

Stephen Naidoo, African Prelate, Dies at 51

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Reuters

Archbishop Stephen Naidoo, the Roman Catholic primate of Cape Town and one of South Africa's leading anti-apartheid campaigners, died today during a private visit to London, his office said. He was 51 years old.

Archbishop Naidoo had been suffering from a heart ailment and left for Britain two weeks ago to recover at his brother's home, the office said in a statement. It gave no further details. Archbishop Naidoo, whose Cape Town archbishopric made him the ranking prelate leading the 2.5 million Roman Catholics in South Africa, spent 14 years working abroad, returning to his native country in 1974.

He was elevated to archbishop in December 1984, becoming the first prelate of Indian descent to hold that rank in the church in South Africa.

Although an outspoken critic of Pretoria's apartheid policies, he shunned the limelight familiar to churchmen like the Anglican leader, Archbishop Desmond M. Tutu, and the Rev. Allan A. Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.