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"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Mathew 28:19)

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Is Barack Obama the antichrist?



USA : JOHN McCain's campaign ad 'The One' has generated a lot of buzz regarding the 'Left Behind Series'. Political commentators are comparing McCain's portrayal of competitor Barack Obama with the blockbuster apocalyptic series' depiction of the antichrist. But even the series authors Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins don't think Obama is the antichrist. What may have been created as a farce has generated a firestorm of controversy on the internet. LaHaye and Jenkins take a literal interpretation of prophecies found in the Book of Revelation. They believe the antichrist will surface on the world stage at some point, but neither see Obama in that role. "I've gotten a lot of questions the last few weeks asking if Obama is the antichrist," says

(contd to page 2)

30 arrested for serving beef in function

Haryana: At least 30 people were arrested for allegedly serving beef at a function in Haryana's Panchkula district, leading to a clash between two groups in which eight people sustained injuries. Tension gripped Raipur Rani township after one group opposed to beef's preparation barged into the function venue where it was being allegedly served, police said.

Panchkula's SP Sandeep Khirwar said that 30 people had been arrested for violating provisions of the Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act.

Nun commits suicide unhappy with convent life

Quilon : A Catholic nun from Quilon diocese in Kerala was found hanging at the St Mary's Convent, which police confirmed was a case of suicide. Anupa Mary, 22, member of the Vimala Hrudaya Franciscan congregation was found hanging in the bedroom of the convent around 4 p.m. Pallihottam police have recovered a suicide note from the convent, written by the deceased, expressing her difficulty to adjust to convent life and the new environment. She had also recorded, in the suicide note, her disagreement with the Mother Superior of the convent. According to a Catho-

lic news source, "Sister Anooa was missing at the dining room for evening tea. Though many called out for her, there was no response.



They went searching to her room and found her hanging. They immediately informed the police." The incident has raised protests from the local parishioners, who in large number gathered at the hospital premises and the convent. Recently the

Women's Commission in the state proposed a law to refrain girls below 18 years of age from joining convents. They also urged the govt. to protect their property rights. On June 3, the Commission chairperson D Sridevi said, "parents who force their children who are not yet adults to nunnery in the churches in Kerala need to face legal action." She suggested women who decide themselves to be Catholic nuns should be at least of 18 years of age. Kerala, which renders about 60 per cent of the country's 120,000 sisters and priests, consists of over 20% Christians.

The first edition of "The Disciples Sunday News" published



Past. M.P George Kutty, Director of Hospital Ministries of India dedicated the first copy of Disciples Sunday News. Pr. Aji David (Gen. Sec. Disciples Ministry) Evg. C.P. Simon (HMI State Co-ordinator) Bro. Sony K. Joseph, (Managing Editor Discples Goodnews Online) Pr. Mathew P. David are near.

Chengannur : the online News Paper in English started by the Disciples Ministry with the aim of spreading the Gospel beyond the limits of the Languages, is been dedicated to the Public by Past. M.P George Kutty, Director of Hospital Ministries of India. It will be published in every Sundays with Chris-

tian news and many other articles such as interviews of Eminent Christian Leaders, Bible studies, Testimonies, Advertisements etc. Rev. Dr. Shaji Sukumaran, Chief Editor of "Disciples E-Sunday News" has said that "This is a good media to preach the Gospel to Nations"

Churches ordered closed during Olympics

An organization founded by a man who escaped from China after being persecuted for his Christian faith says it has uncovered a secret Chinese government document demanding that churches shut their doors for 90 days around the Beijing Olympics.

"Should church members violate these rules they will be subject to the disciplinary actions of the Chinese government," said the report from China Aid Association, an organization dedicated to helping persecuted Christians.

"Pastors were forced to sign a written agreement that they would not participate in religious services while the Olympic Games are taking place in China," the organization said.

China Aid said the document, drafted by Chinese government officials, specifies that the house churches in China "refrain from organizing and joining illegal gatherings and refrain from receiving do-



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Arab ministry hopes to spark 'Upper Room' revival in Israel

"The revival meetings will hopefully jumpstart this fire, strengthen the Body of Christ in the land and meet the needs of people in this city." (Jerusalem, Israel)—A set of upcoming meetings aims to ignite a 1st century-style revival in Jerusalem with a gathering of Jews and Gentiles later this month. "We are praying that revival will come down and that Jews and Arabs will worship together," said Jeries Kawash of Jerusalem-based Upper Room Ministries. "Jesus prayed for unity of Believers and we are hoping this will bring Believers of all backgrounds who are coming together to worship." "The message has gone out to the world, notes Andre Mubarak, another of Upper Room Ministries' elders, but "is far away from this city. Jerusalem is far away from revival." According to Nicole Jansezian writing for IsraelToday, the meetings will take place August 23 to 25 and will feature Andres Bissonni, a young revivalist from the United States. Jansezian says Upper Room Ministries is spreading the word to Believers and non-be-

lievers alike to attend the two Jerusalem meetings, as well as gatherings in Haifa and Ashdod. She writes: "The most unique aspect are the hosts: Spirit-filled Palestinian Arab Believers, all born in Israel and raised in Orthodox Christian or Catholic homes. While Christians are already a small minority in the land, spirit-filled, born-again Arabs are an even smaller minority." The leadership of Upper Room Ministries is seeking to see the fire of God again in their communities in Jerusalem, just like it was after the Holy Spirit was given to Jesus' disciples, she added. "The West is great, but we need to start doing things by ourselves," Mubarak said. "The revival meetings will hopefully jumpstart this fire, strengthen the Body of Christ in the land and meet the needs of people in this city," continued Mubarak. Fashioned after the early disciples' community in the Book of Acts, Upper Room Ministries has eight elders who share stewardship of the ministry, which holds weekly meetings in East Jerusalem.

More Than \$12 Million Settlement Reached in Clergy Sex-Abuse Case

CHICAGO - The Archdiocese of Chicago has agreed to pay more than 12 and a-half million dollars to 16 people who say they were sexually abused by priests, and has released a deposition given by Cardinal Francis George. In the 307-page deposition, George answers questions under oath from an attorney for victims concerning why the Roman Catholic priests were not removed amid growing accusations of sexual abuse.

George previously acknowledged that he failed to act soon enough in the case of the Reverend Daniel McCormack, who is now serving a five-year prison sentence for abusing five children. In a statement on the settlements, George apologizes to the victims, their families and the "whole Catholic community." He also acknowledges that the church has been "wounded" by the scandals

Footprints

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed He was walking along the beach with the LORD. Across the sky flashed scenes from His life. For each scene He noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonging to Him and the other to the LORD.

When the last scene of His life flashed before Him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of His life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of His life.

This really bothered Him and He questioned the LORD about it. LORD you said that once I decided to follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me.

The LORD replied, my precious, precious child, I Love you and I would never leave you! During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.

Christianity Growing in China

BEIJING : President Bush is encouraging China once again to allow greater religious freedom. While China does allow Christians to meet in its official state church, many believers are still forced to meet underground. President Bush attended church in Beijing Sunday, where he said he felt great joy during the service.

"It just goes to show that God is universal, and God is love, and no state, man or woman should fear the influence of loving religion," the President said.

These words, spoken at state-sponsored Three Self Church, reinforce the President's concerns of China's freedoms and human rights.

Although members of China's Three Self Churches can worship openly, millions of other Christians

worship in house churches, beyond the government's watchful eye.

But both the Three Self and house churches are growing at a staggering rate.



Thousands of people have come to Beijing's Kanjie church today, but they didn't come to get a glimpse of President Bush. Like millions of other Chinese believers, they came to worship.

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Barack Obama.... contd from page 1

novelist Jenkins. "I tell everyone that I don't think the antichrist will come out of politics, especially American politics."

"I can see by the language he uses why people think he could be the antichrist," adds LaHaye, "but from my reading of scripture, he doesn't meet the criteria. There is no indication in the Bible that the antichrist will be an American."

Jenkins and LaHaye don't take McCain's commercial or the antichrist speculation over Obama too seriously.

Pundits have pointed out that there are similarities between the 'Left Behind Series' character Nicolae Carpathia and Obama. Other than some vocabulary and

charisma, Carpathia, a young Romanian politician who eventually oversees a one-world government, and Obama don't have much in common. "If even the people who created the character Nicolae Carpathia don't see the comparisons as warranted, then perhaps this is overblown," says Jenkins.

'Left Behind' is a series of 16 apocalyptic novels (1995-2007/ Tyndale House Publishers) using end time prophecies in Revelation as a framework. All 16 books reached the 'New York Times' bestseller list with seven reaching the #1 spot. Overall, more than 63 million copies have sold in the 'Left Behind' product line.

Archeologists unearth Roman temple in Zippori

Zippori: Archeologists from the Hebrew University have unearthed ruins of a Roman temple dating back to the second century CE at Zippori National Park in the North. Above the temple, foundations of a church built in the Byzantine period were discovered. The excavations, undertaken by the Noam Shudofsky Zippori Expedition led by Prof. Zeev Weiss of the university's Institute of Archaeology, shed light on the multicultural society of ancient Zippori. They indicate that Zippori, the Jewish capital of Galilee during Roman times, had a significant pagan population which established the temple

at the heart of the city, and was later also inhabited by Christians. "It shows that pagans who were a



minority prayed in the center of the city and lived in harmony with the Jewish majority," Weiss said Monday. The church's location on the foundations of the temple testifies to the preservation of the sacred section of the city over time. The temple, measuring approximately 24 by 12 meters, had a decorated facade. Its walls were plundered in ancient times and only its foundations remain. No evidence has been discovered as to the nature of the rituals per-

formed in the temple, but coins dating from the time of Antoninus Pius, minted in Diocaesarea (Zippori), depict a temple dedicated to the Roman gods Zeus and Tyche. Opposite the temple, a monumental Roman building was also partially excavated this summer. Its function is still unclear, although its size and nature indicate that it was an important building. A courtyard with a well-preserved stone pavement was uncovered in the center of the building, upon which a pile of collapsed columns and capitals - probably the result of an earthquake - were found.

Church alleges foul play in Ranchi school fire

Ranchi : A conspiracy is involved in a fire that destroyed important school documents in a principal's office in Jharkhand says church people. St. Xavier's school in Mandar is a Christian educational institution located next to the St Aloysius church under Ranchi diocese. Vandalized for the second time, the fire destroyed the school's valuable documents including the student's certificates and teacher's records. UCA news quoted Father Pradeep Tirkey, the school's headmaster lamenting, ever since the church opened the school in 1971, "this was second time vested interested" have set fire to the office. The first incident, in 1975, also destroyed records the school had until then. This time, he said, "we had records from 1976, but all is now lost forever." Father Tirkey said

a police case has been registered, so it is the police who should bring out the suspects. "But from past attacks on Church institutions, we know what the result will be," he added. "The police may arrest some of our own boys to fulfill their duty, and we will never know the real culprits." Cardinal Telesphore Topo, Archbishop of Ranchi, expressed shock over the incident and described it as the work of criminals. "Some forces are behind it and we demand the administration bring them to light," he said. Thieves normally would not burn valuable school documents, he added. "This is a very serious issue." Meanwhile, police has not permitted the Christians in the diocese to stage a silent procession and hold a public meeting this week. The school has been closed for further investigation.

Karnataka pastors arrested after mob attack on church

Mysore : The Karnataka police arrested a pastor and three believers after fundamentalist Hindus barged into a prayer meeting and attacked the congregation in Emmanabettur village in that State on Aug 11.

Global Council of Indian Christians (GCIC) reported that over 20 people belonging to 'Shivasainya Youth Association' barged into the prayer meeting and attacked Pastor Rajendra Gowda, assistant pastor Kumara and a few other believers.

The mob stripped the pastors and paraded them half-naked, tied them to a Maruti Omni van and dragged them to Anagi police station outpost seven kilometers away

from Emmanabettur village.

The pastors were shoved into the same vehicle and taken to Davangere rural police station 20 km away. They were hit all along the road.

At the police station, the pastors were booked under various sections. However, the magistrate sent the pastors for medical examination and then to the Davangere sub-jail.

GCIC has extended surety and demanded the immediate release of the pastors.

There have been 42 recorded incidences of torture and violence against Christian workers and pastors in 2008 so far, GCIC said.

Saudi Arabia: Muslim Father Kills Daughter for Converting to Christianity

Washington, D.C.: The Washington-DC based human rights group, International Christian Concern (ICC) www.persecution.org has learned that a Saudi Arabian man cut out the tongue of his daughter and burned her to death after finding out that she had converted to Christianity.

The girl came to know about Jesus Christ through the internet, according to Gulf News. Her father found about her conversion and killed her "following a heated debate on religion" the source indicated. The man is currently in custody. There is no indication as to the killer's identity or the date of the crime except "that the killing happened recently."

The killer works for the mutaween (Commission for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice), an arm of the government that enforces religious purity and is the government's face of persecution to Christians in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is intolerant of Christianity

and non-Muslim faiths. Its education curriculum openly inculcates hatred against Christians and other non-Muslims through their textbooks and teachers.

The Saudi Arabian officials are using their huge oil wealth to export Wahabbism (the most intolerant version of Islam) to other countries including in the United States. In its recent press release regarding the

Saudi government school in Northern Virginia, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom indicated that, according to text books at the school "It is permissible for a Muslim to kill an apostate (a convert from Islam)"

From Ethiopia to Indonesia, Saudi Arabia's oil money is fueling the killings of Christians and destruction of their property. ICC's president, Jeff King, said that "Saudi Arabia has to treat Christians with the same respect that it wants Muslims to be treated in other countries. It has to stop exporting hate and persecution against Christians in other countries."



Bush, wife worship in Beijing church

Beijing : GEORGE W Bush, President of the United States, along with his wife Laura Bush worshipped at the Beijing Kuanjie Protestant Christian Church while they were in China as guests to view the Beijing Olympics festivities.

Following is the statement released by him: "You know, I've just — Laura and I just had the great joy and privilege of worshiping here in Beijing, China. You know, it just goes to show that

God is universal, and God is love, and no state, man or woman should fear the influence of loving religion.



"And I want to thank the pastor for his hospitality. And I want to thank this beautiful choir for singing Amazing Grace and Edelweiss. It was a touching moment. It's been a joy to worship here. Again, I want to thank you, sir, and God bless you. God bless you."

Over a million malnourished kids in central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh

BHOPAL: Global experts on management of severe acute malnutrition Michael Golden and Yvonne Grellety on Monday said here that over a million children in Madhya Pradesh were "severely wasted (undernourished) and the hospitals, health centres and nutrition rehabilitation centres (NRCs) do not have the capacity to treat this number of children.

Professor Golden and Dr. Grellety made this observation while talking to senior State Government officials, doctors and media-persons after concluding a week-long visit to Shivpuri to study the working of the NRCs in that district. They were accompanied by Victor Aguayo, Unicef-India's Section Chief for Nutrition and the

Nutrition specialist with Unicef-Bhopal, Vandana Agrawal.

The nutrition experts said that during their tour in Madhya Pradesh they were impressed by the commit-



ment and high quality of human resource comprising of doctors, nurses, anganwadi workers and christian institutions . They are ex-

tremely optimistic due to their exceptional quality of work and their capacity to treat children. Community mobilisation

But they also pointed out that since the undernourishment prevalence figures are too high, it is not the hospitals, health centre or the NRCs alone that can tackle the crisis. The problem will also have to be dealt with at the community level. The isolation of Christians in the state by obnoxious MP anti conversion have considerably dented efforts to tackle malnutrition.

Participating in deliberations, Dr. Aguayo said that about 80 per cent of his organisation's efforts go into

prevention of malnutrition. However their priority is also to provide quality care for children with severe acute malnutrition, he added.

On the gravity of the problem of malnutrition, Dr. Aguayo said 60 per cent of the wasted children in this country live in six States. In each of the three States—Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar—there are over 1 million severely wasted children, he pointed out. Unicef's mission is to support and scale up facility and community based care for children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

Professor Golden He said that about 40 per cent of Indian children have a deficit in the growth nutrients that needs to be corrected. Some have such severe deficits that they are at immediate risk of death.

Pastor Rajendra Gowda and Kumara tortured and arrested in Karnataka

Bengaluru : Police in Karnataka on Aug 11th, arrest pastor and believers after Hindu extremists attacked Prayer meeting and assaulted the congregation in Emmanabettur village,

More than 20 Hindu zealots belonging to the 'Shivasainya Youth Association' attacked Pastor Rajendra Gowda's prayer meeting and assaulted the Believers and assistant pastor Kumara.

The lampoons stripped the pastors and paraded them halfnaked tied to Maruthy van from Emmanabettur village to Anagi police outpost seven kilometers from the village.

The pastors shoved into the same Maruthy van and driven off to Davangere Rural police station nearly 20kms away. Enroute the extremists severely assaulted the pastors.

Police accepted an FIR against the pastors under #218/08 under

sections 295A, 298 and 504. However, the magistrate sent the pastors for medical exam and to Davangere sub jail

Later at about 8.45pm they were produced before the (Magistrate) judicial officer .GCIC has extended surety and demanded immediate bail.

There are 42 recorded incidences of torture and violence against Christian workers and pastors in the year 2008.

India is a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The ICCPR clearly prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment this clearly is violation of the ICCPR Committee.

GCIC requests that Letters should be written to Indian officials demanding justice and safety of Christians in India, especially in the state of Karnataka



Christianity Growing cntd page 2

Across town, more than 2,000 people flooded into Beijing's Haidian church for one of their six Sunday services.

The pastor here says church attendance has more than doubled since last May.

"I believe because of those things, because of the Holy Spirit working in the church, because the congregation wants to know Jesus more, all of this works together to double the number," Pastor Wu Weiqing said.

Pastor Wu says that the government is already recognizing the positive contributions Christians are making in society.

"The Chinese government has recognized Christians as a positive

power in the construction of harmonious society, so that is very important and significant because we as Christians have ever since become a positive power in the construction of this country," he said.

But many house church Christians are still not seen in the same positive light. President Bush says that recognizing all of these believers will strengthen China.

"This trip has reaffirmed my belief that men and women who desire to speak their conscience and worship their God are no threat to the future of China," Bush said in a radio address.

"They are the people who will make China a great nation in the 21st Century."

Two Missionaries Released from Detention in Inner Mongolia

Inner Mongolia: China Aid Association has learned that two of the four missionaries detained in Inner Mongolia in early July have been released after serving 30 days administrative detention. Yu Yongqing and Li Shusen were released on Aug. 6 and Aug 10, respectively. Yu Yongqing was released after paying an undisclosed amount of money to PSB officials for his release. Two of the four detained missionaries, Li Li and Wang Shuang remain in detention. Mr. Wang's wife and sister visited the PSB detention center where he was being held

upon entering the station they were shown into Wang's cell where he was seen being hung by handcuffs. The two women left seriously distraught yet helpless to change the situation. The other detainee, Li Li has been diagnosed by PSB officials as having a serious lung disease and possibly lung cancer. Detention guard officials fearful that Li will die under their watch have determined that Li will be placed under house detention with the condition that Li will promise not to escape while at home.

Church Donates for Stun Guns for Police

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. - Some churches keep police officers in their prayers. First Baptist Church of Maryville, Illinois, sends them money for Tasers.

The church has donated cash to the Maryville and Marine police departments to buy stun guns.

The church says using the volt-dis-

persing device could be safer for both police and the suspect. And the church says the donations are meant to show its care for the well-being of law enforcers.

Maryville police already have three stun guns the officers share, but a sergeant says having an extra one will be valuable.