



PRAYER ALERT...



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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Gay rights laws fast-tracked in Northern Ireland, warns LCF

The Lawyers' Christian Fellowship has criticised the UK government for 'rushing through' gay rights laws in Northern Ireland, despite opposition from churches and faith groups. The Northern Ireland Sexual Orientation Regulations (SOR) are due to come before Parliament this week despite Ruth Kelly's recent admission that the government would delay the England, Wales and Scotland SORs by six months to address the 'difficult issues' highlighted by the response of faith groups to the consultation. In light of this postponement, the LCF accused the government of 'rushing through' identical regulations in Northern Ireland by using their direct rule powers while the Northern Ireland Assembly remains suspended. The Northern Ireland SORs will be in force by 1 January, the government has said. 'This means the NI Regulations which have received far less thought and consideration, will set a precedent for the England, Wales and Scotland SORs which are not due to come into force until April 2007.'

Pray: that this legislation for NI will be held back to allow full and fair debate by parliament. (Col.4:1)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/gay.rights.laws.fasttracked.in.northern.ireland.warns.lcf/8437.htm>

■ Nearly 100 MPs join backlash against BA's ban on cross

A powerful army of nearly 100 MPs have joined the growing backlash against British Airways over its decision to ban check-in worker Nadia Eweida from wearing a cross necklace. Miss Eweida, 55, lost her appeal to wear her cross with her uniform to work at Heathrow on Monday. She has been off work for two months over the row. Miss Eweida's case is also being cited as an example of religious oppression at a top-level United Nations conference. A staggering total of 92 MPs - one seventh of the House Commons - from all parties have signed parliamentary motions condemning BA's 'deplorable' ban of Miss Eweida's tiny cross. The list includes serving and former Cabinet Ministers, as well as one Muslim and one Hindu MP. Some have joined Ministers Peter Hain and Ben Bradshaw in threatening to boycott the airline over its 'intransigence'. They added their weight to the Archbishop of York Dr John Sentamu's criticism that BA's policy was 'nonsense' and was ignoring Britain's cultural heritage.

Pray: Praise God for this move and pray that it will lead to BA reversing its decision. (1Cor1:18)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/100.mps.join.backlash.against.bas.ban.on.cross/8455.htm>

■ Bishops warn students over Christian society bans

Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops warned student unions last night that they would be acting illegally if they banned Christian societies from campuses. The move followed decisions by student guilds and associations at three universities, Exeter, Birmingham and Edinburgh, to suspend Christian groups from membership or use of premises on the grounds that their constitutions or meetings are exclusionary and discriminate against non-Christians and particularly gay people. Other university unions, including Heriot-Watt University and some London medical schools, are said to have taken similar action.

A letter signed by the Anglican diocesan bishops of Winchester, Chester, Rochester, Southwell and Nottingham and Lichfield and the Rt Rev Crispian Hollis, Catholic Bishop of Portsmouth, calls for the groups to be reinstated. It says: 'Christian students at many of our universities are facing considerable opposition and discrimination in violation of their rights of freedom of expression, freedom of belief and freedom of association'. The letter adds that 'we believe this to be intolerant and unlawful' and that the Christian unions currently suspended 'should be reinstated with full society rights forthwith'.

Pray: for Christian Unions as they deal with this discrimination that they will continue to stand firm on their principles. (Is41:10)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/religion/Story/0,,1954606,00.html>

■ Action urged over abuse of women

The government is not doing enough to tackle the problems of violence against women in the UK, a coalition of charities has warned. A report by the End Violence Against Women Campaign said government work to combat the problem was 'patchy' and suffered from a lack of resources. The report by the End Violence Against Women Campaign - led by Amnesty - says violence against women includes domestic violence, forced marriage, crimes in the name of honour, rape and sexual assault, trafficking, female genital mutilation, sexual harassment and stalking. The report comes at the same time as a separate one which criticises the government for failing to provide homeless women with the help they need. A survey of 160 single homeless women in England by the charity Crisis found more than 20% had become homeless in their attempts to escape domestic violence.

Pray: that the authorities will take seriously the need to tackle any violence and abuse wherever it occurs.

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6175058.stm>

■ Parents halt school mosque trip

Parents have forced a school trip to a mosque to be abandoned because they did not want their children exposed to a religion that was not their own. A class of 10-year-olds at Atwood Primary, Croydon, south London, were due to tour Croydon Mosque as part of their religious education lessons. Head teacher Alex Clark said some parents did not want their children to experience a religion that was not their own, others thought the pupils were too young and some preferred them to spend time on other subjects. Mr Clark said: 'The withdrawal of a significant minority of pupils unfortunately made continuation of the visit unviable. This was done wholly on financial grounds.'

Pray: that as the current political situation raises issues like this that it will not increase the tension between the faiths. (Prov22:6)

More: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/london/6170028.stm>

■ Dawkins anti-religion school crusade is met with scepticism

The plan by science communicator turned anti-religion campaigner Professor Richard Dawkins to take his crusade into schools has been met with concern and scepticism by some of his peers and allies – and by one leading charity. According to media reports, Professor Dawkins is seeking charitable status for a foundation with the purpose of 'flooding schools with anti-religious literature.' It will attack the teaching of creationism and promote 'rational and scientific enquiry'. However the plan has been described as 'a decidedly mixed bag' and "a blunderbuss approach" by some who otherwise sympathise with Dawkins' non-belief, as well as his commitment to science education. Professor Steven Rose, the distinguished biologist, commented: 'I worry that Richard's view about belief is too simplistic, and so hostile that as a committed secularist myself I am uneasy about it.'

Pray: that this confusion within Dawkins' supporters will lead schools into not accepting his materials. (Ps112:1-2)

More: http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/content/news_syndication/article_061122dawkins.shtml

EUROPE

■ Leading Anglican and Catholic delegations unite in prayer at Sistine Chapel

Anglican and Roman Catholic delegations have gathered in Rome this week for the historic meeting of the Archbishop and the Pope and to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Anglican Centre in Rome. The delegations have visited the Sistine Chapel today, 22 November 2006, for prayers to mark the visit of Archbishop Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966. Cardinal Kaspar and the Archbishop of Canterbury will meet today for 'informal talks' and then worship with the St Egidio community at St Bartholomew's Church, an Anglican Communion statement has announced. Archbishop Rowan Williams addressed a congregation at St Anselmo Church and Religious Community last night, 21 November. Dr Williams has said that modern civilisation needs to discover a proper sense of the values of time, authority and participation if it is to renew its sense of purpose and enable communities to cope with modern pressures.

Pray: that as the leaders join in prayer there will be a uniting of minds that would lead to the areas of disunity being resolved. (Ps133)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/leading.anglican.and.catholic.delegations.unite.in.prayer.at.sistine.chapel/8442.htm>

■ EU unfazed by Tymoshenko warning on Ukraine

Ukraine's new Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych is trying to take his country back into the pre-Orange Revolution era and must be removed, ex-prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko said in Brussels on the second anniversary of the Orange Revolution - but the EU is keeping an open mind on Mr Yanukovych for now. Referring to the country's Soviet-like pre-

revolution leader Leonid Kuchma, Ms Tymoshenko said 'Foreign policy and domestic policy with Yanukovich looks like Kuchma-light, like cigarettes - it is similar to Kuchma but not as dangerous. We are doing all we can not to let Kuchma-light turn into Kuchma-full strength.' Presenting a list of anti-EU moves by the Yanukovich government in the past six months, she predicted that a new Orange coalition in parliament will topple Mr Yanukovich in early elections next year and the constitutional court will transfer power back from parliament to Orange president Viktor Yushchenko.

Pray: for the people of the Ukraine that they will not return to the old ways but hold to the principles that were birthed in the 'Orange Revolution'.

More: <http://euobserver.com/9/22930>

WORLDWIDE

■ North Korea: 'God Helped Me Survive Concentration Camp'

Kim Tae Jin, a Christian defector from North Korea, speaks of four years spent in Yodok concentration camp, his escape to South Korea and his faith in Jesus. Kim was sent to Yodok, a vast labour camp high in the mountains. He was forced to work from sunrise to sunset. Daily food was just 300 grams of maize – so he ate rats, mice, snakes, frogs or frogspawn to survive. 'I witnessed the execution of five prisoners who had tried to escape. The men were bound and masked, made to kneel down and each shot with three bullets.' Kim was desperate. But one day he discovered that a few prisoners were occasionally released on significant dates for good behaviour. He decided to be a model prisoner and be released himself. 'It was forbidden to be a Christian in the camp, but I met the leader of a group of seven Christians which occasionally met in secret.'

Pray: that God will bring righteousness to North Korea through the new leadership (Eph.5:8-11)

More: http://www.openheaven.com/forums/forum_posts.asp?TID=13098&PN=1&TPN=1

■ U.N. investigate murder of leading politician in Lebanon

Many Lebanese accuse Syria of involvement in Mr. Gemayel's death. The UN Security Council has agreed to a request from Lebanon to help to investigate the murder. The industry minister, who was a Maronite Christian politician, was shot in a Christian area of Beirut. He's the fifth anti-Syrian Lebanese politician to be killed in two years, and his murder has intensified an acute political crisis in Lebanon. The death or resignation of two more cabinet ministers would bring down the government. Maronites are Christians affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church. They make up roughly 25% of Lebanon's population. Lebanon's constitution requires that the president is Maronite. Phalange (Kataeb in Arabic) is a Lebanese political party advocating Maronite interests, and dominated by the Gemayel family. Its militia was a major player in the civil war. His death comes amid a political crisis in Lebanon, following the resignation of six pro-Syrian cabinet members.

Pray: that God would reign in the area through the elected authorities. (Rom.13:1-2)

More: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/6175508.stm

■ Sudan a possible front for al-Qaeda attacks

Twenty eight people were being held in connection with the slaying in September of Mohammed Taha Mohammed Ahmed, who was kidnapped months after some accused him of blasphemy for articles which many saw as insulting the Islam's prophet Muhammad. A group claiming to be al-Qaeda's branch in Sudan issued a claim of responsibility for the murder soon after Ahmed's body was found in Khartoum on Sept. 6. But Justice Minister Mohammed Ali al-Mardi attempted to dismiss that claim in a press conference Wednesday, saying the suspects carried out the killing using the methods of 'extremist groups in Iraq so that the thinking would be diverted to Islamist groups in the Sudan.' Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden was based in Sudan until the late 1990s. In an April video, bin Laden pointed to Sudan as a possible front for al-Qaeda attacks.

Pray: that many more injustices in the Sudan would be put right and the roots of evil would be revealed and removed. (Deut.32:8-9)

More: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article18855>

■ Another Christian leader arrested and imprisoned in Xinjiang

In the past 2 months three religious persecutions have taken place in Xinjiang. Christian Sister Tian Maishi, a 53 year old retired English teacher from Kashi Educational Institute was arrested. Tian, is a second generation Christian in her family, and moved to Urumqi the capital of the area to engage in missionary work after retirement. She was jailed on the charges of 'illegal evangelism', and 'engaging in superstitious fraudulent activities'. Through out the ordeal not one legal procedure was followed nor were any friends or relatives informed of her arrest. Her husband came home from work and found her missing. He later found her in the detention centre after three weeks of searching the city. This event tramples the very basic human rights stipulated in Chinese constitution.

Pray: that the true church of Jesus Christ would come above the ground, blossom, and be free to spread openly in China and other countries ruled by state religion. (Rev3:7, Prov18:10)

More: <http://www.persecution.org/suffering/newssummpopup.php?newscode=3977&PHPSESSID=b3904f5df92d42bf7f45c1b582a893c3#NewsItem>

■ Ehud Olmert and Vladimir Putin talk about Iran's nuclear plans

As Prime Minister Ehud Olmert left for Russia on Wednesday to meet with President Vladimir Putin and other officials; Natan Sharansky, the opposition Likud minister, offered the prime minister some advice. 'Be straight with Putin about Iran's nuclear plans. The future of the world may depend on it. We understand and respect your desire to see Russia as one of

the leaders of the world. As one who is concerned about the future of the world and the position of Russia, you have to be part of that front. In the past it meant not losing Iranian markets. But now it's a critical moment. Everybody else in the world understands the importance of a united stand. It's very important for world freedom.' He went on to say that Israel had to be 'frank, open and uncompromising with Moscow'. For the Iranian viewpoint on this controversial issue see Tehran Times at: <http://www.tehrantimes.com/Description.asp?Da=11/22/2006&Cat=2&Num=4>

Praise: that the Lord would establish a good communication link between Jerusalem and world leaders and deliver them from nations conspiring against His purposes. (Ps.3)

More: <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?apage=1&cid=1159193465370&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

PRAISE REPORTS

■ Fire of the Holy Spirit sweeps over 'The roof of the world'

Last week some 5,000 people in Siliguri, West Bengal India heard the life-giving message of God Almighty. They experienced powerful works of the Holy Spirit and 1,000 people accepted Jesus as their Saviour, during a 'Healing Festival with handkerchief' led by a Korean mission team. After experiencing the powerful works of the Holy Spirit on the first night, Monday Nov.13th, the congregation arrived early on the 14th to secure a front seat, to hear the Gospel message and experience God's power. Through hearing the testimonies of the first night, many unbelievers including Hindus and Sikhs attended the second night of the festival. While listening to the message and watching the video presentation, the congregation began to praise God, clapping their hands and shouting their excitement. During prayer for the sick, many came forward waving their crutches, shaking their bodies, sharing their excitement of experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit.

Praise: God that His day is dawning (Joel2:32)

More: <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/s06110073.htm>

■ Christian conversions on the rise in Morocco

Morocco's Islamic leaders are concerned about the increase in the number of Moroccans who are converting to Christianity. These now number 1,000 compared to some 400 a decade ago. Many of the converts have joined Protestant and Evangelical churches whose missionaries are active in the overwhelmingly Muslim North African country. According to a report by pan-Arab satellite TV station al-Arabiya, 'We're more than 1,000 and we have some 50 churches present in towns and cities throughout the country.' Abdel Halim, a 57-year-old physician who converted to the Evangelical faith 16 years ago, told al-Arabiya, 'For security reasons, we cannot admit that we have converted and we are often forced to move as if we were a clandestine organisation'. Halim says that 'any questioning of the Islamic faith or the attempt to instigate a Moroccan to change religion is a crime punishable with up to three years in prison.'

Praise: you Father for working out your purposes, and foiling the plans of the enemy.(Jer.10:10-11)

More: http://www.adnki.com/index_2Level_English.php?cat=Religion&loid=8.0.361375614&par=0

■ Evangelicals revive Christianity in Europe

Evangelical churches are growing in Europe, with most of their new membership being immigrants from Asia and Africa. This growth comes at a time when the traditional European churches are shrinking. While only about 2 percent of the population belong to evangelical churches, they are also influencing the practices of protestant denominations and the Catholic Church. 'Non-belief, doubt and secularization continue to progress, but increasingly we're witnessing a spiritual turning in recent years,' said Christopher Sinclair of the University of Strasbourg. What's striking about the evangelical movement is that it's growing. Throughout Europe a spiritual need is being answered. Unlike evangelicals in the United States, those in Europe have stayed outside politics. 'We evangelicals in France are a minority among a Protestant minority,' said Etienne Lhermenault, general secretary of the Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches of France. 'So we have a minority mentality. Our American evangelical friends have a majority mentality, even if they're not exactly the majority.'

Praise: God for the Spirit of Evangelism that is touching nations (Mat.24:14)

More: <http://washtimes.com/upi/20061118-013042-6800r.htm>

PRAYER ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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