



PRAYER ALERT...



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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Gambling Act 'will create child addicts'

A generation of young people could become gambling addicts because ministers have failed to impose any age limit on low-stake slot machines, says Prof Mark Griffiths, one of the world's leading academic authorities on gambling, warning on the decision to allow children of any age to play certain categories of fruit machines. In a formal submission to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Prof Griffiths said there was overwhelming evidence that adolescent gambling could lead teenagers into a downward spiral of drink and drug abuse, truancy and crime. In his submission to the Government's consultation on gaming machine rules, Prof Griffiths, professor of gambling at Nottingham Trent University, said there was strong evidence that 'young people are clearly more vulnerable to the negative consequences of gambling than adults. Education can be affected and [teenagers] may have a criminal record as most problem gamblers have to resort to illegal behaviour to feed their addiction.'

Pray: [that this addictive trend which could ensnare so many young victims would be reversed before too late.](#)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/11/07/ngamble07.xml>

■ Gang convicted of racist murder

Three men have been jailed for life for murdering schoolboy Kriss Donald in a horrific race hate attack. During the trial, prosecutor Mark Stewart QC described the killing as 'an appalling crime of inhumanity against a defenceless boy.' Kriss was snatched near his home in a random act of racially motivated revenge. He was taken on a terrifying 200-mile journey across Scotland before being driven to a secluded spot where he was left for dead. Expert witnesses said they believed the teenager was still alive as his body burned. Judge Lord Uist told the three that the 'savagely and barbaric nature of this notorious crime has rightly shocked and appalled the public. He was selected as your victim only because he was white and walking in a certain part of the Pollokshields area of Glasgow when you sought out a victim'.

Pray: [that Kriss Donald's family would know God's solace, and that his murderers would come to know Jesus.](#)

More: <http://www.itv.com/news/d6a091ead443b7e668a88c00a967483d.html>

■ Move to overhaul sentencing rules

Judges in England and Wales could be given greater discretion to decide the sentence tariffs for potentially dangerous criminals. It follows anger over the case of Craig Sweeney, who was told he could be released after five years of a life sentence for kidnap and sexual assault. A consultation document outlining the overhaul was published on Thursday. Under rules introduced two years ago by then Home Secretary David Blunkett, non-violent offenders are automatically freed halfway through their sentences, to be supervised in the community by probation officers. For those sentenced to life terms

- apart from in murder cases - the 'tariff' of time they must actually serve is arrived at by halving the equivalent determinate sentence. In the Sweeney case, the 24-year-old offender - who kidnapped his child victim from her home in Rumney, Cardiff, in January - was given a sentence discount of one third for entering an early guilty plea.

Pray: that God's wisdom and justice will prevail and that the innocent will be protected.

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6131182.stm>

■ Church leaders defend Christ in Christmas

The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster have introduced a new think-tank report challenging the ongoing secularist campaign to drive Christ out of Christmas. The release of *Doing God: A Future for Faith* in the Public Square by new think-tank Theos coincides with the release of the Royal Mail's Christ-less Christmas stamp collection earlier this week. The Church of England expressed its regret at the noticeable absence of a Christian theme in the stamps which feature instead Santa Claus, a reindeer, snowmen and a Christmas tree. The *Doing God* report throws its criticism in particular at 'the annual rash of winterval stories' that have appeared at Christmas time over the years as councils attempt to rename Christmas as part of a trend towards politically correct public symbolism that ends up as 'insipid and uninspiring', *The Times* reported.

Pray: for every Christian to openly affirm their faith in Jesus this Christmas. (Is 40: 9)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.leaders.defend.christ.in.christmas/8239.htm>

■ Church of Ireland initiative challenges new thinking on reconciliation

A groundbreaking initiative set up by the Church of Ireland to foster political reconciliation in Northern Ireland is going from strength to strength as it launches a series of public forums designed to 'provoke thinking that goes beyond the predictable'. That is the hope, at least, of the Church of Ireland's Hard Gospel Project set up in 2005 to challenge the 'whatever you say, say nothing' approach that previously dominated public dialogue in addressing key issues affecting the wellbeing of communities in Northern Ireland. The *Beyond the Box* series aims to bring discourse 'beyond the rhetoric; beyond the stale debates; beyond the conventions; beyond the box'. The first seminar in the series will be held on Monday 13 November on the theme of 'Where there is no vision... leadership in the Protestant/unionist communities'.

Pray: that the first seminar will launch wholehearted ongoing support for this challenging thinking on reconciliation. (Prov 29:18 AMP)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.of.ireland.initiative.challenges.new.thinking.on.reconciliation/8228.htm>

■ Micah Challenge calls on world leaders to account for MDGs progress

'Blow the Whistle' is a major campaign to be launched in January 2007 by Micah Challenge calling world leaders to account for progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It will draw attention to the lack of sufficient progress in fulfilling the commitments made by world leaders in 2000 to halve poverty by 2015. The campaign is an international Christian response to the injustice of global poverty which in the UK seeks to build on the momentum created by the Make Poverty History movement. A Blow the Whistle event in London is being planned for May which will precede the 2007 G8 summit in Germany (6 to 8 June), which aims to be a public and powerful demonstration in which tens of thousands are expected to blow the half time whistle to halve poverty. Rev Joel Edwards, General Director of the Evangelical Alliance UK, said: 'Our government along with 188 others around the world, made a promise, a covenant, to the poor. We want to hold our government accountable to do what they have said.'

Pray: that governments and citizens will be challenged by God's compassionate heart for the poor and work for the reduction of global poverty. (Deut 15:11)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/micah.challenge.calls.on.world.leaders.to.account.for.mdgs.progress/8243.htm>

■ All-white Scottish parliament 'could spark despair and racial violence'

Scotland's race relations chief has warned that the continued lack of Muslim and black representation at Holyrood risks creating a country riven by racial tensions and violence on a par with last year's Paris riots. Although it is expected that Scotland will elect its first Asian MSP after the polls next year - the SNP's Bashir Ahmad - Jarvis called having just one black, Asian or Chinese member of parliament 'purely tokenism'. Since 1999, when the Scottish parliament was created, Holyrood has never had a non-white MSP. Jarvis said Scotland's ethnic minority communities were growing at such a rate that 2001 census figures showing a 2% proportion of the population were 'woefully out of date'. She believed the figure had now more than doubled, and that in cities such as Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee ethnic minorities were approaching 9% of the population. Without institutions that reflected all its people, she said, Scotland faced becoming a society that was 'fragmented' and 'unstable'.

Pray: for godly preparations for next year's election, that would result in a just representation of all ethnic groups, who'll also maintain respect for each others' integrity.

More: <http://www.sundayherald.com/58922>

EUROPE

■ Italy government seeks veil ban

Italy is to put forward draft new legislation to ban the Islamic veil that covers the face. The niqab and the burka have aroused concerns, not least because Italy has a law - intended to foil terrorism - against wearing masks in public. Vice-premier Francesco Rutelli says current laws are insufficient. 'We need a new law, one that respects people's rights in our

society but at the same time makes it quite clear that it's not acceptable for people to cover their faces.' The debate mirrors that in France, Holland and Britain, where politicians have described the niqab as a mark of separation. Romano Prodi, the Italian prime minister, has already set out his position. 'You can't cover your face, you must be seen,' he said recently. 'It's important for society and for integration.'

Pray: that the debate will not produce further tension and social unrest. (Amos 5: 24)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/6125302.stm>

WORLDWIDE

■ Pakistan probes Al Qaeda links in deadly suicide attack

Pakistan on Thursday probed Al Qaeda links to a suicide bombing that killed 42 recruits at an army base near the Afghan border, as Britain and the United States expressed outrage over the attack. A bomber disguised in a shawl ran onto a parade ground where some 200 recruits were gathered for morning drills and blew himself up at the Dargai training camp in the northwest of the country, witnesses said. President Pervez Musharraf condemned Wednesday's attack and reiterated his government's 'resolve and conviction to eliminate terrorism' from the country. However the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), an alliance of six hardline religious parties, called for Musharraf's resignation over the incident. Senior MMA leader Khurshid Ahmad described the attack as 'a very serious national calamity.' 'Musharraf's government and his tactics have totally failed and the only honourable course left for him is to resign,' he said.

Pray: for a righteous government in Pakistan, with people who work in line with God's purposes for the area. (Prov.10:29)

More: http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/subcontinent/2006/November/subcontinent_November315.xml§ion=subcontinent

■ Jamaica's trafficking in persons being addressed

Government's initiatives addressing trafficking in persons is bearing fruit, with 12 convictions and investigations to date, which have resulted in fines totalling \$175,000 and four deportations. 'Investigations are producing results and enabling a profiling and identification of individuals or groups involved in the crime of trafficking in persons at the national level, including local club operators and businessmen working in tandem with individuals or networks abroad, who scout and entrap female workers apparently to work in the entertainment industry,' Mr. Buchanan said. He also mentioned that 'the actions of the Trafficking in Persons Unit of the JCF have resulted in the scaling down of operations or closure of some of these facilities'. Jamaica's programme to prevent, suppress and punish persons involved in trafficking in persons, is very comprehensive and involves the training of personnel in the legal system, including law enforcement officers on threats to border security, methods of forging or altering passports and emerging trends and in trafficking in persons activities.

Pray: that more governments across the world would take similar initiatives to block the present day global slave trade. (Is.25:3-5)

More: http://news.caribseek.com/Jamaica/article_42297.shtml

■ Watchdog adds Egypt to Internet blacklist

Journalists' rights group Reporters Without Borders has added Egypt to its list of the worst suppressors of freedom of expression on the Internet and removed neighbouring Libya, as it found no Web censorship there. There are 13 states regularly criticized by human rights groups, such as Cuba, Myanmar, Iran and Turkmenistan. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has shown a worrying authoritarianism as concerns the Internet. Internet use is one of the freedoms monitored by the rights group surveying civil liberties around the world. RSF said three bloggers were arrested in Egypt in June and detained for two months for saying they were in favour of democratic reform, while others had been harassed. It also expressed concern at an Egyptian court ruling that said an Internet site could be shut down if it posed a threat to national security.

Pray: for global freedom of press, injustices revealed for what they are, and not cloaked in official speak.

More: http://article.wn.com/view/2006/11/08/Watchdog_adds_Egypt_to_Internet_blacklist/

■ Prayer for persecuted church globally on November 12th

Christians across the globe will take part in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. The focus will be on those who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ. 'In 1996, several ministries that work with persecuted Christians came together to create a day where the Church could focus their prayers on the Persecuted Church,' said Dana Simons, Co-Founder, Greater Calling Ministry, about the inception of the day, now an annual occurrence. 'The number one request from persecuted Christians is for prayer. They are encouraged when they hear that we are praying for them.' She said that the prayers are for all of those people living where they are not allowed to profess their faith in Jesus Christ. 'North Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia are where Christians are especially persecuted, to the point of losing their lives if they are found practicing their Christian religion,' Simons explained.

Pray: that many would hear and be a part of this initiative (Is.58:6)

More: <http://www.crosswalk.com/news/religiontoday/1444923.html>

■ Syria attacks UN report of arms traffic to Lebanon

In the United Nations on Nov 8 Syria accused a senior U.N. official of falsely claiming that Lebanon had reported the recent smuggling of arms into the country from Syria in violation of Security Council resolutions. Syrian U.N. Ambassador Bashar

Jaafari dismissed as 'untrue' an Oct 30 statement on alleged smuggling by Terje Roed-Larsen, the top U.N. diplomat on Lebanese ties with Syria. The envoy's report set off alarms in the Middle East because it bolstered Israeli charges that Syria was smuggling arms to Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon, in violation of the Aug 14 cease-fire ending the 34-day Israeli-Hezbollah war. Israel has used the charges to justify surveillance flights over southern Lebanon which also violate the cease-fire on grounds it needs to monitor activity on the ground. Roed-Larsen, briefing the Security Council and later speaking with reporters on Oct. 30 said Lebanese officials had regularly reported to him that arms were being smuggled into the country from Syria.

Pray: for accuracy and truth in statements relating to matters of extreme political sensitivity and for the peace of Jerusalem. (Ps.122:6) Also, continue to remember the inflamed situation in Jerusalem, re the current Gay Pride March. (Prayer Alert 4206)

More: <http://today.reuters.com/News/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=N08297661>

■ Taliban issues jihad warning to Canada

A Taliban spokesman on Monday pledged to wage a renewed jihad against Canadian troops throughout the winter, saying Canadian forces have broken their promise to redevelop Afghanistan by killing innocent civilians. He said if Canadian troops want to avoid casualties 'the best way is to stop their operations.' The Commander of NATO in Afghanistan, has accused the Taliban of deliberately enmeshing themselves in civilian populations to exacerbate casualties. One tribal elder in a hard-hit southern village said his people had little choice but to acquiesce to Taliban demands. 'NATO is telling us not to give shelter to Taliban,' said a tribal elder. 'This is not our duty. The government and NATO have to stop Taliban. We don't have weapons to stop armed people. If they ask us for shelter we don't have any options.' It is widely believed Taliban insurgents prey on the tribal honour code, known as Pashtunwali, which dictates Pashtun people must open their homes to guests.

Pray: that the cultural norms would be overridden by God's Holy Spirit and that the people would be free from a spirit of fear and death.

More: <http://www.canada.com/reginaleaderpost/news/story.html?id=f72658f4-84dc-40ee-a889-8ef924d97187&p=2>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Mega-mosque falls foul of planning laws

Plans to build Britain's first mega-mosque in east London have been thrown into doubt amid opposition from local Muslims and news that the radical group behind the project has fallen foul of planning laws. Tablighi Jamaat, an Islamic group which each year sends hundreds of young British Muslims to fundamentalist religious schools in Pakistan, wants to build the huge mosque in Newham to hold between 40,000 and 70,000 followers, depending on planning permission. The proposal has led to a unique coalition of local Muslims and fundamentalist Christians who say that two of the 7/7 bombers attended Tablighi Jamaat mosques. Counter-terrorism sources say it is more likely that radicalised young Muslims are attracted to Tablighi Jamaat than the other way round. So far, 2,500 Muslims living near the mosque site have signed a petition against the plan. Asif Shakoor, chairman of the Sunni Friends of Newham, said: 'It is radicalising the younger generation. We have to make a stand.' (See Prayer Alert 3806)

Pray: God that extremism has been thwarted through just means and a common stand by Christians and Muslims. (Mic 6: 8)

More: http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1939889,00.html

■ Christian TV programmes planned by Iraqi Christians

As the violence towards Christians in Iraq escalates, Arab Vision is drawing up plans to produce Iraqi TV programmes by early 2007. Programmes made by Iraqi Christians in their own Iraqi Arabic dialect will focus on sharing the Gospel of peace with their nation, as well as encouraging their own Christian community to cope with the dangers it is facing on a daily basis. 'Iraq has had enough of bombs and wars,' says the International Director of Arab Vision. 'For many Iraqis, Islam has brought mostly violence and war, and more than ever before, they are turning to Christ. Now is the time to spread the Gospel through TV in that land.' Arab Vision's programs are already on a number of satellite stations which can be received in Iraq, and they generate good response from the viewers there. One of them wrote recently: 'I am a man from Iraq. I was Muslim and I converted. I want to know more about God's love.'

Pray: God for this courageous Christian breakthrough in the media and for the many who will be converted as a result.

More: <http://www.inspiremagazine.org.uk/news.aspx?action=view&id=527>

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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