



PRAYER ALERT...



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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Obey UK law, Iran ex-leader urges

UK Muslims should obey British law as well as accepting the obligations of citizenship, the former president of Iran has urged. Mohammad Khatami, during a three-day visit to Britain, told BBC News the UK was right to fear radicalism. But it had added to the problem by getting involved in Iraq, he said. Mr Khatami, the most senior Iranian to visit the UK since the 1979 Islamic revolution, said his mission was to remove barriers between East and West. His attempts at moderation and reform in Iran were ended by the election of the hard line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last year. But, in an interview with BBC Radio 4's Today programme, he said he was still working to tackle extremism wherever it existed. The former president said his mission was to break down barriers between the great religions and civilisations of East and West.

Pray: that barriers to understanding will be dismantled and that all UK citizens will work for peace. (Eph 2:14)

More: http://article.wn.com/view/2006/11/02/Obey_UK_law_Iran_exleader_urges/

■ Dissidents 'behind bomb attacks'

Dissident republicans have been blamed for firebomb attacks on a number of stores in Belfast. The Homebase store on Boucher Road was destroyed in one attack, while nearby Smyth's toystore was also targeted. That blaze was brought under control. JJB Sports in Anne Street in the city was badly damaged in a third attack. Tony Blair has condemned the attacks. NI Secretary Peter Hain said it was an attempt by dissident republicans to derail the St Andrew's Agreement. The prime minister said: 'The best response to such acts of violence is to make sure that the St Andrew's Agreement is fully implemented, that we get the institutions back up and running and that the peace process thrives.' The firebomb attacks came ahead of a meeting between the Northern Ireland political parties and Chancellor Gordon Brown in London on Wednesday about a so-called 'peace dividend'. (see also: Prayer Alert 4006)

Pray: for the upholding of the St Andrew's Agreement by all concerned, and pray against violent attempts to derail it.

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/northern_ireland/6105290.stm

■ Peers reject faith school quotas

Peers have voted down a plan to make newly established faith schools in England take up to a quarter of pupils from other religions. The rejection of an amendment to the Education Bill, tabled by Lord Baker, follows the decision by ministers to drop similar plans last week. Peers voted by a margin of more than three to one against the proposal. Ex-Tory minister Lord Baker said the government had 'changed tack' under pressure from the Catholic Church. Peers voted by 119 to 37 against the former education secretary's amendment. He had claimed his proposal would promote 'social cohesion'. Earlier this

month Lord Baker dropped an amendment to the bill, calling for a quota, after the government promised to introduce similar plans. (See also: Prayer Alert 3806)

Pray: that this strong vote in the Lords against Lord Baker's amendment will be upheld in the Commons.

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6099156.stm

■ Abortion time limit cut rejected

MPs have voted against a bill calling for the legal time limit for abortions to be cut from 24 weeks to 21 weeks. Conservative MP Nadine Dorries, who introduced the bill, had argued that a foetus may feel pain from 21 weeks. Ms Dorries also wanted a ten day 'cooling-off' period between a request for an abortion and it being performed, for the woman to receive counselling. All the main parties consider the issue of abortion, of which there were 186,400 in England and Wales last year, to be one on which individual MPs should have a free vote, rather than following a party line. Department of Health statistics show that 89% of abortions in 2005 were carried out before the woman was 13 weeks pregnant, with 67% performed at under 10 weeks. Ms Dorries said the usual argument for reducing the time limit centred on viability - the likelihood of the foetus surviving outside of the womb - which is considered to be 23 weeks.

Pray: that God's view of the sanctity of human life is upheld in all these deliberations. (Ps 139:15-16)

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/6099982.stm

■ Father of Damilola encourages black Churches to combat violence

The father of Damilola Taylor, who was fatally stabbed 6 years ago, will call on Britain's black churches to play a greater role in combating violence. Richard Taylor, Damilola's father and founder of the Damilola Taylor Trust will speak at Christian Life City (CLC) based in Hackney, east London, on 5 November. Bishop Wayne Malcolm, the leader and founder of CLC, commented: 'It is very important that churches give their support to people like Mr Taylor and his family who have lost a child due to mindless killing. It is admirable that despite his tragic experience, Mr Taylor has founded a charity in memory of his son that is taking a stand and trying to rid our culture of the circumstances that produces young people with a penchant for crime and violence.' The Damilola Taylor Trust, which aims to help victims of crime aged 25 and under, was founded by Richard and Gloria Taylor in 2001, on the first anniversary of their son's death.

Pray: that Richard Taylor's message will gather vital support across all Churches against violent crime among the young.

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/father.of.damilola.encourages.black.churches.to.combat.violence/8181.htm>

■ YMCA urges more Government action to tackle youth offending

YMCA England has responded to figures released by the Youth Justice Board last week which showed that the number of young people in custody in England and Wales has reached crisis point, with 3,350 young people being held. 'These figures are a wake up call to the government that more needs to be done to tackle youth offending,' said Angela Sarkis, national secretary of YMCA England. 'In all the furore about prison numbers we have forgotten the need to stop young people getting into trouble in the first place,' she said. 'It is hard graft to work with young people at risk of offending and one which YMCAs do every day all over the country.' Sarkis said that fewer young people would be caught up in crime if more were given support in their communities as she stressed the need for more prevention measures. 'If the right support isn't in place for young offenders, custody can become a revolving door to a life of crime.'

Pray: that government, churches and communities will be seriously moved by this crisis alert. (Ezek 22:30)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/ymca.urges.more.government.action.to.tackle.youth.offending/8178.htm>

EUROPE

■ Georgia has free trade talks in Brussels

Giorgi Baramidze, Georgia's state minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration, has been meeting in Brussels this week with EU representatives and NATO officials. Baramidze has also met with some EU ambassadors. Baramidze said in an interview with RFE/RL that his most important discussions centred on the possibility of establishing free trade between Georgia and the EU. Baramidze is among the first Georgian officials to visit EU headquarters in Brussels following the recent adoption of a European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) 'action plan' for Georgia. Baramidze said the ENP action plan sets out clear priorities where the European Union and Georgia must concentrate on their relationship it is important for the European Union and Georgia to develop a closer relationship. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili has made the point that the EU could make life much easier for Georgia with regard to gaining greater access to the Turkish market. Baramidze goes on to say Georgia will be 'ready for NATO membership' in 2008, but adds that it will be up to the alliance to decide when to expand.

Pray: that Georgia would lead the way for routes of free trade to be opened that have previously been closed.

More: <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2006/10/932f77f7-983f-4501-a662-d1ded914d0ec.html>

■ German leader set for Blair talks

German Chancellor Angela Merkel is due to meet UK Prime Minister Tony Blair in London for talks on Germany's presidency of the EU and G8 in 2007. Ms Merkel will travel to the UK on Friday where she will discuss European and international policy issues with Mr Blair, the German government said. The two leaders will also discuss bilateral subjects, officials said. Germany assumes the rotating presidency of the G8 in 2007 and takes over the EU presidency on 1 January

for six months. Mrs Merkel has previously said her government will be 'very ambitious' in trying to revive the European Union constitution in 2007.

Pray: for the discussions today between Mr Blair and Ms Merkel that the Lord will guide them in their roles as leaders.

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6110474.stm>

WORLDWIDE

■ Opposition in Kyrgyzstan is to hold demonstration demanding the removal of the country's president.

The opposition in Kyrgyzstan is to hold a demonstration demanding the removal of the country's president. Because a number of demands had not been met - including the removal of senior officials accused of corruption - politicians now wanted Kurmanbek Bakiyev to go.' Bakiyev told the opposition that violence in Thursday's rally would not be tolerated. 'We have enough forces and I will not allow violence. The authorities are accused of deploying elite troops from Bakiyev's support base in the south in preparation for the rally, and planning to provoke violence. It could be a regional confrontation, for the Kyrgyz capital saw large-scale riots following the March 2005 overthrow of Askar Akayev, the former president who fled to Russia. Bakiyev was elected months later, but his presidency has been marred by high-profile killings, prison riots and battles for control of lucrative businesses.

Pray: that democracy in central Asia would flourish and that corrupt practices would be wiped out. (Ps.14)

More: <http://www.aljazeera.co.uk/>

■ Israel: opposition to Gay Pride March escalates

Opposition to the Gay Pride March is gaining steam as the scheduled date approaches. Leading rabbis and Jewish spiritual leaders representing the entire ideological gamut have upped the ante, unleashing caustic rhetoric and doomsday prophecies of violence, bloodshed and even murder if the parade is allowed to take place. Rabbi Moshe Sternbuch, the head of the ultra-Orthodox and anti-Zionist Eda Haredit rabbinic court, has blamed homosexuals' 'obscenity and promiscuity in the Holy Land' for Israel's loss in the second war in Lebanon, while the moderate Rabbi Ya'acov Meidan, one of the heads of the Har Etzion Yeshiva in Alon Shvut, attacked the idea of a gay pride parade in a scathing opinion piece entitled 'Stopping the parade of abomination.' This week, unidentified activists distributed a pamphlet in Jerusalem that promised a NIS 20,000 bounty for killing a homosexual.

Pray: for this march to be stopped, and that the outcry that it has caused will be used by God to bring his people back to their true faith, uncorrupted by worldly standards. (Romans 1:21-32; 1Corinthians 6:17,18)

More: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1162378307542&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

■ 300 Chinese Christians Protest by Sitting Demonstration

A 15 day demonstration involving 300 Christians from a Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) church in Gansu province is in progress. The Christians are standing against the government's occupation of their building and are sitting silently at their church property requesting the return of it to the church. Recently the local government sold the property to a developer for 17 million RMB, in response to which the Christians started the sit-down demonstration. Also, on October 20, the local police arrested more than 10 Christians, including three Singaporeans, in Qingshui Town. Most Christians arrested were released; five of the believers are still in detention. Signs indicate that they will be prosecuted or sent to the Re-education labour camp directly. These five Christians have done nothing harmful to either the society or the country.

Pray: for the return of the occupied property to its owner, and for release of brother Liu, brother Ouyang Liang, brother Li Baoming, brother Tan Defu, and brother Lou Yuanqi. (Psalm 20:5)

More: <http://www.crosswalk.com/news/religiontoday/1443113.html>

■ Jaffna in Sri Lanka faces humanitarian catastrophe

Closure of A9, the only trunk road to Jaffna from rest of Sri Lanka, more than 10 weeks ago, has halted the flow of essential food provisions, and medical supplies to Jaffna Peninsula, and if urgent steps are not taken, the residents will face a severe humanitarian crisis, civil society leaders in Jaffna warned Monday. Jaffna residents face malnutrition and imminent starvation; and shortage of medical supplies and doctors, have wreaked havoc with the peninsula's fragile health care system, hospital and Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) sources said. The child specialists attached to the Jaffna Teaching hospital warned that many of the children in the Peninsula are affected by malnutrition because the provision sent by the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) is inadequate and only could fulfil 25% of the entire need of nutrition. Inefficiency of the Government bureaucracy and the rampant corruption in the supply chain also may be exacerbating the situation.

Pray: that the corruption in the food chain would be shut down and that the trunk road would be opened. (Psalm 8:7-10)

More: <http://www.worldevangelicalalliance.com/news/view.htm?id=748>

■ Russia keen to help Egypt get nuclear power

Russia will use a visit by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that began Wednesday to pitch for lucrative contracts to help Egypt launch an atomic energy programme. Egypt has ordered studies into building nuclear power stations after Mubarak said in September nuclear energy was a cheap and clean energy source and called for national dialogue on the issue. Russia's state atomic energy agency, Rosatom, said it was having preliminary discussions with Egypt. Russia confirmed they were interested in Egypt's nuclear stations, and expect that Egypt will announce an international tender and that, in competitive conditions, Russia will be successful. A Rosatom spokesman said the Egyptian government had asked the

agency's export unit, to submit a presentation. The agency is building reactors in China , India, the Bushehr reactor in Iran. It has also landed a contract to build a new nuclear plant in Bulgaria.

Pray: that this growing global market for nuclear power will be treated with restraint - and the only great cloud of power over this world will be the covering of God.(Ps.96:3-6)

More: <http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/world.aspx?ID=BD4A308237>

■ The Human Face of the Drought

Australia is facing one of its worst droughts in history and the churches are calling for prayer, a call which, for some, is too difficult. On my wall is a motto: 'Impossibilities can be attended to at once – Miracles may take a little longer.' In this situation, we need a miracle, not sermons and preaching about others making mistakes, but fellowship in prayer! At Yass the church representatives called for a Day of Prayer for Rain on November 26. They appealed to government officials, who explained it was not their responsibility. Church leaders said they did not have time to arrange such an event and, after all, they do not have the finances for such publicity. The NSW Council of Churches have responded by contacting all their church affiliates and shared the challenge with them.

Pray: for God's mercy on Australia and that the heaven above this continent would open both spiritually and naturally, releasing Holy Spirit blessings and the much needed refreshing of the land; also that the government will get behind the November 26 Day of Prayer. (Psalm 63:1,2)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/s06100193.htm>

■ India and Britain work to prevent attacks

Indian and British experts will share intelligence and devise ways to better protect their public transport systems from terrorist attacks the two countries said on Thursday. The cooperation is part of a counter-terrorism agreement reached between Prime Minister Tony Blair and his Indian counterpart, Manmohan Singh, when the two leaders held talks in London last month. Both countries have faced some of the most deadly attacks on public transport systems in recent times 'We have agreed to a meeting of our experts in the area of protecting critical national infrastructure such as mass transit systems and other assets,' Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee told a joint news conference with his British counterpart, Margaret Beckett. Indian officials said they also hoped to learn from London's success in foiling a plot to bomb trans-Atlantic airliners in August. Cooperation will include intelligence sharing and the use of technology to prevent such attacks.

Pray: that there will be more unity between countries in the global stand against terrorism and that God will lead them along his paths in every decision that is made. (Proverbs 5:21-23)

More: http://today.reuters.co.uk/news/articlenews.aspx?type=topNews&storyID=2006-11-02T085133Z_01_DEL14680_RTRUKOC_0_UK-SECURITY-INDIA-BRITAIN.xml

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Churches in the UK attribute growth to the Holy Spirit

Sixty-five percent of Christians in expanding churches in the UK attribute their growth to movements in the Holy Spirit, according to a recent survey of over 2000 Christians conducted by Premier Radio for The Church Army. The survey found growing churches' members also believed in strong leadership, evangelical outreach and youth work. This is in strong contrast to those churches in decline where an increasingly secular British society, ageing congregations and lack of youth work are considered to be behind their falling numbers.

Praise: God for this move of the Holy Spirit resulting in church growth and opportunities for outreach.

More: http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art_pf.html?ID=3197

■ General Sir Richard Dannatt has talked openly about his deep faith

The head of the British Army has spoken of his belief that God saved his life three times, prompting him to become a Christian. Two of General Sir Richard Dannatt's near-death encounters took place in Northern Ireland, where his efforts to save the life of one of his men earned the Military Cross. The third occurred in Germany. It is the second time this month that the Chief of the General Staff has talked openly about his deep faith and comes less than three weeks after he sparked a political storm by saying that the presence of British troops in Iraq was making the situation worse. His latest comments are contained in Candles in the Darkness, a compilation of recollections from Christians serving in the RAF and Army. He said that it was his belief that God first intervened to spare his life in 1973, amid rioting in Belfast.

Praise: God for Sir Richard's commitment to God and his open testimony.

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/10/30/wirq530.xml>

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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