

## PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

# Prayer Alert . . .

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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### Northern Ireland parade riots point to deeper unrest

It's hard to make much sense of the mayhem unleashed on Belfast's streets by loyalists after Saturday's Whiterock parade. The Orange Order may have been angry about being re-routed near the west Belfast peaceline. But the intense and widespread nature of the violence which ensued was breathtaking - a throwback to the early days of the Troubles or, more recently, the worst days of the Drumcree crises in the mid nineties. In short these were scenes which it had been hoped would be confined to history. The world has largely focused on the future of the IRA. But there are real fears of fragmentation in the poorest Protestant communities - a fear that support for the peace process will ebb away in areas where it is most needed. Beyond the high politics, many loyalist areas are clearly suffering an economic and social malaise, with Protestants in inner city working class enclaves feeling increasingly alienated from wider society. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Let us continue to pray for Northern Ireland and for the Lord to reach down to the deepest needs of the people both spiritual and social.*

### Abortion services in the republic – hearing before the ECHR

On Tuesday of last week, three women from the Republic of Ireland presented their case against the Irish government before the European Court of Human Rights, claiming that their human rights had been breached because the law prevented them from having an abortion in Ireland. The complaint centred on the lack of abortion services in Ireland in the case of lethal foetal abnormalities. A judgement will be delivered at a later date, the outcome of which will have significant implications for the situation in Northern Ireland. The Court has in the past avoided imposing its views on national authorities in an area where questions of law and morality are intertwined. [www.care.org.uk](http://www.care.org.uk) *Please pray for the seven judges as they begin their deliberations and make their decision. Also pray that respect for human life will be upheld across the country.*

### Britain shameful adult TV capital of Europe

Britain has become the television porn capital of Europe – with five times more adult only channels than anywhere else in the continent. UK viewers can now tune in to 27 dedicated porn channels, compared to just five in Germany – our nearest rival. Research shows pornography was the fastest growing genre in television last year. The number of X-rated channels in Britain increased by a third – from 18 to 27 – to overtake the availability of children's channels, which number 24. Campaigners last night blamed the Government and regulators for allowing porn to 'flood' our screens. The research, by the media consultancy Screen Digest, shows there are now 84 pornography channels across Europe, compared to just three a decade ago. Under Ofcom rules, pornography in Britain is far less explicit than in much of continental Europe. But broadcasters are lobbying to lift

the current ban on R18 films and earlier this year Playboy TV was fined £25,000 by Ofcom for screening hard-core pornographic film in breach of the programme code. Source: Daily Mail 15/9 [www.mediawatchuk.org](http://www.mediawatchuk.org) *Pray for those in authority that they will start to take this problem seriously and take up the challenge to confront those responsible.*

### **Recent survey on downward trends of U.K. Churches becomes wake-up call**

Sunday church attendance in the United Kingdom may drop to just 2 percent of the total population by 2040, according to a nationwide church survey published late last month. The result has become a wake-up call to Christian leaders. The survey was conducted by Christian Research, an independent Christian organization that researches on the U.K. Christian scene every two years. The latest report called The Future of the Church: Religious Trends 5 has tried for the first time to project the current figures up until 2040, according to the Telegraph newspaper. As all U.K. churches have been suffering from drastic drop in service attendance over the last decade, the Christian Research predicts that at the present trend, church attendance will drop by two-thirds over the next 35 years, the Telegraph reported on Sept. 3. [www.openheaven.com](http://www.openheaven.com) *Pray that this indeed will be a 'wake up call' to the church and we will seek the Lord for His way forward to buck this trend.*

### **Historic national summit to unite ethnic minority Church leaders in UK**

Over 100 black and minority ethnic church leaders from across the UK will gather in an historic meeting entitled 'Stronger Together – Weaker Apart' next month. The leaders' summit has been organised by Minority Ethnic Christian Affairs (MECA). The event is in recognition of the role of black and minority ethnic leaders within the church which has been increasing and the growth of the minority ethnic Christian population in Britain. Throughout the day, the leaders will pray, network and discuss everyday concerns together such as: what do Black and minority ethnic Church leaders in Britain have to say on global warming, natural disasters, famine in Africa, AIDS, Live8, G8, international terrorism, London bombings, witchcraft, child abuse, ritual killing in churches....and the contrast between revival in Black Churches and slump in attendance in mainstream Churches. [www.christiantoday.com](http://www.christiantoday.com) *Pray that they will meet with the Lord and He will bless them with His way forward.*

### **Religious Hatred Bill update**

The incitement to religious hatred offence, proposed by the Government for England and Wales, is the most serious threat The Christian Institute has seen to religious liberty in Britain. It is vital that Christians hear about this issue and receive good guidance on how to pray and act. Therefore for the first time, The Christian Institute has published talks (together with other resources) so that Christians can hold their own meetings about this issue. Go to our website to find out more: [www.christian.org.uk](http://www.christian.org.uk) We would particularly encourage church leaders to hold meetings for your church and other Christians in your area. The Christian Institute cannot help to arrange, administer or advertise the meetings that you organise. But we are confident that using the materials provided on our website many ministers and churches will be able to run high quality meetings throughout the country. Church leaders, with the support of the [Lawyers' Christian Fellowship](#), are gearing up for the next stage in their fight against the Government's [Incitement to Religious Hatred Bill](#). A mass prayer rally in Trafalgar Square is being planned for 8 October, and another one outside Westminster on 11 October - the day of the Bill's Second Reading in the Lords. *Pray that the Church will bring its influence to bear on our government to make the necessary changes.*

### **Christian Medical Fellowship calls for moratorium on 'virgin conception' research**

In response to the creation of Britain's first 'virgin conception' human embryo, the Christian Medical Fellowship has called on the government to restrain the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) who approved the research. In a press briefing at the British Association festival of science, Paul de Sousa, a researcher at the Roslin Institute which cloned Dolly the sheep, said that his team had created so-called parthenotes, which are early-stage embryos that are made from a single egg, without sperm, reported the Guardian newspaper. The move has further dismayed pro-life groups and Christian medical agencies, who believe that the modern advances in stem cell research are leading to a decline in ethical values. The fact that the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has approved it is further evidence that this un-elected and unaccountable quango has gone far beyond its remit and is increasingly becoming a law unto itself. The government should rein it in and order an embargo on such research. [www.christiantoday.com](http://www.christiantoday.com) *Pray against this decline in ethical values.*

## **EUROPE**

### **Germany goes to the polls**

Elections take place in Germany on 18 September. Germans will choose between two main parties – the Christian Democrats led by Angela Merkel, and the Social Democrats led by Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder. Big differences of policy are reported between the two parties in both foreign policy (attitudes towards Germany's relationship with the US and other Member States) and economic policy (particularly on EU economic reform and reduction of the budget for the EU Common Agricultural Policy) (<http://news.bbc.co.uk>). *Pray that God would be sovereign over the outcome of the elections in Germany and that He would grant wisdom to the new government.*

### **EU measures to counter terrorism**

UK Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, in a speech to the European Parliament on 7 September, highlighted the need for EU support for cross-border intelligence operations to dismantle terrorist groups and organised crime. He said that the UK Presidency would work for agreement on EU proposals to require telecoms data – crucial to the investigation of the London bombs in July - to be retained for longer and made available to police. Clarke also said that the UK considered that biometric data should be included in passports, visas, and possibly driving licences, to prevent people from using multiple identities to hide their movements. He also stated that the EU should work with other countries, particularly the US, to exchange and use information on international passengers. The EU's Court of First Instance will give judgment on 21 September in cases challenging EU legislation freezing the assets of those linked to terrorism and suspected of financing terrorist groups. If this is struck down, individuals suspected of financing terrorism will be free to use their assets, unless there is an appeal. Clarke said that the UK government now considered that the application of the European Convention on Human Rights by the courts did not strike the right balance between the rights of citizens to safety and security, and the protection of individual rights to

privacy. *Pray for the UK government as they chair discussions and set the agenda on these difficult and sensitive issues. Pray for effective measures against terrorism but with proper safeguards to ensure that information cannot be misused against individuals.*

### Europeans 'are biggest sceptics'

Europeans are among the most sceptical about people in power, a global survey on attitudes to authority suggests. Some 50,000 people in 68 countries were asked about trust, power, freedom of action and identity in the Gallup poll commissioned by the BBC World Service. Few Europeans trust the media and many would like to see intellectuals play a greater role, the survey found. Germans appear most tied to their jobs while regional identity is strongest in Portugal and Spain. In the 23 European countries surveyed, a third of respondents said they did not trust politicians or business, religious and military leaders, rising to more than half in central and eastern Europe. Globally, only a quarter of those in the survey held people in authority in similar disregard..(See also Africa and America below) [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray that the Church in Europe would be able to build up trust amongst the peoples as they preach the 'good news.'*

### EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council meet

The EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council meet on 19 and 20 September. When Ministers representing each EU country meet together in Council they have the power to adopt legislation and this will be one of the more important meetings under the UK Presidency. Items on the agenda include a report to the Council by UK Ministers on their discussions on reform of the EU rules on prices and marketing of sugar with sugar-producing developing countries. The Council will consider measures to conserve stocks of fish. The European Commission will give an update to the Council on avian flu. *Continue to pray for a new sugar regime in Europe which will be fair for producers in the EU and in developing countries. Pray for fisheries measures which go far enough to protect stocks of fish but pray also for fishing communities in Europe will be severely affected by limits on catches. Pray for wisdom for EU Ministers to know what steps need to be taken to protect Europe from an avian flu pandemic.*

## WORLDWIDE

### US President calls for National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the victims of Hurricane Katrina

Friday, September 16, 2005 - National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims of Hurricane Katrina. This was one of the worst natural disasters in our Nation's history and has caused unimaginable devastation and heartbreak throughout the Gulf Coast Region. A vast coastline of towns and communities has been decimated. Many lives have been lost, and hundreds of thousands of our fellow Americans are suffering great hardship. To honour the memory of those who lost their lives, to provide comfort and strength to the families of the victims, and to help ease the burden of the survivors, I call upon all Americans to pray to Almighty God and to perform acts of service. As we observe a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the victims of Hurricane Katrina, we pledge our support for those who have been injured and for the communities that are struggling to rebuild. We offer thanks to God for the goodness and generosity of so many Americans who have come together to provide relief and bring hope to fellow citizens in need. More: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/09/20050908-12.html> *Join the people of America today in prayer and remembrance for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.*

### Fresh violence hits Iraqi capital

Iraq's capital Baghdad has been hit by a series of deadly blasts for a second day running, killing at least 26. In the worst attack, 16 people, mainly police, died when a police patrol was hit in the southern Doura district. Hours later, two more deadly bombs were aimed at Iraqi Special Forces in the same area, followed soon after by gun battles between police and insurgents. The blast follows the deadliest day of violence in Iraq since the 2003 US-led invasion. More than 182 people died. The BBC's Caroline Hawley in Baghdad says the militants are making good on their threats of more bloodshed following the attacks on Wednesday. A group claiming to be al-Qaeda in Iraq released a statement on a website saying it was acting after US and Iraqi forces attacked insurgents in the northern town of Talafar. And in a separate development the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, purportedly declared "war against Shias in all of Iraq" in an audio tape released on the internet. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *With all this continued violence please pray for those affected by these killings. .And seek the Lord for a breakthrough that would bring forth peace.*

### Aceh rebels begin giving up guns

Rebels in the Indonesian province of Aceh have handed over their first batch of weapons in a crucial stage of a peace process with the government. The Free Aceh Movement (Gam) fighters are due to give up a quarter of their weapons at four undisclosed locations across the province this week. In return, Indonesia will withdraw about 6,000 combat troops. Aceh bore the brunt of the Indian Ocean tsunami and the disaster prompted the two sides to return to talks. Gam is expected to hand in a quarter of its arsenal over the next three days. A Gam spokesman said 78 weapons had been handed over on Thursday, according to the Aceh Monitoring Mission. Gam is due to hand over the rest of its weapons by Christmas. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Praise God for this breakthrough and pray that this will lead to peace and allow recovery from these conflicts and the tsunami.*

### Africans trust religious leaders

Religious leaders are particularly trusted in Africa, a BBC World Service Who Runs Your World? survey of global attitudes towards power has revealed. Three-quarters of those questioned in Africa identified religious leaders as the most trusted group, compared to only a third worldwide. Politicians in Africa, as in the rest of the world, are the least trusted. Less than a third believe their government reflects the people's will, with Nigerians especially unhappy. In Nigeria 85% of those questioned trusted religious leaders and a similar proportion were willing to give them more power. Asked who had had the most influence on their decision-making over the past year, 13% of those surveyed in Africa said religious leaders. The global figure among more than 50,000 people questioned was just 5%. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray that the Church and its leaders will be able to build on that trust and not let God down.*

### Americans 'back church leaders'

Forty percent of people in the US would like religious leaders to be given more power, a Gallup poll commissioned by the BBC World Service suggests. In the US and Canada, 49% of people said they trusted religious leaders, compared to a global average of 19%. This would seem to confirm the view of many that religion played a big role in President Bush's victory, analysts say. The results for 14 Spanish-speaking Latin American states suggest there is little trust in politicians.  
[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray that this trust will indeed lead to more influence and glory to God.*

### Churches urged to join week of prayer for North Korea – 19-25 September

Churches and Christians around the world are being urged to remember the suffering people of North Korea during the Week of Prayer for North Korea running from 19 - 25 September, 2005. "The immensity of the need and the deep spiritual darkness in North Korea requires urgent and intense prayer by the Body of Christ," says Christian Solidarity Worldwide's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas. North Korea is probably the most closed of all societies in the world today and its walls of isolation have very effectively blocked the population from hearing the Gospel. There is no freedom to preach the gospel and the whole nation is forced to revere the leaders in a form of idolatry that is reminiscent of that imposed by Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel's time," [www.assistnews.net](http://www.assistnews.net) *Let us pray for the persecuted Church in North Korea that the Lord will strengthen them and build their faith.*

## PRAISE REPORTS

### The world's deaf population to get God's word in their language

More than six million people around the world use sign language as their first language. That's how they talk to their friends and family. That's also how they communicate with God. But, it's a language that's gone unmet in Bible translation around the world. [Wycliffe Associates'](http://WycliffeAssociates.org) President and CEO Bruce Smith says they're doing something about it. "We've been working with some experts in this field and are cooperating as part of a project to create some local studios in different studios around the world where unique sign languages are being signed. Recently we sent a team to Costa Rica to help complete work on a video studio so that sign language translation could be done in that location." Wycliffe plans to invest about \$150,000 in a series of local studios. [www.mnnonline.org](http://www.mnnonline.org) *Praise God for this initiative that it will lead to many discovering the living word.*

### Thousands attend first All African Congress hosted by Salvation Army in Zimbabwe

At the end of last month (August) the National Sports Stadium in Harare, Zimbabwe was filled with about 7,000 young members of the Salvation Army, there for "Africa for Christ," the organization's first all African congress. According to The Christian Post, seventeen African countries were represented in the gathering as they celebrated the hope of their salvation in Jesus Christ. The large amount of attendees caught the attention of even the business community, as a leading banking corporation donated 250 million Zimbabwe dollars to the Salvation Army for the event. Salvation Army General John Larsson spoke on one evening proclaiming, "Africa is the continent that is wide open to the Gospel!" At the final meeting on Sunday August 28th, over 12,000 people attended, as they were challenged to go into each of their communities making "Africa for Christ a reality." [www.christianpost.com](http://www.christianpost.com) *Pray that this gathering will help to bring that reality, 'Africa for Christ.'*

### See You At The Pole 2005 theme 'Call to Me and I will answer . . '

According to a press release on the See You At The Pole (SYATP) website, this year's theme is "Pray: Call 2 Me," based on Jeremiah 33:3 in the Bible which says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know." The student-initiated and led movement was started in 1990 in the suburbs of Fort Worth, Texas. Last year a reported two million teenagers met throughout all 50 of the United States. Youth also met internationally observing a SYATP time of prayer in countries spanning six continents. Students are encouraged to meet on usually the 3rd Wednesday in September, (some countries have a different meeting date) before school, gathering at the flagpole, where they pray for their schools, teachers, fellow students and country. <http://www.syatp.com/02home.html> *As they call pray that He will answer.*

## LOOKING AHEAD

**19 - 25 September:** *Week of Prayer for North Korea.* Christian Solidarity Worldwide is urging all Christians to pray for North Korea.  
[www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)

**20-22 September:** Prayer Association of British Isles and Ireland meeting near Dublin. *Pray for clear guidance as they seek the Lord together for the future.*

**21st September:** Churches representing over 560 million Christians world-wide are being invited to mark the *United Nations International Day of Peace*, as an *International Day of Prayer for Peace* – for a second year running. The initiative calls on Christian churches all over the world to arrange for services or vigils on 21 September, as well as to include prayers for peace in their services on the Sunday before or after that day [www.ekklesia.co.uk](http://www.ekklesia.co.uk)

**5<sup>th</sup> October – 3<sup>rd</sup> November:** *30-Days of Prayer for the Muslim World.* For the latest "30-Days" news and for prayer materials during Ramadan 2005 [www.30-days.net](http://www.30-days.net)

**8th October:** *Day of Prayer for Nigeria.* At All Souls Clubhouse, 141 Cleveland Street, London. 10am - 3pm. Admission is free. Tea and Coffee will be provided, please bring a packed lunch

**29th October:** *Trumpet Call III* - Back to the NEC Arena for a third National Trumpet Call Day of Prayer. Make sure the date is in your diary [www.worldprayer.org.uk](http://www.worldprayer.org.uk)