

## PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

# Prayer Alert . . .

**Draft Issue 42**

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FRIDAY 14 OCTOBER 2005

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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### Christian groups deliver message to Blair against Religious Hatred Bill

Christian groups this week delivered a blunt message to the Government that its proposals to outlaw incitement to religious hatred were likely to stir up religious division rather than bring greatly needed social harmony. Evangelical groups led protests in Parliament Square in advance of the second reading of the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill in the House of Lords. They also took out a full-page advert in The Times on Tuesday claiming that the Government's proposals could be misused to undermine civil liberties and legitimate evangelism. Widespread criticism in the Lords debate greeted the Government's third attempt to get this law on the statute book. Several hundred Christians, mainly evangelicals and black church members, lobbied, protested and prayed outside parliament – timing their display of opposition to coincide with the reading of the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill in the House of Lords. [www.churchnewspaper.com](http://www.churchnewspaper.com) *Continue to pray for this bill as it makes its way through parliament. (See Praise Reports below for latest news)*

### Premier Lifeline offers prayer and support to those concerned as divorce rate rises in Britain

With the number of divorces in the UK reaching a seven-year high, London's Premier Christian Radio has issued a call to married couples having relationship problems to contact Premier Lifeline. Premier Lifeline is a helpline designed to offer support and prayer for Christians and non-Christians. It is open from 9am to midnight every day. They receive over 500 calls each week, with relationships being their second most frequent subject matter after loneliness. The call to married couples experiencing difficulties was prompted after the divorce rate in Britain has risen again, for its fourth successive year. Premier Lifeline Manager, Jonathan Clark spoke of the regular calls to Premier Lifeline on the subject of relationships. [www.assistnews.net](http://www.assistnews.net) *Praise God for this initiative and pray that those in need will be blessed and encouraged by the prayers.*

### Euthanasia plans savaged in Lords

Fierce opposition to euthanasia by bishops and other religious leaders this week has forced euthanasia campaigner Lord Joffe to water down his private member's bill for 'physician-assisted suicide'. He revealed in Monday's debate in the House of Lords that his bill would make it legal for doctors to prescribe lethal drugs to enable terminally ill patients to end their lives, but his proposals will not extend that right to doctors to administer the drugs. Active and retired Anglican leaders, including the Bishops of St Albans, Oxford and London, as well as former Archbishops, Lord Carey and Lord Habgood, opposed the bill in the House of Lords. But even more significant was a major campaign of religious leaders in the days leading up to the debate. Nine religious leaders from six different religions appealed to Parliament to reject assisted suicide and voluntary euthanasia,

basing their case on the sanctity of human life and rapid advances in palliative care. [www.christiannewspaper.com](http://www.christiannewspaper.com) *Another answer to prayer but continue to pray for the ongoing discussions and amendments that they will be open to Gods will.*

#### **PMs seeking to restore devolution**

The British and Irish governments are seeking ways to restore devolution in Northern Ireland, the UK prime minister has said. Tony Blair said both administrations wanted to create the circumstances for re-establishing the political institutions. However, he warned that loyalist violence was "a threat to the stability of Northern Ireland". Mr Blair was speaking after talks with Taoiseach Bertie Ahern in London. It was their first meeting since General John de Chastelain said that the IRA had completed its disarmament. Mr Blair said that had been "a genuinely significant change in the politics of Northern Ireland". "We have now got coming up, the Independent Monitoring Commission report in the next couple of weeks and then there is a further report next year," he said. "The important thing is to create the right confidence in all parts of the community, indeed that devolved government can happen and can be stable. This is why it's important that there is a change of culture on all sides." [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Keep the situation in Northern Ireland in your prayers that there will be a meeting of minds leading to a lasting solution.*

#### **Continued prayer needed for e-Coli outbreak in South Wales School**

This incident started approx. 3 weeks ago and spread quite quickly. A supplier of food to School Canteens was incorrectly pasteurising the meat products sent out to schools, which quickly realised there was a problem and the government traced the problem to the supplier. However, in the process over 130 children contracted the 'e-coli' bug and two have since died, several remain with Kidney problems and from the report below, several children are hiding their medical issues, probably in fear of having to go into hospital. An Open Door - a ministry which operates in schools in South Wales, is travelling throughout the affected area, and reports on the problem. [www.anopendoor.org](http://www.anopendoor.org) and [www.prayer.tv](http://www.prayer.tv) *Please pray that the Lord will move in the lives of the children and the school teachers during this time.*

## **EUROPE**

#### **Czech Evangelical Alliance calls on Christians to use media effectively**

The Czech Evangelical Alliance (CEA) is making it easier for Christians in the Czech Republic to communicate with local and national media and challenges Christians to use media effectively, as a part of its ongoing "Media Consulting Service" project. "We are living in a society that is more and more dependent on media," the CEA stated in a document entitled "How to use the media," which depicts the changing face of media use in the modern age. "According to the alliance, in order for churches and Christian organisations of 21st century to communicate effectively with its surroundings, they have to learn how to use media and learn to professionally present their own messages. "Christians shouldn't ask if it's right to use media. Instead they should ask if it's right to ignore them," the CEA stated. The alliance has been spearheading efforts to educate Christian organisations about the media by providing resources online. ([www.ea.ca](http://www.ea.ca)) [www.christiantoday.com](http://www.christiantoday.com) *Pray that the Church will take up the challenge and use all methods to spread the 'Good News'.*

#### **Spain: Deportations to Morocco put migrants at risk**

"The Spanish government should immediately suspend the deportation of undocumented migrants to Morocco from the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla," Human Rights Watch said today. Over the past two weeks, some 2,000 people have attempted to enter Ceuta and Melilla by storming the fences that surround these two Spanish cities located on the North African coast and adjacent to Morocco. At least 11 people have died and scores have been injured, as Spanish and Moroccan troops attempted to block their passage into the enclaves. "Shipping people back to Morocco is not an answer to this crisis," said Holly Cartner, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Protecting these extremely vulnerable people should be the Spanish government's priority." Sans Frontières last Friday said that, in the desert near the Moroccan-Algerian border, it had discovered more than 500 people abandoned by Moroccan police without food or water. The Moroccan government has reportedly begun transporting hundreds of men, women and children in bus convoys towards the border with Algeria, claiming that the migrants passed through there before. Source: Reuters [www.alert.net](http://www.alert.net) *Let us pray that the authorities will be able to find a solution to this problem that would meet the needs of these vulnerable people.*

## **WORLDWIDE**

#### **South Asia earthquake: the world rallies to help as death toll continues to rise**

With numbers in excess of 35,000 plus lives were lost in Saturday's devastating earthquake in South Asia, but help is on the way from countries and agencies worldwide. CNSNews.com reports an "outpouring of sympathy and assistance from around the world," for those whose lives were ravaged by the powerful earthquake that shook south Asia, Saturday, measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale. At a press conference in Islamabad, Pakistan's Interior Minister Aftab Sherpao said, "Casualties are increasing by the hour." According to the report, donations of equipment, rescue teams and money, have poured in from countries including, Australia, Turkey, Russia, Afghanistan, the UK, the U.S., China and Japan. Aid has also been offered by Israel, who has no diplomatic ties with Pakistan. But it is not known if Pakistani officials will accept Israel's offer. India, while considered Pakistan's rival, offered help as well, though the country was also badly affected by the earthquake. As rescue workers look for survivors among the rubble in some of the hardest hit areas, only small numbers have been found alive. [www.breakingchristiannews.com](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com) *Pray for the situation across this region and all those involved. Those who may still be trapped; for those who have lost loved ones; for the rescue workers and that all the necessary relief supplies may get through.*

#### **Pakistani Christians may be hard-hit by neglect after earthquake**

Last Saturday's earthquake caused huge destruction and loss of life in northern Pakistan as well as neighbouring areas of India and Afghanistan. As generous international aid begins to arrive on the scene, Barnabas Fund is appealing for help with the knock-on effects of the earthquake on the Christian minority. Christians are a despised minority in Pakistan and endure

discrimination in many forms. In such a context, Christians are likely to be shunted to the end of the queue, as regards meeting their practical needs after a natural disaster. Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, international director of Barnabas Fund, comments: "There is a link between persecution, discrimination and disasters. In time of disaster it is often Christian minorities who suffer the most, either because of neglect or because of deliberate discrimination. The Pakistan earthquake will have knock-on effects on Christian communities in the region; earthquake victims are likely to find help for themselves at the expense of the Christians. Therefore we need to be concerned for our Christian brothers and sisters at this time. Whilst they have not borne the brunt of the disaster, they will soon be feeling its effects in other ways." [www.barnabusfund.org](http://www.barnabusfund.org) *Pray for all the victims of the earthquake in Pakistan, India and Afghanistan, the bereaved, the injured and those who have lost their homes and livelihoods. Pray that such radicals will not exploit the tragedy of the earthquake to bring further suffering, hostility and bloodshed for non-Muslims.*

#### **STOP PRESS - Hyderabad India**

Brian Mills, who many of you will know and respect, is currently in Hyderabad India from 9-14 October attending a 10/40 Window Prayer Summit with delegates from 70 nations. He has sent a text message via mobile phone asking for our urgent prayers as they have been warned of credible security risk on this city and three others in India. *Pray that God will intervene and hold back the enemy. Pray for the protection of the delegates and that the Lord will bless their deliberations.*

#### **Over 200 Eritrean Christians captured & detained in new persecutions**

Over two hundred Christian Eritrean evangelicals and members of minority churches have been captured and detained, according to Release Eritrea. The operation which was carried out by Eritrean security forces is said to have been the worst of its kind thus far, with having been detained without their whereabouts being known. Email sources indicated that the development project of Kalehiwet Church has been shut down, according to Release Eritrea. The development project is responsible for projects across the country with emergency aid and feeding programmes. But it was forcibly shut by Eritrean security forces on 3 October. The whole team of staff, including all administrative staff, drivers and secretaries, have all been detained for the past week. The general secretary of the project Mr Ukbay, his administrator Mr Ghebre Michael and many others have been detained. The safety of those detained is the main concern of those who contacted Release Eritrea. But the well-being of the families which have been left behind is a rising concern. [www.christiantoday.com](http://www.christiantoday.com) *We need to continue to pray for the situation in Eritrea. Prayer for those who have been detained and all those caught up in this latest situation.*

#### **Changes in Iraqi constitution approved**

There was wild celebration on the floor of the Iraqi National Assembly last night (Wednesday) as political leaders celebrated the adoption of compromises aimed at winning Sunni Arab support for a new constitution. With Iraqis due to vote Saturday on whether to adopt the proposed constitution, Shiite Muslim and Kurdish leaders said they had yielded to all the changes demanded by Sunni Arabs opposed to the draft. The Shiites and Kurds depicted the compromises as a victory for the forces of national reconciliation after months of sectarian bloodshed. The Sunnis' leading political organization, the Iraqi Islamic Party, endorsed the compromises, which conceded some sticking points and put off others until a new legislature is elected in December. Other major Sunni parties withheld support; however, splitting what had been solid Sunni opposition to the proposed charter. The chief compromise in the deal creates a new committee that would look at amending disputed provisions of the constitution after a new legislature is elected Dec. 15. Amending the constitution then would take a two-thirds vote of parliament and another national referendum. Sunni leaders, whose constituency largely boycotted the January elections, say they expect a heavy Sunni turnout in December and a resulting increase in representation in the next assembly. [www.worldnetdaily.com](http://www.worldnetdaily.com) *Continue to pray for Iraq and as they vote this weekend for protection and that those who contrive to destroy the process will be held back.*

#### **LATEST - Iraq steps up security ahead of historic vote**

Iraqi and U.S. forces have stepped up security across Iraq to stop insurgent attacks aimed at derailing Saturday's historic constitutional referendum. Baghdad's International Airport will be shut Friday and Saturday, while civilian vehicles are banned for two days starting Friday evening and a nationwide 10 p.m. curfew remains in force until Sunday. [www.ctv.ca](http://www.ctv.ca)

#### **Venezuelan President moves against US preachers**

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has said he is about to expel a US missionary group, New Tribes Mission. The leftist leader said the missionaries were "imperialists" and he felt "ashamed" at their presence in indigenous areas of Venezuela. He accused the Florida-based group of making unauthorised flights and setting up luxurious camps amid poverty. New Tribes, which preaches to non-Christian indigenous peoples, said it had no immediate comment. It is one of Latin America's biggest missionary organisations and has 3,200 workers and operates in 17 countries, with operations in West Africa and South-East Asia too. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray for this situation and if deportation takes place that those who have received their message will be faithful and grow led by the Holy Spirit.*

#### **Pray urgently for Zimbabwe**

The world community seems to be talking a lot but doing very little. Remember Rwanda. A Sovereign intervention of God is needed or many will die, perhaps not the way they did in Rwanda but slowly and painfully and hidden from sight. Aid agencies are talking about genocide in Zimbabwe and a Government Minister has been heard to say that they could be 6 million Zimbabwean's instead of 12 million (if they all support the Government). Meanwhile enforced clearances of the poorest people - including those who are HIV positive and the million children who are orphans - has continued unabated. Many are left without the basic essentials of food, water and shelter and have had their livelihoods taken away from them. The food shortages in rural areas have begun to create famine conditions. *Please pray that God will have mercy and intervene.*

#### **A call to pray for justice and for true religious liberty for India's Dalits**

An absolutely crucial Supreme Court hearing will take place in India on Tuesday 18 October. Please pray through this week leading up to the hearing, and then through the hearing itself. A positive outcome would remove crippling, poverty-entrenching religious discrimination from millions of Indian Christians, and a stumbling block from the path of many truth-seeking Indians.

India's caste system is a rigid social class hierarchy rooted in the re-incarnation and karma doctrines of Hinduism. Through it, people are classified and organised according to descent and employment. Whilst caste is essentially part of Hinduism, it is entrenched in Indian culture and tradition, pervading all society across religious lines. The ultimate beneficiaries of the caste system are those at the top: the high caste Hindu priests, rulers and elites. The lowest group, existing beneath the caste system, is the Dalits ('Untouchables'). Because of their caste-imposed poverty and virtual slavery, the vast majority of Dalits are poor, landless and illiterate. Whilst 2.3 percent of all Indians are Christian, 10 percent of all Dalits are Christian. In fact, 60 percent to 70 percent of India's 2.5 million Christians are Dalits. [www.assistnews.net](http://www.assistnews.net) *Please pray specifically that God will be working in the hearts and minds of all those involved in the Supreme Court hearing.*

#### **Perseverance in Prison – Indonesian women organise Church service behind bars**

Three wrongly-accused Christian Sunday School teachers model Paul and Silas' examples, and worship God while in a West Java jail. The three Indonesian Christian women were imprisoned under the Child Protection Act, for "attempting to coerce children to change their religion." However, the Sunday School teachers allowed several Muslim children to attend their classes, only after obtaining "verbal consent" from the children's guardians. Now the women are serving a three-year prison term in the Indramayu district of West Java, Indonesia. While Christian Freedom International urges their release they have been allowed to lead a small church service in a courtyard. They pray for the other prisoners and guards. One prisoner has even converted and became a Christian. This is 'School of Trust Bible School,' not a jail. There are 16 women altogether, in the prison, and eight share a 5 meter x 5 meter jail cell where they must pay the guards to turn on the water for their toilet.

*Pray for these women that God will sustain them and that their witness will bring others to Christ, even their guards.*

#### **Churches call for investigation into Philippines killings**

Church and development groups from around the world are calling on Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to investigate the killings of more than 30 human rights activists, including clergy members, in the course of this year, reports Maurice Malanes for Ecumenical News International. "We are deeply concerned at the killings of 34 activists in the Philippines so far in the year 2005," the groups said in letters last week to President Arroyo and to army chief of staff Lt Gen Generoso S. Senga, released by the Geneva-based Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance. The more than 30 signatories included the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, Franciscans International and the Young Women's Christian Association. They demanded "immediate and impartial investigations into all recent extrajudicial executions". [www.eni.ch](http://www.eni.ch) and [www.ekklisia.co.uk](http://www.ekklisia.co.uk) *Pray that President Arroyo will instigate an investigation that will bring about justice for all those involved.*

## **PRAISE REPORTS**

#### **LATEST - Religious Hatred debate from Tuesday 11 October.**

Yesterday (Tuesday) the House of Lords debated the Second Reading of the Racial and Religious Hatred Bill. There were a very large number of excellent speeches against the Bill from all political parties. For every one peer who supported the Bill, four opposed it. Many peers with great legal expertise totally dismantled the Government's case with great precision. Baroness O'Cathain, Baroness Cox, Lord Clashfern, The Bishop of Southwell and the Bishop of Winchester opposed the Bill, as did the former Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey who gave a very strong speech. [www.christian.org.uk](http://www.christian.org.uk) *We give thanks to God that a strong case was put and continue to pray that the Bill will be defeated. Do pray also for Christian Institute as they work on this issue. Pray for particularly wisdom. Do pray about the Equality Bill which also has serious implications for religious freedom. We are concerned that the Bill may ban the provision of Bibles in public places, including in hospitals. Do pray for Christian Institute staff and other Christian organisations as they raise their concerns about the Equality Bill with Government officials.*

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

**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)

**8<sup>th</sup> 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

**19<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> October:** *National Parents' Week.* Register for resources on website or by phone to The National Family and Parents Institute (NFPI) Tel: 020 7424 3460 Website: [www.nfpi.org](http://www.nfpi.org)

**23<sup>rd</sup> October:** *Bible Sunday.* Resources available from The Bible Society contact: Website: Tel: 01793 418100 [www.biblesociety.org.uk](http://www.biblesociety.org.uk)

**29<sup>th</sup> 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)