

## PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

# Prayer Alert . . .

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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### Thousands call for just global trade in mass lobby of Parliament

Thousands of people from across the country braved torrential rain on Wednesday in [one of the largest ever mass lobbies of Parliament](#), which called for more just global trading rules in order to lift millions of people out of poverty. Hundreds of MPs were invited out onto the pavements of Westminster to meet an estimated total of around 8000 constituents who were calling for the UK to take a lead in changing global trade rules to benefit developing countries instead of harming them. Those attending the lobby event were urging the UK Government and its partners in the European Union to stop forcing free trade on poor countries by pushing them to open their economies through world trade talks. They were also calling on the UK and European Union (EU) to respect the right of poor countries to decide on the trade policies that will help end poverty and protect their environment. This would allow countries the freedom to choose the best policies for poor people in services such as water, health and education and policies that will protect vulnerable farm sectors and promote national industries. *Continue to pray for that the nations governments will take these protests seriously and MakePovertyHistory.*

### Street Pastors and prayer to 'Transform Southwark'

Current issue of rising violence in the London borough of Southwark, in the last several months, shootings and stabbings have claimed a number of young people's lives. The response from the church is to call a week of prayer entitled 'Transform Southwark' that will run from Monday 14th to Sunday 20th of November 2005. They are asking every church in Southwark to participate as they pray for the peace of the city and seek a blessing on the borough. At a recent event at Southwark Town Hall it was reported by a senior police officer that incident crime rates in the centres of Peckham and Camberwell dropped by 95% and 85% respectively on the nights when Street Pastors were operating. The formerly sceptical officer commented that; 'I had thought that well meaning Christians out at night were more likely to have created problems, but nobody can ignore these statistics. The Street Pastors initiative has clearly made my job much easier'. Street Pastors have clearly opened a door that means that the police and local government have shown willing to partner with us as we launch this week of prayer for the borough... [www.sfi.org.uk](http://www.sfi.org.uk). *Let's take this opportunity to pray in the name of Jesus that this demonstration of unity in the pursuit of Gods blessings for Southwark will be effective in bringing Him glory. And pray that the Street Pastors initiative will be picked up in other cities. (E.g. see Prayer Alert 20 – Birmingham)*

### Over 2,000 'die from NHS errors'

More than 2,000 people died in English hospitals last year due to lapses in patient safety, a watchdog says. About 980,000 patient safety incidents and near misses were reported in the NHS, the National Audit Office found. But as many incidents are not reported, the numbers of deaths, which are already higher than previous estimates, could be even higher, the study said.

The government said while the majority of mistakes were minor it was important the NHS learned from them. But the study found about half the incidents in which a patient was unintentionally harmed could have been avoided if lessons from previous incidents had been learned. The cost of the mistakes to the NHS was estimated to be £2bn a year in lost bed days on top of the costs of litigation, according to the NAO. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Let us pray for our NHS that it will be able to face up to all the challenges and be able to make a difference for the sake of the nation's health.*

#### **Religious leaders repeat arguments over broadcasting**

Representatives of faith communities have told Parliamentarians that faith does not figure sufficiently in BBC programmes and services. Their statements came in oral evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on the BBC Charter Review yesterday (Tuesday) on the coverage of faith and the role of religious broadcasting. The hearing formed part of the Select Committee's inquiry into specific areas of the BBC including religious, sporting and regional broadcasting and the BBC World Service. (See also Prayer Alert 44) The statements by the group of broadcasters – chaired by the Bishop of Southwark, the Rt Revd Tom Butler – fly in the face of comments made by the BBC's Director General in June. [In a speech to the Churches' Media Conference](#), Mark Thompson, himself a Christian, urged Christians to move beyond old arguments that faith did not figure sufficiently in BBC programmes and services. [www.ekklisia.co.uk](http://www.ekklisia.co.uk) *Continue to pray that the BBC will listen to the demands of Christians in this nation.*

#### **Scotland signs Malawi help accord**

The president of Malawi has declared friendship with Scotland and war on political corruption in his own impoverished African nation. President Bingu wa Mutharika said an impeachment move against him in Malawi was driven by political rivals. The co-operation agreement, signed in Edinburgh, should open the door for further practical help from Scotland. It will be followed by detailed plans to assist in areas such as health, education and economic development. Four million people in Malawi are facing starvation but the threat of famine has not united politicians, with accusations that public funds have been used to support the ruling political party. Scotland believes it can help channel practical aid to Africa, but President Mutharika knows he must tackle corruption claims to reassure donors. Aid agencies have urged Scots to add their voices to those demanding emergency aid for Malawi. President Mutharika warmly welcomed the pact and sought to reassure global donors by pledging to root out corruption at home. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray that this initiative will bring lasting benefit to Malawi. Pray that the president will be able to root out corruption.*

#### **Compensation 'fears gripping UK'**

Britain is gripped by a "culture of fear" of legal action, the Lord Chancellor said as he set out plans to end the so-called compensation culture. He said beneficial activities like school trips were often being prevented by a fear of spurious claims. Outlining a new Compensation Bill Lord Falconer pledged to "put the brakes on the cowboy claims of companies who take advantage of the public". Measures include regulating claims firms and limiting hard-sell tactics. Local authorities don't open public spaces because they fear they might be sued. People don't do school trips because they fear they might be sued or sign up for voluntary organisations, like the Boy Scouts or Girl Guides," he said. He said this was a result of the damaging compensation culture. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) *Pray that this move will indeed lead to this 'compensation culture' being broken.*

## **EUROPE**

#### **President Chirac Appeals for calm sixth night of rioting in Paris suburbs**

French President Jacques Chirac intervening after six nights of rioting in housing projects outside Paris, called Wednesday for calm and said authorities will use a firm hand to curtail what may become a "dangerous situation." The violence, sparked initially by the deaths of two Arab teenagers, has exposed the despair, anger and deep-rooted criminality in poor suburbs, where police hesitate to venture and which have proved fertile terrain for Islamic extremists. The rioting, which spread Tuesday night to at least nine Paris-region towns, has exposed rifts in Chirac's government, with Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy — a potential 2007 presidential candidate — being criticized for his tough talk and police tactics. It also has renewed debate about France's failure to fully integrate its millions of immigrants, many of whom are trapped in poverty and grinding unemployment, living in low-cost, sometimes decrepit, suburban housing projects where gangs dealing in drugs and stolen goods sometimes are in control. *Pray for the French government that they will be able to establish peace and that these riots will lead them to address the needs of those trapped in poverty.*

#### **Christian Aid warns price for EU tariff cuts is too high**

The European Union has made another move to end the deadlock in the world trade talks. It has offered to reduce its agricultural tariffs by 46%. Europe's farming subsidies are often blamed for the current stalemate in the trade talks. But the EU trade commissioner, Peter Mandelson, has again insisted that the offer is conditional on 'immediate movement in negotiations in industrial goods and services'. 'The EU is holding a gun to the head of poor countries in the WTO', said Claire Melamed, head of trade policy at Christian Aid. 'Unless they agree to liberalise vital services they won't get the agricultural reform that they have been long promised in the WTO. But if they do liberalise services they will be unable to guarantee their citizens access to the essential infrastructure – like transport, energy and banking, that make trade possible.' 'The conditions the EU has attached to its offer on agriculture make a mockery of the promises made at Doha that this would be a development round.' [www.christianaid.com](http://www.christianaid.com) *Please pray that the EU will stop holding the gun to the head of the poor nations.*

#### **More than 53 million Muslims in Europe**

According to newly released figures from the Central Institute's Islam Archives in Soest, Germany, more than 53 million Muslims live in Europe. Of that number, in the EU, France has the highest population with 5.5 million, followed by Germany with 3.2 million, the UK with 1.5 million and Italy with 1 million. Russia has 25 million Muslim residents and the European part of Turkey 5.9 million. The Institute also found that the number of Muslims in Europe has increased by 800,000 over the last two years. Only one in five Muslim adolescent's worships regularly and most converts to Islam in Germany are women who convert because they are marrying a Muslim man. The most illuminating part of the report, however, was that "more and more Muslims in Germany are becoming Christians." According to reporter Wolfgang Polzer, most are Iranians in exile, who estimate that each year approximately 60 Muslims are baptized in Germany. The institute believes that more than 100,000

Iranian Shiites have converted to the Christian faith since the Islamic revolution most living in the United States. [www.breakingchristainnews.com](http://www.breakingchristainnews.com) *Pray that the Church will be enabled to meet the challenge of evangelizing.*

## WORLDWIDE

### Update on Pastor Ferdie Flores, East Timor

Recent reports circulating about the scheduled execution of Pastor Ferdie Flores, a Filipino missionary in East Timor, are incorrect. A source close to Bro. Flores has stated: "Several threats have been made by priests, but there has not been any physical harm done to Ferdie as of yet. Although last week a mob of about 250 people did surround Ferdie with stones, sticks, and machetes, but the Lord intervened and the crowd was dispersed without incident. As of now things are calm, but could erupt at any time. Ferdie has requested much prayer. "Please follow this link to find out more. <http://www.fbc-misawa.org/missionaries/Flores.htm>. Severe human rights violations occurred regularly in East Timor when the area was under Indonesian occupation. However, since its liberation from Indonesia and the coming of democracy, East Timor has abolished the death penalty and has sought to institute a culture of human rights. [www.csdw.org.uk](http://www.csdw.org.uk) *The current texts and emails are unhelpful and could risk stirring up ill-feeling once again. If anyone contacts you on this matter, please tell them not to forward these messages to anyone, but instead to pray for unity, reconciliation, peace and understanding between the diverse members of the body of Christ in East Timor.*

### Indonesia: Three Christian girls have been beheaded

Three Christian girls have been beheaded and another badly injured as they walked to a Christian school in Indonesia. They were walking through a cocoa plantation near the city of Poso in central Sulawesi province when they were attacked. This is an area that has a long history of religious violence between Muslims and Christians. A government-brokered truce has only partially succeeded in reducing the number of incidents in recent years. Police say the heads were found some distance from the bodies. It is unclear what was behind the attack, but the girls attended a private Christian school and one of the heads was left outside a church leading to speculation that it might have had a religious motive. A bomb in May in the nearby town of Tentena, which is predominantly Christian, killed 22 people and injured over 30. The fighting four years ago drew Islamic militants from all over Indonesia and many have never gone home. Analysts say the militants have targeted central Sulawesi and believe that it could be turned into the foundation stone of an Islamic state. The analysts have warned that the violence could resurface at any time. [www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com) *Please pray for the families of those who have lost their children in such a horrific way. Pray for the protection of all Christians in Sulawesi that their faith will be strengthened and that they may be a powerful witness at this time now that Ramadan is concluding.*

### Denominational Churches unite to worship in streets on Java as Churches are shut down

Christian churches are being closed on the island of Java in Indonesia, but that's not stopping Christians from worshipping. In fact, for six consecutive Sundays, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Pentecostal Christians have been holding join worship services literally on the streets. As expected, this is making radical Muslims even more determined to stop them. Indeed, at one recent outdoor worship service, more than 1,000 Islamic radicals reportedly tried to intimidate them. Reporter Jay Esteban notes that Christians claim that outdoors is the only place left where they can freely worship God after city officials ordered their churches closed. More... [http://www.persecutionblog.com/2005/11/indonesian\\_musl.html](http://www.persecutionblog.com/2005/11/indonesian_musl.html) *With another prayer request for Indonesia please make it a priority for prayer for those on the frontline of the battle. (See also Prayer Alert 44 – SOS)*

### Sri Lanka anti-conversion amendment's fate: hinges on nation's presidential election

Intercessory prayer is needed for Sri Lanka's Thursday, November 17 presidential election, which could determine the fate of a constitutional amendment that seeks to make Buddhism as the state religion. Christian groups encouraged believers worldwide to pray against a proposed anti-conversion law in the mainly Buddhist country of 20 million people. According to Glenn Penner of Voice of the Martyrs Canada, the amendment case, which was scheduled to be presented to the Sri Lankan parliament on October 4, was dropped because there was not sufficient support for the debate. "What they would rather do is to avoid controversy and upsetting the international community at this time with the presidential elections at hand," Penner explained. As the countdown to the election continues, attacks against churches have also been unrelenting. There reportedly have been more than 200 cases of vandalism, violence, arson and harassment against the churches and Christians in Sri Lanka over the past two years. [www.win1040.com](http://www.win1040.com) *Pray for the election commissioner who has gone on record that he will uphold the election regulations and that he will not stand for any election rigging. Pray for the election of the right presidential candidate who will not support the anti-conversion bill. Pray for all our Christian brothers and sisters that the Lord will bless and protect them.*

### Open Doors USA Launches North Korea prayer campaign

For three straight years North Korea has topped Open Doors' World Watch List of countries where persecution of Christians is the worst. Due to the continuing severity of persecution in that communist country, Open Doors have launched a Prayer Campaign for North Korea. The goal of the campaign is to blanket North Korea in prayer for 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To accomplish this, Open Doors USA is seeking at least 1,008 Christians in the United States who are committed to pray 10 minutes a week. Open Doors USA will provide updated information on the status of Christians in North Korea for the prayer warriors. Without prayer the North Korean church can't survive." To register for the Prayer Campaign for North Korea, go to [www.opendoors.org/3ypnk-us/](http://www.opendoors.org/3ypnk-us/). *Let us join with our American brothers in prayer for North Korea Christians.*

## PRAISE REPORTS

### Alexandria update

Following last weeks Urgent Prayer Alert we give thanks for answered prayers. Instead of the expected rioting and attacks on Christians the militants all stayed at home. There was a heavy military presence on the streets, however the threat still remains. More info including pictures: <http://mychristianblood.blogspot.com/> *Keep praying and lifting those Christians who live in such challenging situations within the Muslim world.*

### **Patenting of human cells Item**

Following intensive lobbying by CARE and its allies, the European Parliament overwhelmingly voted last week to affirm its opposition to the patenting of human cells and asked the European Commission to register an objection to the provisional patent granted earlier this year to Edinburgh University for sex selection techniques in human embryos, which included patenting of actual human germ cells. [www.care.org.uk](http://www.care.org.uk) *Give thanks to God for this victory*

### **First Christian Church in 1,400 years to be built in Qatar**

The Times reports that the first Christian church in Qatar since the arrival of Islam in the 7th century is to be built next year on the outskirts of the capitol, Doha, home of the Arab network Al-Jazeera. The land for the Church of the Epiphany was donated by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani. It is estimated that 7,000 - 10,000 Anglicans live in Qatar. Says the Most Rev Clive Handford, the Anglican Bishop in Cyprus and the Gulf: "We are there as guests in a Muslim country and we wish to be sensitive to our hosts . . . but once you're inside the gates it will be quite obvious that you are in a Christian centre." More... <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0%2C%2C251-1853837%2C00.htm> *Praise God for this new Church initiative.*

### **Bill Gates gives £28.5m for disease research to Liverpool's School of Tropical Medicine**

An article in the Liverpool Echo states that millionaire Bill Gates, today, gave £28.5m to the internationally renowned School of Tropical Medicine in Liverpool, England, for disease research. The generous donation was made through Bill and Melinda's charitable foundation. Janet Hemmingway, a professor at the school said, "This award is wonderful news for the school and the city, and most of all the thousands of people in countries where the school is at the forefront of the fight against malaria." According to the report, Malaria kills 2,000 African children everyday. [www.breakingchristiannews.com](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com) *Thank you Bill!*

### **Good news for the Church in Iraq**

"The people are open like never before. It is because we have no peace." There's good news for the Church coming out of Iraq. According to Charisma News, in Baghdad, a total of 15 evangelical congregations have started since the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime in April 2003. Officially, only two evangelical churches existed during Hussein's rule. Now there are Baptists, Methodists, and Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) congregations, all led by local Iraqi pastors. "The people are open like never before," says Ghassan Thomas, pastor of a CMA church in Baghdad. "It is because we have no peace. This is how we connect our message to the nation: I preach on the topic, 'How do we get peace?' and everyone listens, especially when I talk about the deeper peace that Christ brings." "Muslims, too, want peace," Thomas adds. "Many of them are frightened. When the hostages are killed, often a Quranic verse is used to justify it. So many Muslims are scared of their own god. When we preach that God is love, it is so liberating to them." [www.breakingchristiannews.com](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com) *Praise God for this good news even under persecution.*

### **Thailand: new churches in Khao Lak after the tsunami**

The 30-mile coast between Thaimuang and Takuapa was devastated by the tsunami at the end of December 2004. Khao Lak, which everyone heard of in the weeks following the catastrophe, is in this region. Hundreds of volunteers assisted the locals and the Thai army with reconstruction. Many of these volunteers who invested their time and money were Christians, and their living witness caused many to think about Jesus; over 20 new churches have started in this area since the flood, mostly small house churches led by nationals who take good care of the people's needs. "Christians have never been so involved in any region in Thailand," commented one pastor. Of course, many people come to the churches because of their physical needs, but they are also brooding about the basic questions of life. There is hardly anyone who did not lose family, friends and neighbours to the tsunami. In one of the churches, a 27-year-old woman who lost her husband and both children told how the book of Romans comforted her, enabling her to sleep again. In that church, 19 people have been baptised in the past month. Source: DMG, Germany [www.buften.net/fridayfax](http://www.buften.net/fridayfax) *Give thanks to God for this growth in His Church.*

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

**6<sup>th</sup> November:** *International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (UK).* What began as a core group of about 7,000 churches, the IDOP has grown to be the largest prayer day event of its kind in the world. Last year, an estimated 200,000 churches experienced the spirit of unity by taking part in this Day of Prayer. Information [www.idop.org](http://www.idop.org)

**10<sup>th</sup> November:** *Hope for London Leaders' Prayer Breakfast.* Over the past two years, increasing numbers of Christian leaders in London have been gathering together at the Hope for London Leaders' Breakfasts to lift the capital before God. Pete Broadbent will be the speaker this time on 'Confidence in our Unity' and Noel Robinson will lead worship. [www.eauk.org](http://www.eauk.org)  
Visit: [www.idop.org](http://www.idop.org) or [www.worldangelicalalliance.com](http://www.worldangelicalalliance.com)

**14<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> November:** *A week of prayer* entitled 'Transform Southwark' We are asking every church in Southwark to participate as we pray for the peace of the city and seek a blessing on this borough. You can do this simply by signing up to hold an open prayer meeting for the borough during all, or part of one day that week. On registering you will be provided with a prayer calendar with facts and specific prayer requests from the police. [www.sfi.org.uk](http://www.sfi.org.uk)

**[www.prayer-alert.net](http://www.prayer-alert.net)**