

PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
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Issue 3110

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Friday 30 July 2010

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE: Sovereign Prayers**

The monarch and her family are spending part of their summer holiday this week sailing in the Western Isles of Scotland as a special commemoration of Princess Anne's 60th and Andrew Duke of York's 50th birthdays.

<http://news.sky.com/skynews/Home/UK-News/Queen-And-Family-Go-On-Holiday-To-Scotland-Via-The-Hebridean-Princess/Article/201007415669434?f=rss>

Over the past five decades as Head of State Queen Elizabeth II has provided stability and continuity in times of political and social change, meeting Heads of State and ambassadors, holding weekly audiences with Prime Ministers and reading state papers from the red box delivered to her daily. (even while on holiday). She has an unequalled store of experience upon which successive Prime Ministers have been able to draw; bridging party politics and providing a stable framework within which a government can introduce wide-ranging reforms. This **INSIGHT ARTICLE** (click on 'Info' button) is a prayer resource for interceding for the Queen, her family, her government and the Church in the United Kingdom.

Pray: for God to mightily bless, lead and protect our Royal family. (1Tim.2:2)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/royalinsight2.pdf>

■ **Hospitals propose banning Bible**

Hospital managers wanting to ban bedside Gideon Bibles have been attacked by religious leaders who warned that sick people will be deprived of spiritual comfort when it is most needed. The ban, at the Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, is intended to reduce levels of infectious superbugs such as MRSA on the grounds that the Bibles are hard to clean. They want all bedside areas in Queen's Medical Centre and City Hospital kept tidy to stop deadly viruses breeding. Christian protesters said the holy texts pose a 'minimal' risk of infection and called for the plans to be scrapped. A spokeswoman for the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham said: 'For many patients Bibles have been a source of comfort and support through uncertainty and illness. It is unsatisfactory that patients may now have to ask a nurse for a Bible'. Hospital officials are now consulting staff, patients and chaplains before bringing in the ban.

Pray: that a way is found for these Bibles to remain to support for patients without any health risk. (Jn.1:1)

More: <http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/189145/Bashing-for-hospitals-over-ban-on-the-Bible>

■ **Evangelicals confront spiritual malaise**

Western Europe has become a region of 'empty nominalism' and 'confused spirituality' said the chairman of the evangelical Keswick Convention. Dr. Jonathan Lamb told this year's convention that while millions of people in Western Europe define themselves as Christian, they regard themselves as Christian only by nationality, culture, and as a result of family ties to the

faith, or tradition. He said the spiritual landscape closer to home could be characterized by a 'dry orthodoxy', which he explained as Christians who are committed to the evangelical faith but whose life 'has been drained of its spiritual vibrancy'. Others outside the church fold appear to be caught up in a kind of 'confused spirituality'. Dr. Don Carson, research professor of the New Testament, cautioned Christians about the dangers of pursuing spirituality, for its own sake without any reference to Christ and Jonathan Stephens, Principal of the Wales Evangelical School of Theology, reminded Christians that the key to Christ-centred renewal could be found in returning to Scriptures.

Pray: for Christ and His Gospel always to be at the heart of our Christian lives. (Ro.1:16)

More: <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20100727/evangelicals-confront-western-europes-spiritual-malaise/index.html>

■ The health gap between rich and poor

The health gap between the richest and poorest in Britain is now wider than it was during the great depression, according to researchers from Sheffield and Bristol Universities. They say that the gap was gradually narrowing until the 1970s, when the trend reversed. Health inequality has grown rapidly in the last twenty years. This reflects a growth in economic inequality over a similar period. 'Health and wealth are directly linked', insisted researcher Danny Dorling, 'Unless we tackle the income gap, we could well see life expectancy actually starting to fall for the first time in the poorest areas.' Campaigns for economic equality have gained momentum since the publication last year of the *The Spirit Level*. The book's authors, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, use detailed analysis to demonstrate lower levels of crime, unwanted pregnancies and other social problems in more equal societies. This perspective is now promoted by the Equality Trust.

Pray: for an understanding that redressing this imbalance will also address other problems in society. (Dt.15:4)

More: <http://www.eklesia.co.uk/node/12729>

■ How churches fight belief in witchcraft

African churches in Britain are learning how to safeguard children's rights against exploitative pastors. Monday's 'Dispatches' programme on Channel 4 highlighted the harm caused to children in the UK, mainly from an African background, by church pastors who are apparently labelling them as witches or as in some way 'possessed'. Enormous strides have been made recently in building relationships with African churches, many of whose members do not speak English as their first language. To that end, the Child Protection Advisory Service has already trained more than 5,000 church leaders and volunteers in the optimum standards of child protection. The practices of a minority of 'rogue' churches and pastors are being challenged by African communities. This voice has been strengthened by community-led meetings and training for parents and young people. Specialist training has improved social work and health practitioners' knowledge and understanding of harmful cultural practices, which is critical to improved identification of abuse linked to spirit possession and witchcraft.

Pray: for the complete eradication of child abuse linked to these 'cultural practices'. (Dt.18:10)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/jul/27/religion-witches-africa-london-exorcism>

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE:** 2012 Olympic Games

Sir Craig Reedie, the former British Olympic Association chairman said London will be a 'magical' place to be when the Olympics begin in under two years' time. He was at the Olympic Park on Tuesday when Seb Coe, the London 2012 chairman, and London Mayor Boris Johnson launched the countdown to the Games.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/othersports/olympics/7914208/London-2012-Olympics-Games-will-be-magical-says-Sir-Craig-Reedie.html>

In 2012 the Olympic flame signalling the start of the Games will begin its journey in Olympia, Greece and travel across the world to be held high by torch bearer across the UK to the Olympic Stadium in London. The flame burns continuously until the closing ceremony. This **INSIGHT ARTICLE** (click on 'Info' button) has been prepared to encourage prayer throughout the coming months for God to bless the Olympic torch route in advance of 2012. Records reveal the Olympic Games and the rituals we still use today began in 776 BC in Olympia in Greece and are rooted in pagan religious symbolism, and declarations.

Pray: that every village, town, city, ancient path and site on the proposed route will be blessed with God's light. (Ps.67:1)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/Olympicroots2.pdf>

WORLDWIDE

■ North Iraq-Kurdistan

Praise God for Christian outreach in difficult environments. God is calling people supernaturally and releasing Christian workers to visit, counsel, encourage and disciple new believers. We have been asked to pray into the problem of finding suitable wives for new believers. There are situations where husbands come through but the wife is not yet believing. Thank God for open doors to minority sects of Islam, one is the Yezhidi, who worship the 'peacock god' believed to be a fallen angel. Pray for Christian outreach groups to be established in their midst. Another Islamic sect believe in the Psalms and there is speculation they were formerly Jews. They are very open and there are believers in their midst, but they are very persecuted by majority Muslims. Hundreds of this tribe have been murdered by terrorists and there are many orphans and widows.

Pray: for more believers with a burden to help these new believers, and for the protection of those who face persecution and loss in Iraq and Kurdistan. (Ps.112:4)

■ Vietnam: House Church attacks

A gang of youths attacked a house church as the congregation worshipped on Vietnam's south central coast. The youths smashed the walls of the home and wreaked havoc within, railing against evangelist Mang Vuong for being a Christian and building his home to be a house church. In Vietnam a common approach for church expansion is to build a roomy home for an evangelist to serve also as a meeting place. The evangelist's house was nearly completed when it was first attacked last month, then on June 10th the same youths were spurred by local authorities to break into Vuong's home stealing more than \$3,000 and destroying furnishings, utensils and books. Vuong, who works for the Evangelical Church of Vietnam, has received death threats. A petition sent to district and provincial officials stated it was Communist Party leaders who plied the youths with liquor then incited them to attack the evangelist's house.

Pray: for the Christian community to respond with Christ-like love and forgiveness. (1Pe.3:9)

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/vietnam/23120/>

■ Iran: Report of US warships off coast

As unconfirmed reports continue to emerge of an imminent Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities in Middle East media. A US-based strategic intelligence company released charts showing US naval carriers near Iranian waters. The chart dated June 23rd 2010 shows that over the last few weeks naval carrier the USS Harry S Truman has been positioned in the north Indian Ocean, not far from the Strait of Hormuz. (which leads into the Persian Gulf). The carrier joins USS Dwight D Eisenhower already in the area. Reports of movements of Israeli and US naval warships have been circulating through the media for weeks. (See Prayer Alert 2610) Ha'aretz reported 12 US and Israeli warships were seen moving through the Suez Canal from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. On Saturday Associated Press published 'unconfirmed' reports from Israeli and Iranian media that Saudi Arabia allowed Israel to use its territory in preparation for an attack on Iranian nuclear facilities.

Pray: for a cooling down of this situation, for any erroneous reports to be exposed for what they are, while at the same time for all truth to be revealed and acted upon. (Pr.21:29-31)

More: <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article25829.htm>

■ Pakistan: 40 days of prayer & fasting

The Intercessors Network of Pakistan has arranged a 40 Day Prayer and Fasting Campaign from 1st August to 9th September 2010. The cry of Islamabad and Rawalpindi will be 'Heal the Land'. Hundreds of believers from 70+ churches will be participating daily to pray for the healing of the land. Eleven churches from other cities will also be participating. The 'National Day of Prayer' will also be celebrated on 14th August. Prayer needs: Unity among Christians/church leaders and denominations: Abolition/repeal of the blasphemy laws: Christian brothers and sister in prison facing trails falsely accused under this law: Safety and security of Christians living under threat of being persecuted under this law. For sustainability of 24/7 and other prayer watches that are going on and that the Pakistani church will understand the power of cooperate prayers and move into a culture of prayer.

Pray: for a spiritual awakening of the Church on a national level so that the Gospel can spread across the country. (1Thes.5:10,11,17)

More: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/National-Prayer-Network-Pakistan/251652868252>

■ USA: Does Christian charity reach 'Illegals'?

The state of Arizona has passed harsh anti-illegal immigration laws, including one that requires police to demand a person's legal papers if there is reason to believe the person is in the United States illegally. The state government hopes that these laws will stem the flow of illegal Mexican immigrants across the Mexico-Arizona border. However, the targeting of 'illegal aliens' confronts Christian churches with their own moral dilemma because hostility to 'sojourners' runs counter to the teachings of Jesus, as Baptist minister Howard Bess argues in his essay (see link). Christian churches in Arizona of every kind – Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Pentecostal, liberal and conservative – offer services to people in need and seldom ask about immigration status. Typically, the churches provide services with a full knowledge that some recipients are in the US illegally. Thousands of helper/Christian people are thereby aiding and abetting law-breakers which, Bess argues, easily become a part of our Christian responsibility.

Pray: that a humane and Christian resolution will be revealed to Arizona's policy-makers. (Ps.37:11)

More: <http://www.consortiumnews.com/2010/072010b.html>

■ India: Christians play dead to survive

Two evangelists said they survived an attack in Madhya Pradesh on July 20th by playing dead when six Hindu extremists surrounded them and severely beat them. The assailants accused Mahindra Kharoley 20, and 30-year-old Munshi Prasaad Bahey of 'forced conversion.' The two evangelists were cycling home following a prayer meeting 25 kilometres (15 miles) away when the attackers on motorbikes with their faces covered attacked them at around 10pm. The assailants did not wait for them to respond to the charges of forced conversion before they began hitting and kicking them. 'We lay motionless and pretended to be dead to escape their fury after they had beaten us about 20 minutes,' Bahey added, 'If we had not done so, they would have killed us.' One of the attackers called another by name, saying, 'Mahesh, stop hitting them, they are already dead, let's get out of here.'

Pray: for all hidden and corrupt activity in Hindu fundamentalism to be destroyed and replaced by a widespread Christian revival. (Act.2:17,21)

More: <http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/india/23231/>

■ Myanmar: Crimes against humanity

Over 600 villagers fled as soldiers shelled their village with mortar rounds before burning it to the ground on 23 July, (50 homes a school and a church were destroyed). Refugees joined 300 others from the neighbouring area in fear of attack, leaving possessions behind, escaping with what food they could carry as they sort refuge in the jungle. It is the rainy season and they need shelter, food, medicine and security. Lack of clean water and disease-carrying jungle insects are of particular concern. Hundreds more are fleeing towards the Thai-Burma border, some are seeking refuge in Thailand. The Burmese Army and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (allied to the dictatorship) are preparing a new offensive against ethnic Karen civilians in Eastern Burma in the run-up to the sham elections expected at the end of the year.

Praise: for the Lord to show Christians how to pray to topple demonic forces over Myanmar. (Is.60:15,-6)

More: <http://dynamic.csw.org.uk/article.asp?t=press&id=1017&search=>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Lebanon's ruling party asks Muslims to protect Christians

The head of a Sunni political movement in Lebanon has expressed concern over the decline of Christians in the region allegedly due to growing Shiite influence. Ahmad Hariri, secretary-general of the Lebanese Future Movement, urged Muslims in Lebanon to 'nurture Christian presence' in the region, saying it was an 'Arab and Islamic responsibility as much as it is a Christian one'. According to The Jerusalem Post, Hariri is extremely worried about the repercussions of Christian emigration from some Middle East countries. While Christians used to be a majority in Lebanon, the country has recently witnessed decline due to emigration and the increase in Muslims. Greg Mussleman, of Christian advocacy group Voice of the Martyrs, said the announcement is good for Christians in the Middle East. 'Whether we'll see that spreading to other countries like Iraq and Afghanistan? That may never happen,' he said.

Praise: Pray that Christians in Lebanon will be stronger in their faith, have the desire to grow, and be more outspoken about their faith. (Ac.4:29)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/lebanons.ruling.party.asks.muslims.to.protect.christians/26377.htm>

■ University volunteers leave for Mongolia

The Catholic University of Korea has sent a 90-strong staff-student medical team to treat people in the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar. The team, which includes students majoring in various fields such as internal medicine, obstetrics, paediatrics and radiology, will provide medical and social services from July 25 until Aug. 4. The team will also build or repair houses, and offer educational activities for poor people in regions near the capital. During a July 24 departure ceremony, University President Father Johan Pahk Yeong-sik encouraged participants to take the opportunity to think deeply about sharing their lives and practicing the school's ideals of truth, love and service. 'The service you will provide will be a fundamental indicator to assist you in choosing your way in life,' Father Pahk counselled. The university has, since 1997, dispatched similar teams to 'Third World' locations during summer vacation each year. That year, the school first sent a team to Papua New Guinea.

Praise: God for this initiative and pray that many will be blessed. (1Cor.12:5)

More: <http://www.ucanews.com/2010/07/28/university-volunteers-leave-for-mongolia/>

PRAYER FORUM OF 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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