

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

Prayer Alert . . .

Draft Issue 48

CONTACT US: info@prayer-alert.net

FRIDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2005

- **British Isles & Ireland**
 - [70,000 pubs and clubs call an end to time](#)
 - [Almost 60,000 people HIV positive in UK – study](#)
 - [Our soaps are awash with bad language and violence](#)
 - [Support orders with Asbos urged](#)
 - [Demand for victim support growing](#)
- **Europe**
 - [Diversity and Religion](#)
 - [EU Budget](#)
 - [Making poverty history: the EU contribution](#)
 - [EU Ministers reaffirm commitment to double EU aid](#)
 - [Counter-terrorism](#)
- **Worldwide**
 - [Forgiveness in Indonesia: A family's response to martyrdom](#)
 - [More attacks against Indonesian Christians](#)
 - [Christian leaders call for partnership in Middle-East reconciliatory ministry](#)
 - [Churches and Christian homes torched by mob in Pakistan](#)
 - [Pakistan Christians under siege - believers hold day of prayer after violence](#)
 - [Tearfund launches appeal as food crisis worsens in Southern Africa](#)
- **Praise Reports**
 - [Boiler Room of prayer launched at Liverpool's 'Strawberry Field'](#)
 - [Louis Palau speaks at packed-out church in Beijing](#)
 - [Salvation Army 'Warriors' pray in Canadian 'War Room'](#)
- **Looking Ahead**
 - [Dates for your diary](#)

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

70,000 pubs and clubs call an end to time

Thousands of pubs and clubs will be able to stay open for longer from today after new licensing laws took effect in England and Wales at midnight in the biggest shake-up for 80 years. An estimated 70,000 licensed premises, less than half the total, have used the Licensing Act 2003 to extend their hours, and about 1,000, including 250 supermarkets, have applied to sell alcohol around the clock. While the Government said the new regime would [allow responsible adults to drink](#) later while giving the police and councils extra powers to tackle alcohol-related trouble, critics insisted it would mean more crime. The Liberal Democrats issued figures, culled from official statistics; showing alcohol-fuelled violence had risen by a fifth in two years. Don Foster, their spokesman, said there were already 1,000 offences a week connected to licensed premises and increasing the availability of alcohol would make matters worse. www.telegraph.co.uk *As this new legislation comes into effect let us pray that the worst excesses feared will be held in check. Pray against this evil that can destroy so many lives.*

Almost 60,000 people HIV positive in UK - study

The number of people infected with HIV in the UK rose last year to an estimated 58,300 and almost a third of those may not know they are carrying the disease, a report said on Thursday. Most new cases were diagnosed in heterosexuals and nearly three-quarters of those were probably contracted in Africa. The report said up to a third of the cases -- some 19,700 people -- were thought to be undiagnosed, meaning they could be spreading the disease without knowing. "There is no part of the UK that remains unaffected by HIV or sexually transmitted infections," said Barry Evans, an HIV expert at the agency. "Our report 'Mapping the Issues' coincides with *World Aids Day* (December 1st see below www.globalaidsprayer.org) and allows us to take stock of the progress made in our efforts to prevent the spread of HIV." www.reuters.co.uk *Let us remember all those effected by AIDS and seek a breakthrough that will set them free from this disease and its causes.*

Our soaps are awash with bad language and violence

Soap operas and reality shows are responsible for a sharp increase in swearing on television before the 9pm watershed, a survey has found. Viewers reported a general coarsening of standards across the main channels, with much more explicit swearing and sexual imagery. Big Brother, Trisha, The Osbournes and Hell's Kitchen with Gordon Ramsay were highlighted as examples of programmes that inflict strong language on viewers. The BBC1 soap EastEnders was also mentioned as were music channels such as MTV that feature 'Gangsta Rap'. The survey carried out by media regulator Ofcom, found Channel 4 and, to a lesser extent, Five, were leading the way in increasing profanity. Offensive language on soaps and reality shows was

particularly disliked 'due to the early transmission time and large family viewing. Source *Daily Mail* www.mediawatchuk.org. *Let us pray against this gradual weakening of morals in our media. Pray that Gods people will speak out with a strong voice.*

Support orders with Asbos urged

Young people given anti-social behaviour orders in England and Wales should also be given counselling and support, a government report has said. The Social Exclusion Unit said the orders - Asbos - did not treat the causes of offending. The government is to provide £500,000 for compulsory treatment such as anger management courses, counselling for drug abuse or training schemes. Magistrates will be urged to issue support orders alongside Asbos. BBC social affairs correspondent Kim Catcheside said support could be as simple as teaching teenagers how to get up and dressed in time for work. "It's estimated that a million young people aged 16 to 24 - who are most likely to get into trouble - are not in jobs, education or training," she said. "Those with the most complicated problems often don't have families they can rely on." The Social Exclusion Unit says the state should step in with the support they need." www.bbc.co.uk *Pray that this initiative to treat the root causes of anti-social behaviour will be blessed and meet the needs of these young people.*

Demand for victim support growing

An organisation which offers support to victims of crime said it has been receiving more referrals than ever. Victim Support Scotland, which has been celebrating its 20th anniversary, said demand was at an all-time high. About 700,000 victims of crime in Scotland have used the service since its inception. The organisation provides free and confidential support, practical help and essential information to victims and witnesses. The service is provided through a network of community and court-based services. Deputy Justice Minister Hugh Henry was due to hear how the service has developed during a meeting with victims and volunteers on Thursday. www.bbc.co.uk *Pray that this work will continue to help those victims with the deepest needs.*

EUROPE

Diversity and Religion

The UK Presidency of the EU hosts a conference on Diversity at Lord's Cricket Ground, London on 24 November. The theme of the event was described in the publicity as "A Union of Many Cultures: Celebrating Diversity" and was to consider how "Britain can contribute to the rest of Europe through its unique position as a successful multi-cultural society". It included speakers on race, gender and religion. The topic on religion is described as "Diversity and Religion: How best to manage a union of many faiths." The Rt. Rev. Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester has been invited to speak as well as Dr Badawi, Chairman of the UK Imams and Mosques Council. The programme refers to the enlargement of the EU to welcome Romania, Croatia, Bulgaria and Turkey (negotiations for Croatia and Turkish membership have only just begun: they will not be concluded for some time) and raises the question: What type of EU will exist once the process is complete? *Pray against the stronghold in Europe that Christianity is one of several faith communities, all of them equally valid ways to worship God. Pray also that in our attitudes to gender and sexual orientation, European nations will return to biblical values and that we will consider all races as equally worthy of respect. Pray that Europeans will revere Jesus as the Name above all names.*

EU Budget

When EU leaders met at Hampton Court at the end of October, Prime Minister Blair made a commitment to reach agreement on modernisation of the EU budget for 2007-2013 at the key summit under the UK Presidency of the EU on 15/16 December. The summit, to be held in Brussels will be chaired by Tony Blair and attended by all the EU Heads of State. It is the most important meeting under the UK Presidency. The main disagreements concern the level of spending on agriculture and the future of the UK budget rebate negotiated by Margaret Thatcher before most of the current Member States joined the EU. An attempt to reach a deal in June under the Luxembourg Presidency ended in failure and acrimony amongst leaders, and criticism of the UK for refusal to compromise on the rebate. UK officials and Ministers will be responsible for preparing for the December summit and significant bilateral discussions will take place with individual leaders. The attitudes of France, and the new German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, will be key to reaching agreement. *Pray that EU leaders will negotiate for a just solution and that God will give Tony Blair wisdom as he leads discussions. Pray that the debate will be conducted without acrimony and that the outcome will be fair between EU countries.*

Making poverty history: the EU contribution

In his annual foreign policy speech, Tony Blair called on the EU and the US to cut agricultural subsidies to their farmers to avoid trade liberalisation talks in Hong Kong in December ending in failure (The Times, 15 November 2005). At the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks in Hong Kong in mid-December the EU will vote as a block and agreement must be reached on the EU position before the talks. The UK has a key role in its Presidency of the EU to try to reach a deal. At the Hampton Court summit in October, President Chirac said that France would block a deal in Hong Kong rather than make deep cuts in subsidies to farmers. Blair called on EU countries to reduce subsidies which distort trade, set a date for an end to subsidies to exports from the EU and make access to EU markets easier for producers from developing countries. He called on richer countries to make good their promises to poorer countries at the Gleneagles G8 summit in July. Some aid organisations (Oxfam) have said that the proposed cuts to EU subsidies do not represent a real reduction, and that developing countries should not agree to the proposals in Hong Kong (ActionAid) (Channel 4 News, 13 November 2005). *Pray for wisdom for the UK Presidency and for Tony Blair as they guide discussions on these issues. Pray for EU leaders to reach an agreement on their negotiating position in Hong Kong which will be just for developing countries.*

EU Ministers reaffirm commitment to double EU aid

European Development Ministers agreed in Brussels on 22 November a common vision for development with the aim of eradicating poverty and meeting Millenium Development goals (www.eu2005.gov.uk). Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to double EU aid by 2010, including aid to help developing countries to increase their share of trade. The meeting discussed the EU-Africa strategy to assist development in African countries and their share of trade. This is a key UK Presidency priority and

will be on the agenda for the summit of European Heads of State on 15/16 December (the most important meeting of the Presidency). Development Ministers also discussed ways to improve the response of EU countries to the Asian earthquake. *Pray that EU countries will make a genuine commitment to increase aid for purposes which will make a real difference to developing countries, for a helpful partnership with African countries, and for immediate and effective assistance to Pakistan to relieve the suffering caused by the earthquake.*

Counter-terrorism

EU Home Affairs Ministers meet in Brussels at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 1-2 December to discuss measures to combat terrorism. The agenda will include discussion of a common strategy to deal with recruitment and financing of terrorist organisations, national arrangements to combat terrorism and cross-border police cooperation. Measures to combat terrorism will also be on the agenda for the summit of EU Heads of State on 15/16 December. *Pray that God would give Ministers wisdom so that they may agree on effective measures to combat terrorism and that at this time of insecurity Europeans would put their trust in God.*

WORLDWIDE

Forgiveness in Indonesia: A family's response to martyrdom

Three Christian families are burying their daughters; schoolgirls killed in a vicious attack as they travelled to school (See *Prayer Alert 45*). The families of the murdered girls are still in shock, and they are grieving over the deaths of their children. Not only because they were too young to die but because of the horrible way they were murdered! Their bodies were found headless in a coconut field; their heads were found in different parts of Poso, wrapped in black plastic bags. Mastin Mokoagow is Pastor of the Pentecostal Church of Zion. She says the deaths of Alfita, Teressia, and Yarni are not in vain. She calls them 'martyrs' because their deaths have brought unity to the Christian churches in Poso and their lives encouraged the Christians to be strong in the faith. Several suspects have been arrested in the Christian school girl beheadings, but just a week after those brutal murders, two other Christian girls were shot by snipers (See *Prayer Alert 46*). Tensions remain high here in Poso. But, so far, Christians are remaining true to their faith. They're responding to these violent tragedies in a spirit of forgiveness and restraint, by 'turning the other cheek.' CWNNews.com *Pray for the Christians in Poso that they will remain strong in their faith in a spirit of forgiveness.*

More attacks against Indonesian Christians

In Indonesia there've been two more attacks against Christians on the island of Sulawesi. Two men on motorcycles shot a husband and wife as they left a church service on November 19th. The couple survived the attack, but the woman is in critical condition. A day earlier, one woman died after men with machetes assaulted her and two others. It all happened in the same region where three Christian girls were beheaded last month. No suspects have been arrested in the most recent attacks. www.cbn.com *Our prayers are urgently needed to support our brothers and sisters in Christ asking the Lord to protect them.*

Christian leaders call for partnership in Middle-East reconciliatory ministry

A host of top Christian leaders gathered in London's Westminster Chapel Monday Nov. 21st, to inform people and to call for prayerful support of the works of The Foundation for Reconciliation in the Middle-East (FRME). The FRME is an organisation being largely led by Canon Andrew White, who has worked in the Middle-East region since before the Gulf War. The organisation is the only evangelical body in the world, which is running both the religious track of the Middle-East Peace Process, as well as working on the complex search for peace in Iraq. In addition to this, the organisation runs the Israeli Palestinian Institute of Peace, and is at the forefront of peace making in Iraq with the Iraqi Institute of Peace. In addition to the FRME's political and diplomatic work, it is also running one of the largest churches in Baghdad, as well as supporting the evangelical church in Gaza. www.christiantoday.com *Let us remember FRME and keep their various initiatives in our prayers.*

Churches and Christian homes torched by mob in Pakistan

The Christian community in Sangla Hill village in the province of Punjab, Pakistan, came under attack from a crowd of angry Muslim extremists on 12th November, following a false allegation of desecrating a Qur'an. At least three churches were set on fire as well as several Christian homes, a Christian girls' school, hostel and other Christian premises. Eye-witnesses report that between 2,000 to 5,000 angry Muslims, armed with sticks, rods, axes and kerosene or other inflammable agents, marched on Sangla Hill, chanting slogans and burning Christian property. Many of the Christians fled for their lives. According to one church leader, at least some of the rioters were brought in on buses. The attack lasted two to three hours, during which time there was no police intervention to stop the violence. www.barnabusfund.org *Pray for the Christian community at Sangla Hill village as they begin to rebuild their homes and society. Pray that they will be protected from further violence. Thank the Lord for the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim leaders who have joined with Christian leaders to condemn this violence.*

Pakistan Christians under siege - believers hold day of prayer after violence

While Christians worldwide were observing the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, some Pakistani Christians were under siege by Islamic extremists at Sangala Hill, Pakistan. The All Pakistan Minorities Alliance (APMA) reported in a news release that Christian churches, schools, a convent, Bibles and other religious materials were burned. On Nov. 17, APMA reported, Pakistani Christians observed a "black day" and a day of prayer to protest the attack. All Christian schools were closed throughout Pakistan, and black flags were hoisted on Christian houses as a symbol of protest. In some Pakistani cities, APMA reported, there were protests and in many other cities prayers gatherings were held to mourn and pray. At the site of incident in Sangala Hill, local Christians prayed in front of burnt Presbyterian and Catholic Churches. Believers spent the day in prayer and mourning, "with Christian women wailing and men praying tearfully, wearing black band around their arms as a sign of protest. Some people even put ashes of burnt Holy Bibles on their heads to mourn." Many believers praying in these burnt-out buildings were grief-stricken. www.assistnews.net *Continue to prayer for the Christians in Pakistan that the Lord will keep them from harm and hear their prayers. Pray for the Government that they will be given wisdom on how to rule justly in a land of diverse faiths.*

Tearfund launches appeal as food crisis worsens in Southern Africa

An emergency appeal has been launched Thursday by Tearfund for funds to provide food aid to the more than 11 million people throughout the southern regions of Africa facing acute food shortages. Tearfund's partners in the area have warned that the humanitarian crisis will worsen in the coming months if the international community does not act now. According to the UN World Food Programme the worst hit countries are Malawi, with 4.6 million in need of food aid, Zambia at 1.7 million, and Zimbabwe at around 3 to 5 million people facing severe food shortages. Other countries also affected by an impending food shortage are Mozambique, Lesotho and Swaziland. "In the southern district of Chikwawa where we are working it has reached crisis proportions," said Director of Relief and Development for Tearfund partner Living Waters denomination in Malawi, Victor Mughogho. "In some places as many as 70 per cent of households do not have enough food." Mr Mughogho said: "How they will survive in the coming months we do not know. "We urgently need the support of people in the UK for funds but also for prayer. The people of Malawi are not sitting around waiting for help. They want to solve their own problems; it is just that their level of vulnerability is too high." www.christiantoday.com *Pray that those who have plenty will remember the millions who do not!*

PRAISE REPORTS

Boiler Room of prayer launched at Liverpool's 'Strawberry Field'

John Lennon could never have 'Imagined' what has happened to the Strawberry Field children's home in Liverpool, England, immortalized by The Beatles 40 years ago, since it officially closed its doors back in May 2005. An enterprising venture in prayer among young people is revitalizing the site in Woolton, Liverpool, made famous when John Lennon wrote the hit song "Strawberry Fields Forever" after playing there as a child. The building has just re-opened its doors as 24-7 Prayer's Liverpool 'Boiler Room', a "hothouse of prayer", operated in association with the Salvation Army. Strawberry Fields now houses eight prayer rooms of different shapes, sizes and themes, including a Global room, a Liverpool room, and the 'Tabernacle.' There's also a chill out/drop in area, and studio art space. <http://www.boiler-rooms.com> *May this new hothouse of prayer bring many blessings to Liverpool.*

Louis Palau speaks at packed-out church in Beijing

The Christian Post reports that Evangelist Luis Palau "preached to local Chinese believers in Beijing on Sunday at an evening service that followed an earlier morning service with President Bush. His 40 minutes of passion to win souls to Christ resonated among the overflow audience at Gangwashi Church." Palau had been invited by the White House to join President Bush's entourage. "We're honoured that the President would ask us to join him in worship, particularly during his China visit" said Palau. "I've been so encouraged by the receptiveness and hospitality of the Chinese people, and it's an absolute blessing to join the President at worship services with our Chinese friends." www.breakingchristiannews.com *Pray that Louis' words will bare much fruit and praise God for this and other opportunities we are given to share His word.*

Salvation Army 'Warriors' pray in Canadian 'War Room'

"It's pretty much a miracle that it is still going strong." According to a report in Christian Week, for a small band of Salvation Army prayer warriors in the poverty-ridden area of Vancouver, British Columbia known as Downtown Eastside, a round-the-clock prayer vigil that was supposed to last a week is still going strong 20 months later. Using Isaiah 61:4 as a biblical promise, captain Stephen Court (who leads the Corp's 614 in Vancouver, B.C.) says, "It's the hub of everything that's going on in our authentic little Christian community that we're trying to cultivate down here." The "War Room" was first opened in February 2004 in response to a challenge to be part of a Salvation Army prayer wave across Canada. Each participating church dedicated an entire week to non-stop prayer. Today, about 60 or 70 people are involved. www.breakingchristiannews.com *Praise God for this 'miracle' and may the Lord bless their endeavours.*

LOOKING AHEAD

1 December: *Global AIDS Day2Pray* The annual international day of action on HIV/AIDS The Global AIDS Day2Pray is a day for prayer and remembrance of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. GAPP, Churches Together and our global partners are mobilizing local churches, on a citywide, regional and national basis to participate in united prayer for the global AIDS pandemic. Local churches are setting aside 6 minutes of their Sunday Service on either November 27th or December 4th, the Sunday immediately preceding or following World AIDS Day for prayer and awareness. GAPP is making available FREE downloadable resources to all churches who register for the Global AIDS Day2Pray www.globalaidsprayer.org

3 December: *International Day of Disabled Persons* Initiated by the UN in 1984 to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. The theme of the Day is based on the goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities. <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disiddp.htm>

18-25 January 2006: *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.* Contact: Churches Together for Britain and Ireland (CTBI). Resources available. Website: www.ctbi.org.uk

30 January - 2 February 2006: Belfast. *Kingdom Come ... more than words.* An event jointly organised by the Evangelical Alliance and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, steered by senior church leaders from a range of denominations, and geared for those who have a heart for reaching Northern Ireland. www.kingdomcomeireland.com