



# The Exodus Road

EMPOWERING RESCUE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **The Exodus Road helps rescue 4 girls, arrest 5 traffickers in Operation ORCHID**

**JUNE 19, 2017, INDIA** - The Exodus Road worked with local police to rescue two minor girls and two women from a roadside hotel brothel in rural India last week, and helped arrest five men, who were either all traffickers or a combination of traffickers and customers.

The Exodus Road's team of investigators in India had received a tip from an informant that girls had been trafficked across the border to be sold for sex in the hotel-based brothel. The team investigated the brothel for about a month before they were able to conduct Operation ORCHID with the help of local police.

Investigators were able to help rescue one of the survivors, 20-year-old Bashita\*, just 10 days after she had been trafficked. Bashita comes from a poor family in Bangladesh where she was only educated through the third grade. A man Bashita knew trafficked her across the border to India by promising to marry her. Once she was transported to India, Bashita found not a wedding but a brothel awaiting her.

Like Bashita, many people caught in trafficking are lured in with promise of a job, relationship or other hope for the future. Once Bashita reached the brothel, she was forced against her will to serve customers day and night for the 10 days she was there. Her family still doesn't know that she was sold into sex slavery.

Prostitution was especially horrific for Bashita because she had been seriously injured in a car accident three months earlier. After the accident, she underwent surgery to have iron rods placed in her back and leg. By the time of her rescue, Bashita was in so much pain that she couldn't walk or get in the police van. Social workers helped her collect her belongings and move to safety.

Today, Bashita is no longer being subjected to constant pain and is recovering in a safe-home for care and protection. The name Bashita means "freedom" in Bengali. Now that she has been brought out of slavery, Bashita's new life of freedom can begin.

\*Bashita is a representative name. The names of people and locations are changed to protect survivors, operatives, and future raids.

The Exodus Road is a nonprofit based in Colorado Springs, Colo., that works together with local law enforcement to find and rescue victims of human trafficking in India, Thailand, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. The Exodus Road has 59 active operatives on its Search & Rescue teams and has supported 812 rescues and 301 arrests in five years.

- **Photos attached; contact for interviews and more media**

*We help find and free slaves through strategic action with ordinary people.*

The Exodus Road is a registered 501(c)3 charitable organization.