

PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
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Issue 2510

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Friday 18 June 2010

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Christians need 'spiritual ambition'

More than 1200 church leaders from 77 countries and 28 denominations attended Alpha International's conference for leaders from Europe, the Middle East and Africa last week at Holy Trinity Brompton in London. The week aims to train, equip and encourage leaders who are heading up Alpha courses in their nations. The Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, opened the conference with an address in which he told delegates 'The Christian movement throughout the entire world has really got to develop and increase in this century; proper spiritual ambition for the sake of Jesus Christ. This is a very turbulent world, a world where we're facing huge promise and huge peril and unless the followers of Jesus Christ have spiritual ambition and a real burning zeal to present Jesus Christ as part of the truth that will bring to fulfilment the promise of the 21st century, then things will look dark indeed.'

Pray: for the Alpha movement that it will continue to bring many to Jesus with zeal and ambition. (Ro.12:11)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/world.will.be.dark.unless.christians.have.spiritual.ambition.bishop/26103.htm>

■ Bloody Sunday: justice at last

After a 38-year struggle for truth and justice, campaigners for those killed in Derry on Bloody Sunday celebrate the Saville Report's exoneration of the victims and its unequivocal conclusion that the shootings were 'unjustified'. The Bloody Sunday tribunal's verdict that soldiers had lied to the inquiry now opens up the possibility of legal action against the former troops involved. David Cameron announced the findings and apologised on behalf of the British state, 'I never want to call into question the behaviour of our soldiers and our army, who I believe to be the finest in the world, but the conclusions of this report are absolutely clear. There is no doubt, there is nothing equivocal, there are no ambiguities. What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable. It was wrong.'

Pray: for all those affected by these events and that the report might heal old wounds. (1Pe.5:10)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/jun/15/bloody-sunday-report-soldiers-prosecuted>

■ NHS chaplains

Hospital chaplains play an 'important' role in the NHS, and the Government values their work, a Conservative Peer has said. Speaking in the House of Lords, Earl Howe said the Government is committed to giving patients and staff in the NHS access to 'spiritual care'. Chaplains came under fierce attack from secularists last year who launched a campaign to remove their funding. Earl Howe said the chaplains 'play an important part in providing high-quality spiritual care services to patients and staff, and we are committed to ensuring that patients and staff in the NHS have access to the spiritual care that they want, whatever faith they may have'. The Bishop of Chichester, the Rt Revd John Hind, had earlier pointed out that 'a chaplain often serves more patients directly each week than any other single healthcare professional working in a hospital'.

Pray: for hospital chaplains and that their valuable services will be secure in the future. (Jas.5:15)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/govt-affirms-importance-of-nhs-chaplains-work/>

■ Sharp rise in repeat abortions

New figures showing a rise in the number of multiple abortions among younger women have prompted criticisms of government sex education policies. A Christian doctor's group called the statistics 'profoundly depressing' and blamed the government's longstanding 'values-free' sex education. 'It is increasingly clear,' said Dr. Peter Saunders, of the Christian Medical Fellowship, 'that abortion is simply being used as a form of contraception by a growing percentage of girls and women, and that tired policies of values-free sex education, condoms and morning-after pills are not working.' George Pitcher, a liberal Anglican minister, commented that the current approach to dealing with unwanted pregnancies, especially among the young, is failing to take the problem seriously. 'You don't have to be over-cynical to feel that making the likes of Marie Stopes the principal public voice in abortion policy is like appointing a fox as gamekeeper. There needs to be a higher moral imperative than that.'

Pray: for the return of clearly taught values to sex education and an end to abortion being used as a quick fix. (Jn.8:32)

More: <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2010/06/15/sharp-rise-in-repeat-abortions-in-england-and-wales-values-free-sex-ed-blamed/>

■ Halt to 'draconian' vetting

The vetting of up to nine million people who frequently work with children, which was due to start next month, was halted by the Home Secretary, Theresa May, pending a review intended to scale back the scheme to 'common sense' proportions. May said she had taken the decision because it was now recognised that the vetting and barring scheme was disproportionate, burdensome and infringed on civil liberties. 'Until this remodelling has taken place, we have decided to maintain those aspects of the new scheme which are already in place, but not to introduce further elements.' More than 66,000 employers, charities and voluntary groups are being told the details of the decision. Under the original scheme the database of people registered to work with children would have covered 11 million adults, the largest child protection database in the world. Similar action is required for hospital volunteers.

Pray: for those who freely volunteer their talents and that the remodelled scheme will be widely accepted. (Ac.8:15)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/jun/15/child-worker-vetting-scheme-review>

■ Christians' 500 days of prayer

The organisers of a national day of prayer are mobilising churches and networks across the UK in a season of united prayer and outreach (See Prayer Alert 2410). Last weekend's gathering at West Ham football stadium drew some 20,000 Christians. A season of 500 days of prayer was announced that will start on August 1 to run until December 31, 2011. The 500 days of prayer will mobilise churches in prayer prior to a major prayer gathering at Wembley Stadium planned for 2011 and a year of prayer scheduled for 2012 to coincide with the Olympics in London. Individual Christians are being asked to set their alarms or mobile phones to noon every day and take one minute to pray the Lord's Prayer over the UK.

Pray: that this initiative's momentum will continue with the blessing of the Holy Spirit. (Jas.5:16)

More: http://www.openheaven.com/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=32884&PN=1&TPN=1

■ The troops in Afghanistan

Conditions in Afghanistan for the British troops are hot, dusty and strength-sapping. Long hours of work in difficult conditions far from home and family can lead to servicemen and women becoming tired, distracted, homesick and demoralised. This is far from the norm, one mistake can be life-threatening for individuals and their colleagues, since much of the work requires them to remain alert and pay great attention to detail.

Pray: for the safety of all those searching for roadside bombs and other explosive devices and other sentries that they may be diligent in their duties. (Ps. 4:8)

More: <http://www.blogs.mod.uk/afghanistan/>

EUROPE

■ Radical Muslim influence in Kosovo

Kosovo is a disputed territory in the Balkans bordering Central Serbia, Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro. Its largest city and capital is Pristina. Within the last couple of months, Christians in Kosovo have been victims of what has been described as the increasing influence of radical Muslim groups. Pastor Artur Krasniqi said a church member from a town in the western part of the country was recently brutally beaten. Two days after this attack Kosovo police arrested a group of five people believed responsible. In addition, Krasniqi added, one of his church's buildings in Pristina was recently vandalized. He is worried about Islamic influence. 'Muslim radicalization of our country has become our serious concern, as it will impact not only our democratic values and freedoms but our safety and well being too.' Krasniqi asked that those concerned about the plight faced by his fellow believers write to both the Prime Minister and the President of Kosovo to express their concerns.

Pray: for the security and freedoms of our Christian brothers and sisters in Kosovo. (Jdg.10:12)

More: http://www.openheaven.com/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=32912&PN=1&TPN=1

■ Christian Aid condemns 'two-faced' EU

Europe is behaving in a dangerously two-faced way when it comes to protecting the world's climate, Christian Aid warned as the UN climate talks drew to a close in Bonn last week. 'European Union leaders claim they still support the only existing climate deal that has legal teeth, the Kyoto Protocol, but their actions tell a different story,' said Dr Alison Doig, Christian Aid's Senior Adviser on Climate Change. 'By not giving the Protocol their strongest possible support and by allowing other rich countries to abandon Kyoto and instead make weak, non-binding pledges through the Copenhagen Accord, they are

condemning Kyoto to death. Since many other rich countries want to let the Protocol expire, only enthusiastic backing from the European Union will save it now. We urge European leaders to seize the remaining opportunity in Bonn to show leadership on climate change.' Under the Copenhagen Accord, countries would merely pledge the emissions cuts which they feel are politically expedient.

Pray: for the Lord's wise guidance to those in authority. (Job 12:13)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christian.aid.condemns.eus.twofaced.approach.to.climate.agreement/26102.htm>

WORLDWIDE

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE G8/20 Summit**

The Canadian Prime Minister has extended invitations to Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Colombia, Jamaica and Haiti to attend a special session at the G-8 Summit in Huntsville, Ontario, from June 25-26. 'The G-8 has a long tradition of developing credible solutions to global challenges in partnership with Africa and others in the international community,' said the Prime Minister. See: <http://g8.gc.ca/home/> As the leaders of the world's most powerful nations gather June 25-27th in Canada for the G8/G20 Summits there is an opportunity for this summit to influence healing for the nations. Canada's Prime Minister put forward an agenda for maternal health, in the spirit of caring for widows and orphans, and we can cover this and other influential proposals in prayer for a global move towards righteousness and justice; and for Jesus to bring healing to the nations. Click the 'info' button for prayer helps for the summit.

Pray: for solutions that will positively affect the poor in our world. (Ps.12:5)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/G8G20insights1.pdf>

■ **Kyrgyzstan: Tense after ethnic fighting**

Kyrgyz troops patrolled burnt-out streets of the city of Osh to maintain a fragile peace between ethnic groups following days of fierce fighting. Mainly Muslim Kyrgyzstan has been on edge since a revolt in April toppled the president of the ethnically divided Central Asian country and brought an interim government to power. Clashes between its main ethnic groups, Uzbeks and Kyrgyz, erupted in the south on June 10 and escalated into the deadliest violence in the former Soviet republic in 20 years. At least 179 people have been killed, mainly in Osh and nearby Jalalabad. The violence has subsided in past days but a constitutional referendum expected next week may reignite tensions. The son of the deposed president was arrested in Farnborough having flown from Kyrgyzstan to the UK in a private jet. The interim government is seeking his extradition, accusing him of funding this latest violence. **STOP PRESS:** Kyrgyz Christians are already risking extra hostility for protecting Uzbek believers in the midst of the violent ethnic clashes in Kyrgyzstan. This morning (16 June) a pastor in Kyrgyzstan told Barnabas Fund that threats are now being voiced against Christians - rather than simply against a particular ethnic group. <http://www.barnabasfund.org/?m=7%23227&a=1725>

Pray: that the fragile peace in Kyrgyzstan would continue and that the referendum would bring stability. (Pr.29:4)

More: http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE65A5PA20100616?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FUKTopNews+%28News+%2F+UK+%2F+Top+News%29

■ **Kenya: Blasts at Christian prayer rally**

Church leaders in Kenya are holding the government responsible for two explosions at a constitution prayer rally in Nairobi where seven people died and nearly 100 were injured on 13 June. The church leaders have been campaigning for a 'No' vote against a proposed draft constitution and condemned the attack as an affront to the Christian faith. They sent their condolences to the families of those who had died. 'Having been informed over and over that the passage of the new constitution is a government project, we are left with no doubt the the government, either directly or indirectly, had a hand in this attack. Who else in this country holds explosives?' said the Rev. Peter Karanja, general secretary of the National Council of Churches of Kenya. 'We therefore hold the government and the 'Yes' team responsible for the attack and the blood that was shed.' said Karanja.

Pray: against the enemy that seeks to de-stabilise and for the Christians to stand firm and not be intimidated. (Pr.18:17)

More: <http://www.eni.ch/featured/article.php?id=4165>

■ **Somalia: Family abuses girl for leaving Islam**

The tiny, shaken Christian community in Gedo Region reports that a Muslim family shackles their 17 year old daughter to a tree by day and puts her in a small dark room at night because she converted to Christianity. Anonymous source said, 'When the woman's family found out that she converted to Christianity she was beaten badly but insisted on her new-found religion.' Her parents took her to a doctor who prescribed medication for a 'mental illness'. Traditionally Somalis believe the Quran cures the sick especially the mentally ill so Islamic scripture is continually recited to her twice a week. 'The girl is very sick and undergoing intense suffering. There is little the community can do about her condition but I have advised our community leader to keep monitoring her condition, but not to meddle for their own safety.'

Pray: that the faith of this young lady would continue to uphold her and that God would release her from this oppression. (Heb.13:13)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100616/family-of-17-year-old-somali-girl-abuses-her-for-leaving-islam/index.html>

■ **USA: Hamas leader's Christian son faces deportation**

Masab Hassan Yousef, the son of a prominent Hamas leader who became a Christian is facing a deportation hearing on June 30 in San Diego because the U.S. Government views him as 'a threat to America's national security.' Yousef, 32, authored the globally circulated book 'Son of Hamas' in which he recalls embracing Christianity and working as a secret

agent for Israeli intelligence for over a decade to halt 'terrorist attacks throughout Israel.' Israeli officials have not commented on the case. The book was published this year, resulting in television appearances on American network shows. Yousef sought political asylum in the US but was told last February he was 'barred from a grant of asylum because there were 'reasonable grounds' for believing he was 'a danger to the security of the United States.'

Pray: for God to protect Yousef and provide a safe haven for him to put down his roots. (Ps.121:3)

More: <http://www.worthynews.com/8288-hamas-leaders-christian-son-faces-deportation-from-u-s>

■ Israel: Gaza Strip blockade eased

Israel has announced it will ease its blockade of the Gaza Strip and allow more civilian goods to enter the Palestinian territory. It comes amid growing international pressure to end the embargo. An Israeli commando raid on an aid flotilla attempting to break the naval blockade of Gaza last month was widely condemned. Israel and Egypt tightened the blockade after the Islamist Hamas movement took control of Gaza in 2007. The decision to ease the land blockade, agreed by Israel's security cabinet after a two-day meeting, will see the expansion of the number of products Israel will allow into Gaza via border crossing points. The naval blockade will remain in place. The only item singled out in an Israeli government statement is a plan to allow in construction materials for civilian projects, but only under international supervision.

Pray: for an easing of the tensions between the Palestinians and Israelis, and that Gazans would have all they need to rebuild their communities. (Pr.12:20)

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/10338199.stm

■ Indonesia: Believers report church closing

On May 21, members of the Indonesia Christian Church visited the National Human Rights Commission to report that local officials had stopped construction of their Church in Bogor City, sealed the building and banned Christian activities. The Christians met with Mr. Simanjuntak of the National Human Rights Commission. There is an attempt to prevent people from being able to fulfil their religious activities and building their building of prayer. All the building procedures were already fulfilled by the church. They had received the license from the local government, and they applied the license based on the right procedures,' Simanjuntak told the press following the meeting.

Pray: for a speedy resolution and for believers to remain faithful and committed to Christ during this challenging time. (Gal.2:20)

More: http://www.salememail.com/specialoffers/VOM_Persecution/VOM_persecution_watch_full.aspx?id=3

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Saints on the street

Baptist churches have been encouraged to set aside a number of Sundays each year to get out into their neighbourhoods and meet people who would not normally come to church. The future president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Revd Chris Duffett has launched an evangelistic project called Saints on the Street (St St). 'As the vast majority of people in the UK do not go to church, St St projects take church to the vast majority,' he explained. 'Our hope is that St St may become a vision for Baptist churches in the UK to set aside some Sundays in the year where the morning service is used to engage with people who wouldn't consider going to church.' Recently he invited shoppers in Peterborough to walk along a VIP red carpet to give them the message that God thinks they are 'Very Important People'. Forty copies of Mark's Gospel were given away.

Praise: that this Baptist outreach may be effective in bringing the good news to the unchurched. (Isa. 52:7)

More: <http://www.baptisttimes.co.uk/news1.htm>

■ Moldova: Proclaiming the Gospel through sports.

This office received news of 'Sports Ministry' that is evangelising young people in closed countries. 'Let me share news from a Christian ministry we are doing in Moldova through a sports club. We have 32 instructors teaching annually over 1500 students in Moldova, Afghanistan, Pakistan and United Arab Emirates. The first hour of the 'sports' training is inductive bible study and during 13 years many accepted Christ and are active in their churches and in the ministry in their own countries. As the founder and president of the sports club I examine all the students when they take their tests. At a recent exam in Moldavia for 30 students and their parents, reported that they seriously studied the Word as well as developing in the sport.' The BBC reported world football has a generation of players bringing God onto the pitch, such as the Brazilian player Kaka who celebrates victories by revealing a T-shirt saying, 'I Belong to Jesus'. Fifa would rather religion stayed out of football.

Praise: God for 'hidden' ministries in the world, and ask Him to send out more workers into the sports harvest fields. (Mt.9:37)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00821ch>

PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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Prayer Alert is a partnership project of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles and Ireland
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