

PRAYER ALERT...

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

Issue 46-2013

Website

Contact Us

Donations

Thursday 14 November 2013

■ Praise Reports

- ✦ [Somebody Cares for Malawi](#)
- ✦ ['Mother ship' traffickers arrested off Libya](#)

■ British Isles & Ireland

- ✦ [Plans to outlaw Christian street preachers](#)
- ✦ [British Armed Forces in Afghanistan](#)
- ✦ [Liverpool calls for ban on 'addictive' betting machines](#)
- ✦ [Pressure to spend at Christmas puts families under too much strain](#)
- ✦ [Methodists say their RE resources are 'open hearted'](#)
- ✦ [Parents fear 'sexualised culture' of music videos](#)
- ✦ [Prisons Week: A call to community](#)

■ Europe

- ✦ [EU pro-life petition surpasses 1.8 million signatures](#)
- ✦ [Warsaw prepares to host fresh global climate talks](#)

■ Worldwide

- ✦ [The Philippines needs](#)
- ✦ [Philippines: What local papers are saying](#)
- ✦ [Afghanistan: Prayer for change](#)
- ✦ [Egypt: A vulnerable nation](#)
- ✦ [Mexico: Head of town sent mob to beat and abduct Christians](#)
- ✦ [North Korea: 80 executed](#)

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Somebody Cares for Malawi

Theresa Malila began her ministry with nothing more than a small jar of oil. She would walk to communities on the outskirts of Lilongwe and began to pray for those who were critically ill. Today she is the founder and executive director of Somebody Cares, a charity that ministers to women and girls among the poorest of the poor in 22 slum zones in Malawi, covering a population of 450,000 people. She is affiliated with 1500 pastors, chiefs in 260 villages, and 550 volunteers. When asked what ingredient made all the difference in her work, she immediately replies: 'It's the Gospel. It's transforming lives. There was a time when we had 15 patients dying every day of AIDS and other diseases. Today we have 3 per week. Once we smelled death and depression as we entered the slums, but today we smell life everywhere.'

Praise: God for the faith and efforts of Theresa that has blessed so many with life. (1Sam.26:25)

More: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6rDfJz6DC4>

■ 'Mother ship' traffickers arrested off Libya

The Italian navy has arrested 16 human traffickers aboard a so-called 'mother ship' in international waters off Libya. The ship was located some 500 kilometres southeast of Sicily, near Libya, the Navy said on Sunday. Submarine surveillance ahead of Saturday's raid was 'of particular importance, notably for gathering proof' against the traffickers, the Navy said in a statement. The fishing boat served as a staging area from which the traffickers dispatched their clients - Syrian migrants seeking asylum or a better life - aboard smaller, often rickety vessels to destinations in southern Europe. The boat had been under surveillance, including by drones, hi-tech radars, night-vision equipment and the submarine, under stepped-up operations launched after two shipwrecks last month claimed some 500 lives.

Praise: God for the success of the Italian Navy in bringing these traffickers to justice. (Pr.21:15)

More: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2013/11/ship-traffickers-arrested-off-libya-201311101523733505.html>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Plans to outlaw Christian street preachers

This Government is fast becoming the most authoritarian threat to our liberties of the modern era. The Home Secretary Theresa May is intent on outlawing anything that people may find 'annoying'. John Bingham writes in the Telegraph - Christian preachers, buskers and peaceful protesters could effectively be driven off the streets under draconian new powers designed to clamp down on anyone deemed 'annoying', according to a former Director of Public Prosecutions. Lord Macdonald QC said Theresa May, the Home Secretary's plans for a new civil injunctions to replace Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (Asbos) amount to 'gross state interference' with people's private lives and basic freedoms. The proposed

safeguards to prevent abuse of the new system are 'shockingly' weak, he writes. Under proposals currently before Parliament, Asbos are to be scrapped and replaced with wide-ranging new orders known as Ipnas (Injunctions to Prevent Nuisance and Annoyance). The draft bill was first read in February this year, and was less threatening to Christian values, see: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmhaff/836/83605.htm>

Pray: that the bill in its present format will not be enacted. (Ps.103:6)

More: <http://archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.co.uk/2013/11/theresa-may-seeks-to-outlaw-christian.html>

■ British Armed Forces in Afghanistan

The penultimate British force has arrived in Helmand province in southern Afghanistan. These troops were once in more than 130 bases, but this is now down to five, and will reduce still further. They now rarely patrol and the formation of the brigade has changed too. They have enough armour and infantry to protect them from Taliban attacks, but a large part of the force is made up of engineers and logisticians engaged in packing what they can to take back to UK and disposing of what they cannot. Many of the troops now arriving in Helmand will stay for nine months, but some will leave earlier as the force rapidly scales back. Please pray for the families who are facing a long nine month separation from their loved ones, and especially for the children who are fearful of Daddy being away.

Pray: that the draw down will be peaceful and safe. Please pray against attacks from the Taliban which might hinder this process. (Ps.140:4)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-24467398>

■ Liverpool calls for ban on 'addictive' betting machines

Liverpool Councillors have called for extremely addictive high-stake betting machines to be banned from betting shops in the city. Councillor Nick Small said that Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs), which include virtual versions of casino games like roulette, are the fastest way for gamblers to lose money. The machines allow people to bet up to £100 every 20 seconds, and city leaders have called on the Government to ban the machines or give local councils the power to implement restrictions. Councillors voted unanimously in favour of a motion tabled by Cllr Small on the matter. Cllr Small said: 'People are spending money they can ill afford on these terminals'. He added: 'There's hundreds of betting shops in Liverpool and we just don't have the power to control them. Ultimately, we need power to reduce the speed of play and to bring down the maximum stake.'

Pray: for local councils to be given the power to control high-stake betting machines. (1Tim.6:9-10)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/liverpool-calls-for-ban-on-addictive-betting-machines/>

■ Pressure to spend at Christmas puts families under too much strain

The 'absurd and ridiculous' pressure to have a perfect Christmas puts relationships under strain and spoils life', the Archbishop of Canterbury has warned. The Most Rev Justin Welby said 'consumerism over the festive period is now so 'over the top' that couples are left arguing over money and children are shouted at. He said he would like to tell people to stop giving gifts altogether but accepts no one would listen. I want to say something positive, which is that God gives us his Son Jesus Christ to give us life and full life and abundant life. Giving at Christmas reflects that generosity of God. So be generous in a way that shows love and affection rather than trying to buy love and affection.' He added: 'You can't buy it, you can show it, and when you show it, it comes back at you with interest.' Figures last year suggested the average household spent around £1,000 on Christmas.

Pray: for more and more people to hear and live the Christmas message of the Gospels. (Mt.6:33)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10439197/Pressure-to-spend-at-Christmas-puts-families-under-too-much-strain-warns-Archbishop.html>

■ Methodists say their RE resources are 'open hearted'

The Methodist Schools and Education Service has completed a two year project that has produced what are intended to be accessible and informative Religious Education resources. The resources offer an insight into Christianity and Methodism for RE Key Stages 1-4 (Children aged 5 – 8 years). The completion of the project follows the recent Ofsted report Religious Education: Realising the Potential, published 06 October, that criticised the levels of RE provision in schools, placing responsibility for improvement with the Government. John Keast OBE, Chair of RE Council of England and Wales, said: 'Good religious education in all our schools is more important than ever these days. Religion and belief have such a high profile in current affairs, community and social matters and in personal development nowadays that everybody needs to know, understand and be able to make sense of it.'

Pray: for all such initiatives to improve the quality of RE in schools. (Dt.11:19)

More: <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/19417>

■ Parents fear 'sexualised culture' of music videos

Many parents fear music videos have become too sexualised and violent, the founder of a parenting website has said. Siobhan Freegard, of Netmums, said parents were not prudes, but felt things had 'gone too far'. In a survey of some 1,500 website members, most (82%) said their children had repeated sexual lyrics without knowing their meaning. And three-quarters said they tried to stop children watching music videos. Ms Freegard said parents were most angry that their children were being exposed to 'lewd viewing' on programmes shown before the 21:00 watershed for family viewing. Modern parents aren't prudes - they know sex sells,' she said. 'But there's a strong feeling that things have gone too far now. It's toxic to tell young kids casual sex and violence are something to aspire to.' Most (75%) of parents with daughters said very sexual pop acts were teaching girls they would be 'judged on their looks, not their achievements or personality'.

Pray: for this issue, that is regularly raised by concerned groups, to be noticed and acted upon by all authorities to tackle the problem in a meaningful and positive way. (1Pe.3:3-4)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-24836571>

■ Prisons Week: A call to community

Christians across the UK are being invited to pray for prisoners during 'Prisons Week' from 17 to 23 November. The campaign, which has been running since 1975 and uses the tagline 'Stand in the Light', aims to bring attention to the issues surrounding imprisonment. With a committee made up of representatives from various Christian denominations and organisations supporting prisons ministry, it encourages churches and congregations to get involved with schemes run in their local prisons, challenging people to say 'I'm in'. This campaign comes as recent figures released by the Ministry of Justice reveal that 200,000 children were affected by the imprisonment of a parent in 2009, which is a greater number than experienced their parents' divorce. 85,000 people are currently in custody in England and Wales, and re-offending rates are high. Organisers behind Prisons Week contend that the social impact of crime and imprisonment means that the future of a generation is at risk, and action must be taken.

Pray: for all those who are imprisoned: and for their families, especially the children. Pray for those reaching out with support and encouragement. (Rom.12:8)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/prisons.week.a.call.to.community/34649.htm>

EUROPE

■ EU pro-life petition surpasses 1.8 million signatures

A pro-life petition on the European Citizen's Initiative website - the EU's equivalent to epetitions.direct.gov.uk or whitehouse.gov/petitions - has gathered more than 1.89 million signatures. The One of Us pro-life group's petition states that 'the EU should establish a ban and end the financing of activities which presuppose the destruction of human embryos'. This would include banning all abortions and stem cell research that destroys embryos as part of the method. The petition closed on 2 November 2013, but final calculations have been completed nine days later. At this stage, the organising group reports that 20 countries have reached the minimum threshold of signatures required in order to receive a response from the European Commission. The One of Us initiative has garnered support from Christian communities all across Europe, with Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox communities all acting in unison.

Pray: that following this huge response notice will be taken by the authorities leading to a halt to unnecessary and unjustified abortions. (Ps.55:19)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/eu.pro.life.petition.surpasses.1.8.million.signatures/34638.htm>

■ Warsaw prepares to host fresh global climate talks

Delegates from almost 200 nations will begin talks in the Polish capital, Warsaw, on Monday to prepare for a global summit on a UN climate pact. The search for new targets on emissions cuts promises to be a hotly debated issue with many developed nations eager to set a more cautious tone, but some environmental campaigners say tough action is still needed. The biggest greenhouse gas emitters China and the United States have pledged to curb carbon, but on a modest scale. In Europe, recession and green energy use mean the EU has already nearly met its 2020 target of a 20 percent cut in comparison with 1990 in greenhouse gas emissions, which include carbon and methane. Goals for 2020 agreed by EU leaders in 2007 became an international benchmark for climate ambition.

Pray: that the focus on climate change would lead to further steps to implement further reductions.

More: <http://www.euronews.com/2013/11/10/warsaw-prepares-to-host-fresh-global-climate-talks/>

WORLDWIDE

■ The Philippines needs

As international efforts increase to relieve Philippine's suffering there are reports of looting in warehouses, relief agencies being mobbed and water pipes punctured as people try to get at precious supplies. Pray for order to be restored as desperation, thirst, hunger and opportunism are provoking anarchy. Pray for wide-ranging co-ordination between government bodies, relief agencies and on site NGO's. Pray that survivors are properly fed and the dead are promptly buried. Pray for the dozens of relief organisations to work in unity with no unnecessary duplication of efforts or communication breakdown. Pray for the government to deliver workable logistics as they attempt to restore airports that are broken down, roads that are still covered in debris, services that are cut off. Pray against disease taking hold in areas lacking sanitation. Pray for effective mobile hospitals and teams of medics to be released into the most deadly situations where entire areas have been completely and utterly decimated; may they keep those who survived alive.

Pray: for the millions of people affected by the super typhoon, four million are said to be children. (Ps. 46.1-3)

More: <http://www.euronews.com/2013/11/12/philippines-supplies-looted-and-aid-convoy-mobbed/>

■ Philippines: What local papers are saying

Local papers are worried that the Philippines is not ready to deal with Typhoon Haiyan aftermath. The Philippine Star reads, 'The next phase of suffering for disaster victims can be as awful as the actual event. Apart from disease risks, victims lose their livelihoods - it can take a long time to recover.' The media calls on President Benigno 'Noy' Aquino to 'chuck off politics' and concentrate on relief efforts. The Daily Tribune says, 'Whatever political intrigue Noy is embroiled in should take a back seat in the mind-set of his administration. Political play is the least that Filipinos need from Noy at this time.' The Manila Times said, 'Weather scientists fear Yolanda will not be the last monster storm to ravage the Philippines. The national government needs to start drawing up plans now before the next super typhoon blows our way.' The bad news is that within the next couple of days we should see the arrival of yet another typhoon.

Pray: for the government to make wise choices and decisions, ask God to bless the emergency relief funds and deployed troops. (Pr.8:14-16)

More: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-24895620>

■ **Afghanistan: Prayer for change**

This year is set aside by the International Prayer Movement as a year of prayer for Pakistan and Afghanistan. To assist this initiative some prayer points are listed here today:- *If the Taliban succeed, Afghanistan would again become a training base for international terrorism and affect many nations. Pray that the Taliban's weapon supply is cut off and for confusion and disunity. * Foreign Aid. Pray that foreign aid pouring into Afghanistan will not be wasted through inefficiency nor diverted by corruption but will reach the neediest and rebuild the nation's shattered infrastructure. *60% of Afghans are under 20, have known nothing but war, long for education opportunities, employment and freedom of choice. Pray that they will be able to break free from Taliban and local warlords' control. May they provide new impetus to efforts of freedom and peace in the nation. *4.5 million refugees have returned, many bringing financial resources, international connections and an entrepreneurial spirit.

Pray: for the raising up of strong and effective leaders from the emerging generation in Afghanistan. (Ps.112:2)

More: [No link](#)

■ **Egypt: A vulnerable nation**

The Suez Canal transports Middle East oil to Europe and the West. Egypt also has a major oil pipeline. If both were to be closed by riots or terrorism oil prices globally would inflate. The Sinai is a haven for al-Qaeda-inspired terrorist attacks on the gas pipeline from Egypt to Israel and Jordan. It has been used as the launching point for armed attacks on civilians travelling in Israel's south and is a launching point for rocket attacks at Israel. Violent clashes are rocking Egypt; heavily-armed terrorists are waging a campaign against the government and allied nations; a sizable minority is suffering on-going attacks. Egypt stands on the brink of a civil war or at the very least sustained civil unrest and sectarian violence. The confrontation between the military and radical Islamists led by the Muslim Brotherhood is not expected to end well. The Brothers (the original modern Islamic terror group and the ideological source of both al-Qaeda and Hamas) are in no mood to negotiate or compromise. See also:- <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/355820/egypts-unraveling-and-coming-chaos-erick-stakelbeck>

Pray: against Egypt's complete collapse and for the Lord to make Himself known to the Egyptians. (Is.19:19-22)

More: <http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/dispatch/article/egypt-unraveling/>

■ **Mexico: Head of town sent mob to beat and abduct Christians**

Traditionalist Catholics abducted, jailed and beat a group of Evangelical Christians with rods and stones in Oaxaca, Mexico last week on orders from the head of a municipality for declining to participate in and help pay for Traditionalist Catholic festivals and for protesting their previous mistreatments. The mob attacked the Christian's unfinished church structure with sledgehammers and pick-axes and four of the Evangelical Christians were jailed for four days. Three brothers who escaped the mob sent to kill the Christians said officials led townsfolk to hate those who are not Traditionalist Catholics. Traditionalist Catholics in remote areas practice a blend of Catholic and indigenous rites involving drunkenness, revelry and idol worship. Christians declining to participate in the Traditionalist Catholic festivals have been threatened, attacked and economically deprived in the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo and Puebla. The Mexican government's aversion to involving itself in religious issues has allowed such situations to escalate.

Pray: for the independent Pentecostal Churches to receive state help and protection. Pray for these 'suffering saints' - including many very new believers. (Ps.24:5-6)

More: <http://morningstarnews.org/2013/11/head-of-town-in-mexico-sends-mob-to-beat-abduct-christians/>

■ **North Korea: 80 executed**

North Korea has executed 80 people by firing squad for minor misdemeanours, the South Korean newspaper JoongAng Ilbo reported. The wrongdoings include watching television programmes from South Korea or possessing a Bible. The article says the coordinated executions were held in seven cities earlier in November. In Wonsan the local government gathered up 10,000 people, including children, and forced them to watch people tied to stakes being machine gunned to death. Relatives and friends of the victims were also reportedly sent to prison camps. They were executed in Wonsan, Chongjin, Sariwon and Pyongsong, but none in Pyongyang, the capital. Most were charged with watching or illegally trafficking South Korean videos, prostitution, or possessing a Bible. Simultaneous executions across the country could suggest an extreme measure by Mr Kim's regime to quell public unrest. The common theme of the persecution was crimes related to South Korea or corruption of public morals.

Pray: for democracy to reach the most undemocratic and totalitarian state in existence. Pray for justice where the world's worst human rights crimes are committed. (2Thes.2:8)

More: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/nov/12/80-people-publicly-executed-across-n-korea-films-b/>

PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

Prayer Alert is distributed free of charge – Donations towards running costs are gratefully received.

To donate, please visit www.prayer-alert.net

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**