

Is EU Fumbling Egypt Uprising?

✘ Is the European Union fumbling as Egypt and the Middle East erupt in violence and unrest? The European Coalition for Israel (ECI) believes so.

ECI issued the following statement:

“The European Union has found no clear line of policy as Egypt and the rest of the Middle East seem to be sliding deeper into chaos and unrest. The same EU leaders who for years have hailed the Egyptian leader Mubarak as a strong ally and friend have switched allegiance overnight and are now pressing for an immediate toppling of the president without having any clear idea of what may follow if Islamic fundamentalists take over the country.

Egypt's power to shift

✘ Egypt's president Hosni Mubarak is shifting into transition. Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians are still calling for his ouster.

Carl Moeller with Open Doors says it may be a nod to the protesters, but “this is just one additional step in a process, and it really doesn't change the dynamics of what's really happening in Egypt, although it would be seen as a huge victory for the protesters.”

Moeller goes on to say that the dynamics of the change are already set. Vice President Omar Suleiman was thought to be

the next in line to take over, but since Suleiman and Mubarak are viewed as two sides of the same coin, the only thing that will keep Egypt from imploding will be a paradigm shift. "There will either be a diminished Mubarak/Suleiman regime in the next few months leading up to elections, or immediate elections held in the next few weeks."

Indonesia Rioters Storm Churches

✘ Indonesian police stood guard outside churches on Wednesday after a wave of anti-Christian violence swept across the Muslim country.

Todd Nettleton with Voice of the Martyrs explains, "This mob was raised up by a guilty verdict in a case of blasphemy against a Christian man in an Indonesian court."

The case took place in Central Java, where a Christian man was accused of distributing materials and leaflets that allegedly blasphemed Islam.

As judges decided the case, instigators outside began to inflame anti-Christian fanaticism. Nettleton explains that the extremists were dissatisfied with the sentencing. Not long after the verdict, around 1,000 protesters expressed their ire. "The man was found guilty. He was sentenced to five years in prison. The mob was angry because they wanted him to get the death sentence. In fact, they wanted the judge to immediately turn him to the mob so that they could execute him."

NorthRidge Church Sets Out to Feed a Million

☒ Relief efforts have poured into Haiti during the past year, but much work remains. Indeed, thousands of children are still starving in the small Caribbean nation.

The 22,000-member NorthRidge Church is aiming to fill some hungry bellies with its Million Meals campaign this weekend. NorthRidge Church has partnered with Feed My Starving Children, a non-profit Christian organization committed to feeding starving children.

“We don’t want to be just known as that large church, but as that generous church,” says NorthRidge Senior Pastor Brad Powell. “We want to be a church that follows the example God gave us—to be driven by compassion to give our best, to give generously.”

Prison Minister Reaches Out to Lindsay Lohan

☒ Lindsay Lohan isn’t going to jail just now, but a California judge gave the troubled actress a stern warning after she entered a plea in the latest shoplifting charges against her.

The 24-year-old Lohan has pled not guilty to a grand theft

charge for allegedly stealing a \$2,500 necklace from a Venice jewelry store.

“Miss Lohan, let me just tell you a couple things, so we have no misunderstandings,” said Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Keith L. Schwartz. “You need to follow the laws just like everybody else. Look around this room. Everybody needs to follow the law. You’re no different than anyone else, so please don’t push your luck.”

Christians in India Fear Backlash at Massive ‘Reconversion’ Event

✘ Responding to a petition by the state Catholic Bishops Conference, the High Court of Madhya Pradesh yesterday directed the state government to ensure the safety of Christians during a massive Hindu nationalist rally scheduled tomorrow through Saturday (Feb. 10-12) in Mandla.

Organizers of the Maa Narmada Samajik Kumbh (Mother Narmada Social Kumbh, with “kumbh” literally meaning, “pot”) on the banks of the Narmada River hope to draw 2 million pilgrims to the event. Christian leaders said that the Kumbh is the latest in a series of anti-Christian propaganda events that Hindu nationalist organizations have held in recent years.

“We are worried about our safety and security, as our attempt to get adequate protection from the state government received a very cool response,” said Bishop Gerald Almeida of Jabalpur.

Southeastern University's Althouse Appointed to ASR Committee

✘ Dr. Peter F. Althouse, associate professor of Religion at Southeastern University, has been appointed to serve on a research grant committee of the Illinois-based Association for the Sociology of Religion (ASR).

The association is an international group of 700-plus scholars who seek to advance theory and research in the sociology of religion. Althouse will serve on the organization's Fichter Research Grant Committee, which will award a total of \$24,000 this year to scholars who are involved in promising research in women and religion, gender issues, and feminist perspectives on religion, or religion and poverty.

"I am happy to serve both Southeastern University and the Association for the Sociology of Religion," says Althouse. "This is an opportunity for Southeastern to received greater exposure among the scholarly community."

A Canada native, Althouse has been a Southeastern University faculty member since 2007. He emphasizes research-based teaching, a teaching ethic that has benefitted both his undergraduate and graduate students.

Bible Brands Give Away 1 Million NIV Digital Bibles

✘ Even as the King James Bible celebrates its 400th year, three well-known Bible brands are gearing up to get a more modern version into the hands of believers—digitally.

YouVersion's Bible App, Biblica and Zondervan are teaming up to offer 1 million free downloads of the New International Version (NIV) Bible beginning Feb. 12.

FL University Shuts Down Christian Student Group

✘ Commissioned 2 Love has been ordered to cease operations on the campus of Florida A&M University. Florida A&M officials revoked the Christian student group's active status based on a finding that the club violated what the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) calls a "constitutionally problematic" rule that prohibits student groups from meeting, holding events, and hosting functions unless a university-appointed advisor is present at all times.

In a January e-mail to Commissioned 2 Love, the university advised the club that it had been deactivated for violating the university's advisor policy and ordered that "no meetings, events, activities, or gatherings of any type take place prior to Fall 2011 semester certification period." As a result, Commissioned 2 Love has ceased to exist in any meaningful way on campus. ADF officials sent the university a letter Tuesday urging them to reinstate a Christian student group they de-

recognized in January.

South Sudan to Secede from North

☒ Sudan has faced years of civil war. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in north/south violence. But that has all come to an end as South Sudan has overwhelmingly voted to secede from Northern Sudan.

The referendum was part of a 2005 peace accord that ended the north/south civil war. The comprehensive peace accord which was brokered by the U.S. will also remove Sudan from their terrorist list and could renew diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Sudan Unit Leader with Africa Inland Mission, Phil Byler, speaking from Sudan, says, "99 percent of the people voted to separate. Over 80 percent of the registered voters voted. And North Sudan government says they will accept the results."