contradict the principles and commitments discussed in the recent meeting held by Dutch workers regarding addressing sexual abuse cases. In June 2024, Dutch workers acknowledged the painful truth of sexual abuse within the fellowship and emphasized the importance of open dialogue, self-examination, and implementing systems to detect and report abuse. By visiting India without addressing the ongoing issues there, you would be undermining these efforts and potentially re-traumatizing

victims. It sends a conflicting message about the seriousness with which the church views these matters and its commitment to supporting victims. This inconsistency between words and actions could severely damage the credibility of the church's efforts to combat abuse and protect vulnerable individuals.

I respectfully ask that you postpone your visit until meaningful steps have been taken to address these serious concerns. Your influence could be pivotal in pushing for necessary changes, rather than potentially enabling a harmful status quo. Thank you for your consideration of this urgent matter.

Yours sincerely

Concerned Friends