

PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland
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Issue 3310

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Friday 13 August 2010

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ No justice for Duke, sacked for mentioning God

An employment tribunal has ruled that it was reasonable for Wandsworth Council to dismiss Duke Amachee, after he was sacked for gross misconduct for suggesting to a client with an incurable illness not to give up hope and to try putting her faith in God. The decision has come as a huge surprise to Duke and to his legal team. Duke, a committed Christian, had worked for Wandsworth Council for 18 years and had an unblemished record. Yet, as a result of the comments he made in one 45-minute housing interview, he was subject to six months of investigations and three interviews with the Council. His solicitor was even told by the Council that saying 'God bless' to a client would require an investigation if the client complained. Listen to Duke's personal appeal: <http://www.ccfon.org/duke.php> Duke and his legal team intend to appeal the decision.

Pray: that God would hear our prayers and grant a reversal of this decision. (Ex.23:6)

More: <http://www.christianlegalcentre.com/view.php?id=1156>

■ Foster parents rejected over Christian beliefs

A Christian couple from Blackburn, have had their application to be foster parents terminated by the Council because of their orthodox Christian beliefs on marriage and their belief that the best environment in which to raise a child is with a mother and a father. Rev John Yallop and his wife Colette had told Lancashire Council that they were Christians but had been assured that they were still welcome to apply as foster parents. However, during the process problems arose when the Council asked them whether they would have any objections to prospective homosexual adoptive parents coming into their home for the 'hand over' process which normally involves a number of visits. The Yallops proposed that any meetings with prospective homosexual adoptive parents should take place at a children's centre. Due to this request, the Council has now terminated their application.

Pray: for the Council to reconsider their own prejudiced and excluding view on this matter. (1Co.16:13-14)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/foster.parents.rejected.over.christian.beliefs/26463.htm>

■ Halal-only menu for London primary schools

Harrow Council in London has provoked a storm of protest after announcing plans to prefer Islamic halal-only menus in the borough's state primary schools. Parents are outraged that meat prepared according to Islamic Sharia law is being pushed on non-Muslim children. Contracts signed with the Council's preferred catering company, Harrison's, stipulate that only halal meat is served. The Council claims the plan is needed to overcome difficulties in keeping halal meat separate from non-halal meat. It has since said it will postpone the move because of, in part, 'the level of interest from parents' and revisit the issue in the autumn. According to the 2001 census, the religious affiliation of Harrow's population is just seven per cent

Muslim. Harrow resident, Sheila Murphy, blasted the Council's plan as 'appalling'. She said it is 'taking away the choice of children and their parents over what meat they eat and I urge residents to make their views known to Harrow Council'.

Pray: for the council to reflect the views of the vast majority of their residents. (Ac.10:14-15)

More: <http://www.anglican-mainstream.net/2010/08/10/halal-only-menu-for-london-primary-schools-sparks-row/>

■ Give the Gift of Peace

Christians are being encouraged to share a little peace with their neighbours, in the form of a new booklet from the Methodist Church. Lavishly illustrated, A Gift of Peace features encouraging words from the Bible as well as reflections on peace from a variety of authors including Lao Tzu, Benjamin Franklin and Mother Theresa of Calcutta. Rev Alison Tomlin, President of the Methodist Conference, said: 'In the midst of an increasingly chaotic and unsettled world, we all need God's peace more than ever. We hope that this booklet will enrich the way we think and pray about peace and will help people to make a little more space in their lives for reflection.' Churches are encouraged to give the booklets away as well as using them for personal or small group reflection. A Gift of Peace is available from Methodist Publishing at £5 for 50 copies and can be purchased online.

Pray: for all those who receive the booklet that they will take time to reflect and receive God's peace. (Jude 2)

More: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openogod.newsDetail&newsid=457>

■ Vulnerable children trapped by courts

UK's largest children's charity has revealed new data showing that children are being damaged due to huge delays in the courts in England and Wales. A five-year-long pattern of deterioration has led to family courts taking up to 65 weeks to rule if it is safe for children to stay with their parents, says Barnado's. Vulnerable children are waiting on average more than a year (57 weeks) in unstable family homes or emergency foster placements before a county court decides if they will be taken into care, says the charity. In the family proceedings (magistrates) court the average time is 45 weeks. Martin Narey, Barnardos chief executive, said: 'The courts need urgently to reflect on the damage these delays are having on extremely vulnerable children. A year of a child's life is an inordinate amount of time for them to be trapped in desperate limbo, unclear of their future and very possibly at risk.'

Pray: for court procedures to be sped up and also for the vulnerable children caught up in the system. (Jn.17:15)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/12808>

■ Ramadan: A perfect opportunity to share the Gospel

Two doctors have been killed in Afghanistan, police officers have been bombed in Iraq, and plans for a Muslim centre to go up on Ground Zero are underway all, in the name of Islam. The only way to counteract these kinds of militancy, and more importantly, to save the lives of millions of Muslims is to introduce them to the Gospel. Fouad Masri of Crescent Project says Ramadan is the perfect time. Ramadan is a 30-day observation of fasting and prayer for Muslims around the world. August 11 marked Day One of the celebration for 2010. During Ramadan, many Muslims take time to truly seek out God and truth. 'This is a time when they're thinking about God and religion,' explains Masri. He says this makes Ramadan the perfect time to start conversations about Christ. 'We can come in and share with Muslims the teachings of Jesus, whom many Muslims claim to be one of the prophets.' (See Prayer Alert 3110)

Pray: for God's intervention into the hearts and minds of Muslims as they pray. (Eph.5:14)

More: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue10518.html>

■ The Christian zoo accused of backing creationism

A kitemark devised to help teachers find suitable school trip destinations has been awarded to a Christian zoo accused of promoting creationism. Noah's Ark Zoo Farm in Wraxall, near Bristol, is among the latest organisations to receive the Learning Outside the Classroom 'quality badge', developed by the last Government. The zoo already runs sessions for more than 15,000 pupils a year from key stage 1 to A-level. But it has attracted controversy for its views on evolution and creation, arguing that science has tried to 'remove any notion of God from our understanding of life. This is unjustified and we look to put the case for a Creator across to those who wish to investigate,' the zoo's website says. James Gray, education officer at the British Humanist Association, criticised the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom, the educational charity that awards the badges, for its decision. The zoo continues to be picketed by opponents who try to discredit its work.

Pray: that the work of this zoo would continue to be recognised for promoting God's truth. (Jn.8:23)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/7919042/Christian-zoo-approved-for-school-trips.html>

EUROPE

■ Russia: Orthodox patriarch urges Christians to pray for rain

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill has told Christians to pray for rain as wildfires continue to spread in parts of Russia. 'The death toll has doubled and an average of 700 people have died each day in Moscow since late last week due to the smog' reports Al Jazeera. Patriarch Kirill mourned the loss of life and destruction during a visit to one of the worst affected areas on Monday. 'Grief has come to our nation, human lives have been lost, hundreds have lost shelter and thousands have been left without sustenance, including children. I call upon everyone to unite in prayer for rain to descend on our earth.' Patriarch Kirill's call coincided with the Day of the Prophet Elijah, when Orthodox Christians traditionally pray for rain. The Russian Government said the most serious fires were raging in the Ural, Volga and Central district.

Pray: that God would hear and answer the cries of His people as they pray for rain. (Job.5:9-10)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/orthodox.patriarch.prays.for.rain.as.deadly.wildfires.rage.in.russia/26418.htm>

■ **Russia: 'Missiles deployed' in breakaway region of Abkhazia**

Russia says it has deployed S-300 anti-aircraft missiles in the breakaway region of Abkhazia in Georgia. The Georgian government - which refuses to acknowledge Abkhazia's independence - says it is 'concerned' by the move. The announcement comes just days after an unscheduled visit by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to the region. Russia recognised Abkhaz independence in 2008 after winning a brief war with Georgia over nearby South Ossetia. In a statement released by the Russian government, Air Force Commander-in-chief General Alexander Zelin said the role of the missiles would be 'anti-aircraft defence of the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia'.

Pray: that this military build-up will not raise tensions in the Caucasus region. (Ecc.3:1-8)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-10940297>

WORLDWIDE

■ **INSIGHT ARTICLE: Kenya: Referendum repercussions**

Further to last week's INSIGHT ARTICLE we give thanks to God that apart from a few incidents in the Rift Valley the Referendum vote last week was peaceful with no inter-tribal violence. Although 70% of those who voted were in favour of the Constitution only about 30% of the total electorate voted 'yes'. It is probable that many didn't read the document and voted as their leaders told them to. The National Council of Churches of Kenya said the 'yes' vote did not nullify their concerns and Canon Peter Karanja, doubted the integrity of the vote saying, 'We are saddened by the fact that the pre-referendum process was marked by malpractices and irregularities which continued right into balloting and tallying phases. This calls into question the validity of the process and its outcome.' A summary of Kenyan Christians' prayer requests for their country are in this weeks Insight Article click the info button.

Pray: that Kenya would be a symbol of hope in Africa and post-colonial violence will not become a stronghold over the nation. (Ps.22:28-31)

Info: <http://www.prayer-alert.net/info/HowtoprayforKenya2.pdf>

■ **Israel: Children's rehabilitation Centre destroyed**

Almost 400 rocket attacks were launched from Gaza to Israel since the 2009 cease-fire; the most recent one completely destroyed a rehabilitation centre for children with special needs in Sderot last Saturday. On any other day the unit would have been packed with children and therapists, resulting in devastating losses. The centre provides therapy and workshops for special needs children living in the entire country. Because there were no casualties the assault received little media cover and vulnerable children with special needs have lost facilities providing appropriate care. This attack followed an Iranian Grad missile hitting the city of Ashkelon Friday morning. Hamas-controlled Gaza has targeted Ashkelon (population of 125,000) since March 2008. Israeli Intelligence confirm Hamas has now assembled over 5,000 missiles with a range of 40-25 miles.

Pray: for the families struggling to cope with unimaginable fear and hopelessness in this volatile neighbourhood to see peace overtake war, and provision for the weak and vulnerable. (Is.2:3-5)

More: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/138879>

■ **Pakistan: Provisions, politics and protection**

Over a million refugees fled east with very little and now that region is flooded and they are further displaced, have lost what little they had. Pray for those in mourning; families who lost homes, livestock, crops, and livelihood. Corruption in the government continues as neighbouring countries attempt to influence the government and insurgents try to destabilize the government through violence. In addition, there is talk underground of negotiations between Government/insurgents towards insurgents taking government roles. (Minority ethnic groups are afraid this could lead to a return to their oppression.) Pray for western powers and neighbouring countries to use great wisdom in dealing with the government. Finally, the insurgents use suicide bombers and roadside bombs to defeat the coalition and destabilize the government This violence brings death, destruction and fear to the people. The link below takes you to a report telling how floods give insurgents time to regroup.

Pray: that God would hear the great cry of agony going up from Pakistan and reveal His son, and His way forward with supernatural interventions as well as international aid relief. (Hab.3:14)

More: <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/2010/08/12/pakistan-floods-give-taliban-chance-to-regroup-experts-fear-86908-22482312/>

■ **Africa/Asia/Europe: Floods and mudslides on three continents**

Sometimes areas hit by one extreme soon receive another blow. In Niger five thousand people lost their homes and crops when the River Niger burst its banks last weekend. They are already suffering from severe food shortages caused by recent drought. UN officials have warned 20,000 people are at risk of displacement in the event of further heavy rains. See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-10929144> In China rescuers are pulling bodies out of mudslides which has so far killed more than 1,100 people and that number is increasing daily as more bodies are carried out on stretchers. People have been assigned to disinfect the areas where human corpses, and dead animals are a concern. See: <http://www.mysinchew.com/node/43271> Southern Poland suffered its worst flooding in decades when heavy rains engorged rivers sending torrents of water through Bogatynia in south-west Poland and Görlitz in eastern Germany in May.

Pray: for God to look down from heaven and see and hear: and send labourers to minister to physical and spiritual needs so that many are found by the Lord. (Ps.80:19)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/aug/09/floods-mudslides-drought-extreme-weather>

■ North Korea: Underground church leaders executed

Three leaders of an underground house church in North Korea were executed and 20 Christian associates jailed after police raided a house and arrested all 23 believers gathered for a 'religious function'. Three 'ringleaders' were tried, sentenced to death and executed soon afterwards. The other 20 were reportedly sent to prison camp No.15 in Yodok. The arrests and executions happened in May but news has only just emerged. The events were confirmed by North Korea Intellectual Solidarity, a group of North Korean defectors based in Seoul committed to raising awareness of injustice and promoting reform in their homeland. The 23 Christians had come to faith after a few travelled to mainland China on business and came into contact with Christians.

Pray: that Christians in North Korea would powerfully experience God's protective provision as they secretly worship and live in fear of their lives. (Ps.9:12-13)

More: <http://www.releaseinternational.org/pages/posts/north-korea-underground-church-leaders-executed-739.php>

■ Nairobi: Aid blocked

Al Shabaab, an Islamic militant group alleged three agencies were propagating Christianity and halted their work. 'Now that they have suspended their work, it is the local people who will suffer,' said the Pastor now in exile, of a small Christian community in Somalia. On 8 August, the Islamic group demanded that World Vision, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, and Diakonia, a Swedish agency, immediately cease operations in Somalia.

Pray: for God to protect and keep in His perfect peace the groups in Nairobi and elsewhere who bring emotional, physical, and spiritual sustenance where militant Islam threatens. (Ps.26:1, 12)

More: <http://www.eni.ch/>

■ Dubai: Saudi al-Qaida leader urges killing of Christians

In an audio message released on Wednesday, a Saudi leader of al-Qaida has urged sympathizers in the Saudi security forces to kill Christians living in the kingdom. The audiotape posted on a website used by Islamists also repeated an often-made call to overthrow the Saudi government. 'Those of you who work in guarding the tyrants of princes or ministers, or the compounds inhabited by Christians, or can reach them, should seek God's help and kill them,' said Said al-Shihri. Shihri a former inmate of Guantanamo Bay who claimed his organisation has received correspondence from members of Saudi armed forces asking for 'guidance'. During Ramadan pray for the Saudi Muslims (mainly Sunni) living in Dharan, Ras Tanura, Jubail, Dammam, Al-Khobar, Hofuf, Abqaiq, Udhailiya and Shayba. (Please know that you are among only a small group worldwide who has ever prayed for these cities by name)

Pray: for the thousands of Saudis involved in the oil industry to come to the knowledge of Christ (2Cor.4:6)

More: <http://www.canada.com/news/Saudi+Qaida+leader+urges+killing+Christians/3385069/story.html>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Philippines: Faith group wants to help government fight graft

Buoyed by a new president who has been exposing corruption, religious leaders in northern Philippines want to battle sleaze at the local level. 'President Benigno Aquino III has shown he meant business in fighting graft, which inspires us as church leaders to do our part in helping to bring about righteous governance,' said the Rev Dr Simplicio Dang-awan Jr of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Dang-awan was on 10 August addressing his partners in the Baguio-Benguet Ecumenical Group, an organization that brings together Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders, and a Muslim imam. (Graft- the misuse of public money for private gain poses a very grave challenge to national development in the Philippines, and the magnitude of the problem is staggering.) See Prayer Alert 3010

Praise: God that people in authority, used by God to bring about His purposes, and continue to pray for leaders wherever they are. (1Tim.2:1-4)

More: <http://www.eni.ch/news/item.php?id=4342>

■ Rwanda: Answered prayer for peaceful elections

On Monday August 9th over 12,000 believers from various religious denominations in Kigali thronged Amahoro National Stadium to pray for Rwanda's presidential elections to be peaceful. (See Prayer Alert 3210) The crusade from midday to sunset was dubbed 'Rwanda is in your hands Lord.' The presidential elections started the next day. The event was characterized by prayers being led by several pastors, and there were testimonies and entertainment from local church choirs. Pastor Antoine Rutayisire observed that bad politics plunged the country into genocide and urged all churches to wake up and play their role in changing the mindset of Rwandans. 'It's now our churches time to pave the way for a better Rwanda. Rwanda is ours always. If we sleep it will crumble down,' He called on all Rwandans to love and always pray for their country.

Praise: God for answered prayers and ask him to continue to unite His church across the continent of Africa. (2Ch.7:14)

More: <http://www.cisanewsafrika.org/news.php?id=4729>

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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