

# PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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## PRAISE REPORTS

### ■ India: An Afghan Church grows in Delhi

In a South Delhi neighbourhood, the sound of a man reciting Dari, a Farsi dialect spoken in Afghanistan, over a loudspeaker attached to a modest two-story building rose over the din of vegetable hawkers. The building was a church run by Afghan refugees who had converted to Christianity. The man was a young Afghan priest reading the Bible before a Sunday service in its basement. The number of Afghani converts to Christianity increased as the US presence in Afghanistan increased after the fall of the Taliban. Today in Delhi between 200 - 250 Afghan converts from Islam to Christianity who fled persecution from authorities and Taliban have found refuge in Delhi. 2009 saw the highest number of Christians flee Afghanistan. A Delhi pastor said that 40 Afghan Christians have come to India so far in 2013. Most Afghan Christian converts have chosen India because of its proximity and their familiarity with the country.'

**Praise:** [God for the Evangelical church in Delhi, may they touch the lives of the thousands of Muslim and Sikh Afghan refugees who have also settled in India since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. \(Mk.16:15\)](#)

**More:** <http://www.salem-news.com/articles/july282013/afghan-church.php>

### ■ Peru: Economic and now spiritual revival

The poor country of Peru has been experiencing an economic revival that has tripled their economy in the last decade. However, the economic front is not the only place where revival and growth is being experienced. According to a Charisma News report, there is also a rapidly-increasing spiritual revival encompassing the South American country. Peru has seen the number of born-again Christians rise 'dramatically,' says the Charisma News report. The Evangelical population reportedly grew from 'single digits to 12.5 percent in 2007.' This year's tally of Evangelical Christians in Peru is estimated around 17 percent, but could be as high as 20 percent or higher.

**Praise:** [God for this wonderful news and for the growth of His people. \(Ps.85:6\)](#)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=12157](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=12157)

## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ Christians demand free speech guidance from Scotland Yard chief

Britain's most senior policeman has been urged to issue guidelines to his officers to protect Christians' rights to free speech, amid claims they are suffering intimidation and discrimination from police. Christian activists have called on Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, to inform all his officers that it is legal to cite Bible teaching which describes homosexuality as a sin when speaking in public. The campaigners say free speech is under threat after a series of cases in which street preachers were arrested for delivering sermons which referred to the traditional Christian view of homosexuality. Andrea Williams, the Director of the CLC, has written to Sir Bernard insisting that human rights laws allow Christians to express their genuinely-held views without fear of arrest, providing they do not incite a breach of the peace. Mrs Williams suggested Christians were becoming 'fearful' of expressing their lawful views because of the police's 'intimidatory tactics'.

**Pray:** for the Police in their difficult role but that they will recognise the legality of free speech in these matters. (Dt.32:1)  
**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10206335/Christians-demand-free-speech-guidance-from-Scotland-Yard-chief.html>

#### ■ **Topshop bosses criticised on garment worker safety**

Fashion retailer Topshop has rejected moves to prevent further disasters in garment factories in Bangladesh. The anti-poverty charity War on Want has urged the public to press Topshop's parent company, Arcadia Group, to join other leading fashion retailers that have signed the Bangladesh Safety Accord. The appeal comes three months after the Rana Plaza building in Savar collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people and injuring over 2,500 others. The charity's sweatshops campaigner, Murray Worthy, said: 'Topshop's bosses have got no excuse for not signing this agreement. With their bumper profits, they can easily afford a tiny fraction of that to make their supplier factories safe. Their failure to act and to work with other UK high street retailers to make these factories safe leaves thousands of workers' lives at risk. No one should have to work living in fear of death. Yet that is exactly the fate to which Topshop are condemning their workers.'

**Pray:** for Arcadia Group to rethink their position in this matter and fall in line with other UK retailers. (Tim.5:18)

**More:** <http://www.ekkleisia.co.uk/node/18669>

#### ■ **Cameron vows to export gay marriage worldwide**

The Prime Minister has held a party for gay activists in Downing Street and said he wants to export same-sex marriage all over the world. But he has been criticised for further alienating traditionalists and driving them into the arms of other parties like UKIP. The Number 10 drinks reception was organised to celebrate the passage of the same-sex marriage Bill. Mr Cameron gave a speech boasting about the speed with which he rushed the legislation through Parliament. He said he would send the team of civil servants who worked on the Bill across the globe to show how it is done. He also said passing the same-sex marriage Bill was just the start, and that he wanted to see gay rights issues pressed in schools. However, he has been criticised for pandering to the gay lobby in a way that will reopen old wounds and alienate still further many other people.

**Pray:** for a more moderate approach by Mr Cameron that does not appear to backtrack on assurances given only a few weeks ago. (Gal.6:7)

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/cameron-vows-to-export-gay-marriage-worldwide/>

#### ■ **Christian charities support Archbishop over payday loans**

The Archbishop of Canterbury is warning the payday lender Wonga that he plans to force it out of business. He says the Church of England will compete against it, by putting credit unions on its sites. Payday lenders give short-term loans but they come with high interest rates, and are often blamed for leading people into more debt. The Archbishop's comments have received widespread support from within the Christian community. Matthew Reed, Chief Executive of The Children's Society, said: 'The Archbishop of Canterbury should be applauded for taking such a bold stance to tackle the scourge of high cost payday loan companies. Many charge eye-watering rates of interest and drag people into a vicious spiral of debt and despair.' John Kirkby the founder of Christians Against Poverty told Premier's Marcus Jones on the News Hour it's great to see the Archbishop speaking out.

**Pray:** for all measures that will bring an end to usury style loans to break the vicious circle of debt. (Ez.22:12)

**More:** <http://www.premier.org.uk/news/current/Christian%20charities%20support%20Archbishop%20over%20payday%20loans.aspx>

#### ■ **UK 'losing fight' against internet crime, warn MPs**

The UK must do more to stop online fraud and deter state-sponsored cyber-espionage or risk losing the fight against e-crime, MPs have warned. The Home Affairs Select Committee said much low-level internet-based financial crime was falling into a 'black hole' and was not reported to the police. The MPs said more officers should be trained in digital crime detection and e-crime experts protected from cuts. The Home Office said the authorities must 'keep pace' with criminals. Publishing its first report on the subject, the cross-party committee said e-crime took various forms, did not recognise national borders and could be committed 'at almost any time or in any place'. It called for a dedicated cyber-espionage team to respond to attacks, many of which are believed to be backed by foreign governments because they are so sophisticated. A quarter of the gangs, many of which are based in eastern Europe and Russia, use the internet as their principal means of deception.

**Pray:** that the authorities will find successful ways of fighting cyber crime. (Ps.118:25)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23495121>

#### ■ **'Lads' mags' given cover-up deadline by Co-operative**

The Co-operative has given so-called 'lads' mags six weeks to cover up their front pages with sealed 'modesty bags' or be taken off sale in its stores. The 4,000-outlet retailer said it was responding to concerns by its members, customers and colleagues about images of scantily-clad women on covers. Titles such as Front, Loaded, Nuts and Zoo have been given a deadline of 9 September by the Co-op. An industry body said the titles showed the 'diverse interests of young men'. The Co-op, which is owned and run by its more than seven million members, introduced opaque screens for 'lads' magazines on some shelves earlier this month. Steve Murrells, retail chief executive for the Co-operative Group, said: 'As a community-based retailer, we have listened to the concerns of our customers and members, many of whom say they object to their children being able to see overt sexual images in our stores.'

**Pray:** for the success of this initiative and pray that other retailers will also take up the cause. (Ps.118:25)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23486027>

#### ■ **Bishop opens drug rehabilitation service**

A new centre to rehabilitate drug addicts in mid-Wales has been officially opened by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon. The Rt Rev John Davies marked the opening of the Kaleidoscope Centre in Llandrindod Wells with a call for greater understanding of addicts' needs. Bishop Davies said it was too easy to stigmatise people with drug or alcohol addictions

and to blame them for their situation; and that while there may be a small number of people who find themselves in addiction out of choice, there were many more who turn to substance abuse out of despair or because of a failure to cope with the pressures of their lives. The Kaleidoscope ministry began in a Baptist Church in Kingston-upon-Thames in south-east England in the 1960s. It now runs a number of centres across England and Wales. It is a major substance misuse service in South Wales, providing support to people with drug and alcohol problems.

**Pray:** that the Kaleidoscope ministry in Llandrindod Wells and other centres will bring relief and freedom to those who are addicted. (2Cor.3:17)

**More:** <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2013/07/bishop-opens-drug-rehabilitation-service.aspx>

## EUROPE

### ■ Greece: Christians detained for distributing New Testaments

57 believers were arrested last Sunday for distributing the New Testament to homes in Northern Greece. Greek Orthodox Priests are opposing 400 volunteers from 25 countries from gathering near Philippi in a Bible distribution project. Few Greeks own a copy of the New Testament. If they do - it's in older Greek that most would not understand. The Bible is viewed as only being understood and interpreted by the priest, theologians or academics. This modern translation approved by the Greek State Church is being distributed by Hellenic Ministries and contains endorsements from 4 patriarchs of the Orthodox Church from around the world. Objectors condemned Hellenic Ministries as a cult despite there being no attempt to divert from the teachings of the Bible or of the early church fathers which are so dear to the Greek Orthodox Church. Some priests have instructed their parishioners to burn the copies of the scriptures that have been given to them by volunteers.

**Pray:** for an end to antagonism between believers and for God to envelop the Greek Church in transformation. (Jn.17:22) See also item 3 in World section

**More:** <http://blog.godreports.com/2013/07/greece-christians-detained-for-distributing-new-testaments/#more-3920>

### ■ Muslims in various countries call for violence against the Netherlands

In various European countries, young Muslims protested against the arrest of a 19-year-old Muslim woman, Umm Usamah. She was arrested two weeks ago in the Netherlands because she tried to recruit Dutch Muslims for the civil war in Syria. In London, a group of men demonstrated in front of the Dutch Embassy. Banners shown had texts in Dutch and English including 'Sharia for the Netherlands.' Some of the texts posted on the internet calling for her release are extremely violent, including, 'Where is the lone wolf who takes revenge for his sister?' On a Dutch-Muslim website, 'De Ware Religie' ('The True Religion'), a letter was posted which warned the Dutch authorities about the abduction of Dutch citizens in Muslim countries.

**Pray:** against this threat by radical Muslims. (Ac.4:29)

**More:** <http://badnewsfromthenetherlands.blogspot.co.il/2013/07/muslims-in-various-countries-call-for.html>

## WORLDWIDE

### ■ NIGERIA: Bombs kill 24 in mainly Christian area

Kano has been among the cities hardest hit during Boko Haram's insurgency, despite the recent lull. On Tuesday four bomb blasts ripped through a mainly Christian area killing 24 people and leaving 3 seriously injured. A small church may have been among the targets. Residents described the area as being littered with the personal belongings of those who ran in fear and confusion once the explosions began. At least three schools have been attacked in northeastern Nigeria by suspected Boko Haram members in recent weeks. Over the weekend, clashes between a vigilante group and Boko Haram members left at least 20 people dead in the village of Dawashe in Borno State. The insurgency is estimated to have claimed more than 3,600 lives since 2009, including killings by the security forces.

**Pray:** for all working tirelessly to support communities affected by violence, may they restore people's hope. May God guide, sustain and strengthen them as they repair broken walls. (Is.58:12)

**More:** <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/nigeria-bombs-kill-12-mainly-christian-area-095440715.html#BFwMTVL>

### ■ Israel: Re-launching Israel-Palestinian talks

The following are a portions of Statements by US Sec Kerry, Palestinian negotiator Erekat and Justice Min Livni on 30 Jul 2013. - Sec of State Kerry said, 'I know the path is difficult but with Minister Tzipi Livni and Dr Saeb Erekat, standing side by side and sharing an Iftar meal together I'm convinced that we can get there.' Dr Erekat said, 'Palestinians have suffered enough, and no one benefits from the success of this endeavour than Palestinians. I am delighted that all final status issues are on the table and will be resolved without any exceptions, and it's time for the Palestinian people to have an independent, sovereign state of their own. It's time for the Palestinians to live in peace, freedom, and dignity within their own independent, sovereign state. Justice Minister Livni repeated the statement 'failure is not an option' and 'in these negotiations it's not our intention to argue about the past but to create solutions and make decisions for the future.'

**Pray:** that these negotiations would continue to completion, for God to be present in every future meeting and for a political recognition of each people group's aims that will become real and lasting. (Deut.32:10 & Zec.2:8; Gen.12:2-3 & Ps.122:6)

**More:** <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Peace/Guide/Pages/Relaunching-of-Israel-Palestinian-talks-30-Jul-2013.aspx>

### ■ Global: Unity in mission and prayer

Over the last couple of years the Gather network has discovered over 90 unity movements in cities and towns in the UK that are focused on mission and prayer for their areas. It has been a surprise for us all to see what God has been doing under the radar in some cases over the last 20 years. But that's not the end of the story. This movement of city and town wide transformation has been expanding all over the world. This is a grass roots movement with leaders of Churches putting down their differences and competitive natures to form long lasting friendships that results in a developing culture of honour,

respect, love of diversity and encouragement. It is a Kingdom paradigm rather than an empire mentality with Church leaders seeing themselves as part of the one Church in that place.

**Pray:** for more of God's enabling power to envelop the nations - pray that recent events would be just the beginning of global transformation. (Eph.3:20-21)

**More:** <http://www.wegather.co.uk/news/Its-Happening-All-Over-the-World.cfm>

#### ■ **Worldwide: Paedophilia**

Whether it's Vietnam, Kuwait, Senegal or the USA - children are being violated emotionally and physically while the perpetrators often enjoy anonymity and impunity. 5,000 men visit Thailand each year to have sex with children and between 60,000 and 200,000 Thai children are involved in prostitution. In Indonesia between 40,000 and 70,000 children are absorbed into the sex trade each year – two-thirds are trafficked abroad. Cambodia's Anti-Human Trafficking Department admitted, 'We don't deny that Asian men like to have sex with children here.' Japan is the world's main producer of underage pornography. The Philippines has 1.5 million street children, with 30,000+ involved in prostitution. A Middle East journalist said, 'After living in the Middle East for more than 10 years I can now safely say that paedophilia not only exists in these windswept deserts but that it is rampant.' On a positive note:- An FBI investigation into underage prostitution has freed 105 children and led to the arrest of 150 alleged 'pimps' across 76 American cities. see:

<http://news.sky.com/story/1121828/child-prostitution-fbi-sting-rescues-scores>

**Pray:** for all governments to take immediate strong action against paedophilia. Pray for this action to have a preventative effect, bringing an end to both availability and demand. (Ps. 7:11)

**More:** <http://www.win1040.com/page.php?spg=Pedophilia%20in%20the%20Window>

#### ■ **Zimbabwe: Election**

Zimbabweans went to the polls on Wednesday to elect a president and parliament, in an election that will mark the end of the troubled coalition government between veteran President Robert Mugabe and Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. The election had been hit by allegations of fraud before the polls opened when Mr Mugabe's Zanu-PF was accused of doctoring the electoral roll. The election will be the first to be held under the new constitution approved in a referendum in March this year. Mr Mugabe is accused of ruining one of Africa's most promising economies by seizing white-owned farms and giving them to landless blacks with little farming experience. Inflation reached an annual rate of 250,000,000% in late 2008. An estimated two million Zimbabweans left to seek work abroad. Since the coalition hyperinflation has ended and the economy has stabilized. Widespread corruption remains a sore point, particularly in the crucial diamond export sector. 60 – 70% of Zimbabweans actively belong to mainstream Christian denominations.

**Pray:** for vote rigging to be thwarted peacefully and may the next government take Zimbabwe out of corruption and into God's purposes for the nation. (Ps.33:10-12)

**More:** <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-23513467>

#### ■ **North Korea: Thousands of Christians in prison camps**

Last Saturday was the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War and CSW used the date to highlight the plight of at least 200,000 Christians and other inmates detained in five political prison camps across North Korea. Previously Christian aid and advocacy group Open Doors suggested that the real number of prisoners in dozens of facilities resembling concentration camps may be as high as over one million. 'Christians are particularly targeted for their faith,' said CSW. 'The camps are complete villages,' said Open Doors. Yet, despite the threat of detention and even execution thousands of Christians continue to worship in secret, rights investigators say. Recently Amnesty International called the North Korean leader Kim Jong-il to - acknowledge the existence of political prison camps in North Korea - immediately close all these camps, unconditionally release prisoners of conscience (relatives held on the basis of 'guilt-by-association') and release all others unless they are charged with an internationally recognizable offence.

**Pray:** for an end to the barbaric torture, inhumane living conditions and unjust regime and for God to continue to minister powerfully to our brothers and sisters living in unimaginable conditions. (Ps.7:6-9)

**More:** <http://www.bosnewslife.com/29624-thousands-of-christians-in-north-korea-prison-camps-on-60th-anniversary-of-armistice>

#### ■ **Kyrgyzstan: Believers face more Government pressure**

Forum 18 reports that Kyrgyzstan's government is devising new 'punishments' for those who exercise their rights of religious freedom. The proposed changes in the country's religion law are purportedly being pushed by the national secret police. If adopted, the new measures would increase the number of activities that would be punishable, as well as increase already heavy fines. New 'offences' would include teaching religious beliefs without personal registration to do so and forcing children to participate in religious activity. The proposals were sent back to the Kyrgyz justice ministry for more work before they will be sent to the parliament. Our brothers and sisters in Kyrgyzstan are very concerned about these proposed changes. Please intercede in prayer, asking God to intervene for the sake of the Gospel.

**Pray:** for God's protection over those who know him. Ask Him to thwart the plans of those working against His purposes in Kyrgyzstan. (Ps.36:10-12)

**More:** <http://www.sga.org/2013/07/kyrgyzstan-believers-face-more-government-pressure/>

## PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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