

PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
www.prayer-alert.net editor@prayer-alert.net

Issue 1610

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Friday 16 April 2010

■ British Isles & Ireland

- [Judges are biased against Christianity, say senior Church figures](#)
- [School row, Christian worker settles discrimination case](#)
- [English Baroness sounds alarm over the Islamic incursion of Britain](#)
- [Global Day Of Prayer - London calls every Christian in the UK to prayer](#)
- [Resourcing those with a 'big heart' seeking election to the new General Synod](#)
- [British armed forces returning from Afghanistan](#)
- [Muslim says: Christian faith is becoming 'eroded'](#)

■ Europe

- [Prayers and praise for Polish leaders](#)
- [Two-thirds of Europeans want Christian values](#)

■ Worldwide

- [India: Pastors detained for 'converting' Hindus](#)
- [Congo: Church and government to discuss human rights](#)
- [Nigeria: Borno State debates law 'to stop Islamic extremism'](#)
- [Pakistan: False charges filed against 47 Christians](#)
- [Iran: Another Christian is accused of evangelistic activities.](#)
- [Turkey: Church group announces day of prayer](#)
- [Kyrgyzstan: Ex-leader Kurmanbek Bakiyev flies to Kazakhstan](#)

■ Praise Reports

- [Vietnam: Witchdoctor who found Jesus](#)
- [India: Gospel brought us from darkness to light](#)

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Judges are biased against Christianity, say senior Church figures

Senior Church figures are forcing a showdown with the judiciary over an allegation that some of the country's most senior judges are prejudiced against Christianity. Lord Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury (1991 – 2002) and other church leaders will urge the Master of the Rolls and other senior judges to stand down from future Court of Appeal hearings involving cases of religious discrimination because of the judges' perceived bias against Christianity. Senior churchmen believe that Christians have little chance of a fair ruling if the latest significant hearing is heard in front of those judges who, they argue, have already shown a lack of understanding of Christian beliefs. Critics are particularly alarmed by a ruling by Lord Neuberger, the Master of the Rolls, on behalf of the Court of Appeal, that Lillian Ladele, a registrar who refused to conduct civil partnership ceremonies – because they were against her Christian beliefs – broke the law.

Pray: that the Judiciary comes to respect wholeheartedly our Christian faith. (Dt.17:8)

More: <http://www.ccfon.org/view.php?id=1052>

■ School row, Christian worker settles discrimination case

A school receptionist, Jennie Cain, who sued her employers for religious discrimination after a row over her Christian faith has reached an out-of-court settlement. Mrs Cain, who was suspended for nearly four months last year before receiving a written warning, lodged a complaint with Exeter employment tribunal. The case was due to be heard at the end of last month, but the school council and Mrs Cain came to a financial agreement on Tuesday. They said all parties 'jointly acknowledge that all faiths, including Christianity, must be treated equally and with sensitivity while also recognising the freedom of 'individuals to hold, talk and write about their beliefs. My family and I look forward to getting on with our lives and putting this matter behind us'. She has decided to resign from the school.

Pray: for Jennie as she tries to return to normal life after this difficult time and having resigned her post. (Eze.37:14)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/7587012/Jennie-Cain-school-christian-row-worker-settles-discrimination-case.html>

■ English Baroness sounds alarm over the Islamic incursion of Britain

An English evangelical anglican Baroness told 825 Anglican and Episcopal missionaries including three archbishops, 20 bishops and numerous clergy and laity, that resurgent Islamic fundamentalism poses a threat to Western Civilization. Citing Bishop Michael Nazir Ali, Caroline Cox said the British nation has 'lost its soul.' England, she said, is in a perilous situation. 'Where there is a vacuum, it is liable to be filled with alternative ideologies and belief systems. Without a vision the people perish,' she said to a New Wineskins for Global Mission participants coming from 28 countries of the world. 'A resurgent

Islam requires gospel bridges. We do not need walls, but reconciliation can only be achieved through realism,' she said. Baroness Cox is a voice for the persecuted and marginalized of the world, especially in the war torn country of Sudan that she has visited numerous times.

Pray: for interfaith dialogue that will help diffuse all forms of extremism. (Jas.1:19-20)

More: <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2010/04/14/english-baroness-sounds-alarm-over-islamic-incursions-in-britain-and-sudanese-atrocities/>

■ **Global Day Of Prayer - London calls every Christian in the UK to prayer**

As a precursor to a National Day of Prayer at London's West Ham Stadium on 13th June 2010, GDOP London is calling every church and Christian in the UK to a season of prayer and fasting for the nation. As the country moves closer to a historic moment with the British general elections taking place May 6, GDOP London convener Jonathan Oloyede is urging the church to rise up prophetically and perform her duty as 'kingmaker'. 'Every church, ward, borough or district should take responsibility in prayerfully deciding who is elected locally into public office. Churches need to hold vigils, conduct special prayer services and urge their congregants to do a little bit more towards the election which is a divine selection. If we pray then as our Lord taught us, God's will shall be done in Brighton, Hereford, Luton, York and everywhere,' explains Dr Oloyede.

Pray: that Christians throughout the nation will approach the coming election prayerfully. (Ps.48:14)

More: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue9442.html>

■ **Resourcing those with a 'big heart' seeking election to the new General Synod**

More than one national election is taking place this year. A campaign is launched today to encourage 'people with a very big heart' to stand for election to the General Synod of the Church of England. Containing 378 lay and clergy members, and passing measures that have the same effect within Anglicanism as those of Parliament, the General Synod continues to play an essential role in the life of the country as well as the Church. It will be dissolved at the end of the July 2010 group of sessions in York. A new Synod will be elected for a five-year term in September/October, and inaugurated in November. Under the slogan 'Be Part of the Big Picture', new resources include a five-minute DVD filmed at General Synod in February 2010, featuring contributions from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Business Committee chair Preb Kay Garlick, outgoing members of the Houses of Laity and Clergy, and national journalists.

Pray: for Anglicans throughout the country to prayerfully consider God's calling to stand for the General Synod. (1Sa.3:10b)

More: <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/pr3710.html>

■ **British armed forces returning from Afghanistan**

Servicemen and women are coming to the end of their deployment and are being replaced on a gradual changeover in Afghanistan. This is a vulnerable time for service personnel. Anticipating a safe return, service personnel need to stay vigilant right until they get on the aircraft to go home. We all should be aware of their damaging memories from incidents witnessed during their deployment and support them if they require to seek professional help because they find it difficult adjusting to normal life.

Pray: that they will adjust quickly back into their normal routines and family life. (Heb 13:17)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/onthefrontline/7428944/Combat-Stress-appeal-Veterans-found-to-be-at-risk-of-alcoholism-and-suicide.html>

■ **Muslim says: Christian faith is becoming 'eroded'**

Britain's national faith is being 'eroded' by politically-correct individuals seeking to remove religion from society, a Muslim doctor has claimed. Dr Taj Hargey has warned that numerous secularist groups are sidelining Christianity in the country. He claimed that this was leading to the destruction of the 'strong moral compass' and 'once famous community spirit' present in the nation. He stated that rather than protecting religion, those in charge are instead contributing towards its marginalisation. 'I am Muslim. But even as a non-Christian, I can see all too clearly the shameful way in which Britain's national faith is being eroded,' he explained. 'The over-riding impression is that the state increasingly favours minority religions over Britain's own.' A number of religious organisations have spoken out against the introduction of new legislation in the UK which they believe seeks to marginalise Christianity from society.

Pray: that Christians continue to speak out and fight against marginalisation of our faith. (1Ch.19:13)

More: http://www.theway.co.uk/feature.php?id=8034&this=Muslim_says:_Christian_faith_is_getting_'eroded'

EUROPE

■ **Prayers and praise for Polish leaders**

In the spring sunshine, sirens and bells marked the two minute silence at midday across Poland. At the church of St Stanislaw Kostka in a suburb of Warsaw, the silence was particularly poignant. It was here that Lech Kaczynski and his wife Maria used to come to Sunday service. Their pews were kept empty during the service, draped in a huge red-and-white Polish flag and a black ribbon. The smiling pictures of the president and his wife were placed in front of the altar, together with the names of the other 94 people who died on board the presidential jet in Smolensk. Young children gathered around, eagerly putting their hands up when the priest asked them why Poland was in mourning. Outside the packed church, a

group of elderly people wiped their tears. Danuta Kaniewska, a former Solidarity activist sobbed 'We've lost our elite. We're all in pain.' The signs of mourning are everywhere.

Pray: for the people of Poland that they might be comforted in their huge loss. (Ps.119:50)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8614290.stm>

■ Two-thirds of Europeans want Christian values

Around two-thirds of Europeans feel that Christian values are relevant to modern life and are ready to acknowledge Church efforts to promote them. A survey conducted in France, Britain, Italy, Germany and Spain for the Catholic La Croix newspaper found that 'Christian anchorage' among Europeans was still strong. Around half of Europeans also felt Christian values could promote dialogue with different cultures and religions and solidarity with the poor. Over half believed Christians were 'sufficiently visible' in society, but a quarter felt they were under-represented. However, only Italians felt the churches were doing a good job in communicating with young people.

Pray: for this underlying trust in Christian values to be strengthened by the work of the Church in Europe. (Ac.16:5)

More: <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/>

WORLDWIDE

■ India: Pastors detained for 'converting' Hindus

A dozen church leaders remained behind bars Tuesday, April 13, over a week after security forces detained them in India's southern state of Karnataka on charges of 'forceful conversion' of Hindus, a major evangelical group said. The Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI), which represents evangelical Christians and churches, said, the 12 pastors were detained in the district of Kodagu April 6 after Hindu extremists filed a police complaint against the Christians about forceful conversion. The Hindu militants and several police officers reportedly barged into the home of a Christian where the pastors were having a prayer meeting. The extremists accused the pastors of forceful conversion and took them to the police station for questioning. (See Prayer Alert 1410)

Pray: for the church and its leaders in India that God would equip them for the battle. (Heb.13:20-21)

More: <http://www.worthynews.com/7958-india-state-detains-pastors-for-converting-hindus>

■ Congo: Church and government to discuss human rights

Human rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will be the topic of a workshop bringing together high-level representatives of government, churches and international organisations in the country's capital, Kinshasa, 13-17 April, reports CISA. Speakers at the workshop include the UN's special rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Margaret Sekaggya, and the DRC justice minister Luzolo Bambi. Others are ministers in charge of planning, economy and gender issues, the national president of the Church of Christ in Congo the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), vice-president Methodist Bishop David Yemba, as well as other prominent representatives of state, church and civil society. The organizers were the World Council of Churches (WCC) with the co-operation of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), participants come from the different provinces of DRC as well as neighbouring Angola, Rwanda and Burundi.

Pray: that this meeting of minds will result in a powerful pressure group for human rights in central Africa. (Rom.15:5)

More: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue9462.html>

■ Nigeria: Borno State debates law 'to stop Islamic extremism'

Politicians in Borno State in north-eastern Nigeria are debating a bill aimed at curbing religious extremism. The Islamic Preaching Bill would outlaw preaching likely to cause a breach of the peace as well as requiring most clerics to obtain a preaching licence. The legislation was proposed after an Islamic sect was blamed for sectarian violence in northern Nigeria last year in which hundreds of people died. Under the new bill, there would be stiff penalties for clerics found guilty of insulting or inciting contempt of any religious belief which causes a breach of the peace. The bill is an attempt to prevent a recurrence of the violence which spread across Nigeria's northern states in July 2009 when supporters of an Islamic sect called Boko Haram - known locally as the 'Taliban' - attacked police and government offices.

Pray: that this bill will have the desired effect to prevent the recurrence of violence. (Ps.7:9)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8617813.stm>

■ Pakistan: False charges filed against 47 Christians

Police here filed false charges of alcohol possession against 47 Christians, including women and children, on March 28 in an attempt to intimidate them into paying a bribe, Christian leaders said. Police ransacked the home of Shaukat Masih on Palm Sunday, manhandled his wife Parveen Bibi, and threatened to charge them and 45 Christians from other areas with alcohol possession if they did not pay a bribe, said attorney Albert Patras. The Christians refused. 'Police are not interested in their arrest, instead they were trying to extort some money from the destitute Christians,' Patras said. 'Police thought that Christians, being a soft target, would readily be bribed to save their families. Non-Muslims with a permit are allowed to possess and drink alcohol in Pakistan, while alcohol is forbidden to Muslims. Shaukat Masih has a government permit to keep and drink alcohol,' Patras said, thus making the possession charge baseless.

Pray: for our brothers and sisters in Christ who face persecution on a daily basis that God would strengthen them. (2Th.3:2-3)

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/pakistan/17273/>

■ **Iran: Another Christian is accused of evangelistic activities.**

Farsi Christian News Network (FCNN) reports that on March 7, 2010 a new Christian convert by the name of Saeed, was stopped by two unmarked cars, belonging to the ministry of information. After searching his car and personal identification he was taken to the local jail. Upon his release Saeed was told that none of his personal identification documents would be returned to him and he was barred from leaving the city of Tanriz. Saeed has been accused of starting a home-based fellowship, teaching Christian doctrines, attempting to baptize new converts, and other related Christian activities. Remember also the two Christian women by the names of Maryam Rostampour and Marzieh Amirzadeh, who were arrested and detained for nine months at the Tehran Evin Prison. According to reports their trial started on Tuesday April 13.

Pray: for Iranian Christians as they face pressure from the authorities over their faith. (1Pet.1:6-7)

More: http://www.fcnn.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1120:another-azari-speaking-iranian-christian-is-accused-of-evangelistic-activities&catid=127:iranian-christian&Itemid=593

■ **Turkey: Church group announces day of prayer**

The Association of Protestant Churches in Turkey is inviting Christians worldwide to join in a day of prayer for the predominantly Muslim country. The International Day of Prayer for Turkey will take place each year on April 18, the anniversary of the horrific murders of three Christian workers in a Bible publishing house in Malatya in 2007 by a group of young Muslim Turks. The group is asking Christians to pray that Turkey's small Christian community can be strengthened in the Holy Spirit to live for the glory of God and that the people of Turkey will open their hearts and eyes to the Kingdom of God.

Pray: for the Turkish nation that they will have their hearts and eyes opened. (Mt.5:1)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.group.announces.day.of.prayer.for.turkey/23052.htm>

■ **Kyrgyzstan: Ex-leader Kurmanbek Bakiyev flies to Kazakhstan**

Deposed Kyrgyzstan President Kurmanbek Bakiyev has left the country and flown to neighbouring Kazakhstan. His departure comes in the wake of a 7 April uprising that killed scores of people and forced him to flee the Kyrgyz capital of Bishkek. He had been trying to muster support in his home region of Jalalabad in the south of the country. Kyrgyzstan's interim government said Mr Bakiyev had signed a letter of resignation. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) said Mr Bakiyev's departure had been agreed with the US, Russia and the EU. The Russian Interfax news agency said Mr Bakiyev may fly on to Turkey or Latvia. Gunfire had been heard earlier as Mr Bakiyev spoke in the southern city of Osh; an opposition rally was going on nearby. Mr Bakiyev was quickly bundled into his car and driven back to Jalalabad where a plane was seen taking off from the nearby airport. (See also Prayer Alert 1510)

Pray: for the people of Kyrgyzstan that there would now be peace leading to just and stable government. (Job.22:21)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/8623021.stm>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ **Vietnam: Witchdoctor who found Jesus**

'I grew up in a very strong Buddhist family in Vietnam,' says Tran Dinh (Paul) Ai. 'My father was a very successful Chinese medical doctor.' Ai's father vowed he would send his son to the Buddhist temple for training as a monk. At age 14 Ai arrived at the temple, but after a year of study he became disenchanted with the 'hopelessness of Buddhist doctrines.' Seeking a more powerful religious experience, he studied the dark arts, to become a witchdoctor. In 1970, as protests mounted against the Vietnam War in the US, American missionaries entered Ai's town in South Vietnam. 'A lot of people in my town went to the crusades and met the Lord.' Gradually a dawning realization swept through his mind. 'I realized that Buddha was a good man who was wise, but Buddha died. He never promised to save anybody or help anybody,' he says. 'Then I realized Jesus Christ is different. He is not only good and wise, He rose and He's alive!'

Praise: God that the work of Christ's mission is received with such success everywhere. (Ac.15:3)

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=7775

■ **India: Gospel brought us from darkness to light**

The Gospel has led us from darkness to light, said Manipur Chief Minister Ibobi Singh, as he heaped praise on pioneer missionaries for bringing the Good News to the northeast state. Singh recalled the sacrifice of Watkin Roberts and his family for 'bringing the Gospel' and said it brought peace and unity among people. The Independent Church of India (ICI) itself was founded by Watkin Roberts who along with three missionaries from the state of Mizoram ushered in the age of the Gospel among tribal groups in South Manipur in 1910. To mark this event, the ICI held a four-day celebration attended by 20,000 Christians. ICI is one of the leading churches in Southern Manipur and still exists as an indigenous Church. It is deeply rooted in the principles of self-support, self-administration and self-propagation.

Praise: God for the increased acceptance of the Gospel across the globe. (Mt.24:14)

More: <http://in.christiantoday.com/articles/gospel-brought-us-from-darkness-to-light-manipur-cm/5142.htm>

PRAYER FORUM OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

Please feel free to distribute Prayer Alert to anyone you feel will benefit from its ministry. All we ask is that you do not edit or change it in any way or charge for its use without contacting us for written permission.

Prayer Alert is a partnership project of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles and Ireland
C/O World Prayer Centre, Cornerstone House, 5 Ethel Street, Birmingham, B2 4BG, England