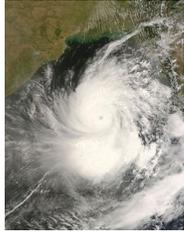




### Top Stories

#### Myanmar to allow foreign aid says UN's Ban Ki Moon

After travelling in-person to Myanmar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon, has announced that international aid-workers will be granted access to the cyclone-ravaged country. International observers and aid organizations met the news with skepticism and expressed concerns that the offer was not genuine. US aid workers are still awaiting visas before they can enter Myanmar.



#### Morgan Tsvangirai returns to Zimbabwe

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of Zimbabwe's largest opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has returned to the Zimbabwean capital city of Harare after a period of self-imposed exile in South Africa. He hopes to begin rallying support for the presidential run-off election against current President Robert Mugabe.



#### President Bush to meet with LDS Church leaders in Utah

United States President George W. Bush is set to meet with



### Top Stories

leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints next week in Utah. President Bush's primary purpose in visiting Utah is to raise money for Republican presidential candidate John McCain's general election campaign. The Deseret News and The Salt Lake Tribune have reported that the meeting is scheduled for May 29.

#### No prosecution for UK minor who called Scientology a 'cult'

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) of the government of the United Kingdom told the City of London Police on Friday that there will be no prosecution for a 15-year-old boy who called Scientology a "cult" at a May 10 peaceful protest. The human rights organization Liberty has come out strongly against the City of London Police for issuing the boy a court summons at the protest, and said they are pursuing an inquiry into the police force for what they say is a troubling freedom of speech issue.



Credit: Peter-Flickr (CC-BY 2.0)

### Wikipedia Current Events

south of Pratt, Kansas as more than a dozen tornadoes hit Kansas.

- Three people are killed and another three injured in a helicopter crash on Santa Catalina Island, California near Two Harbors, California.
- Munster win the Heineken European Rugby Cup against Toulouse, 16 to 13.

#### Authorities contacted after school death threat made on Wikipedia

Authorities have been contacted after a threat was made on the online encyclopedia Wikipedia. A user called Deathboy52 made an edit threatening violence at Thomas Grover Middle School, New Jersey. The incident was reported to Wikipedia's 'Adminisrator's noticeboard', where the reporting user said that the edit "absolutely needs to be reported to the school and the local police."

The user who made the edits has been blocked indefinitely from editing Wikipedia as a result of the threats made. Wikinews has learnt that the person who made the threats also edited the article on Sudan, in which he added "Halo therreewada WArr Destruction Deathboy," to the article.

The threats were described by Wikipedia user Bongwarrior as death threats, although Wikinews has not seen the threat due to the

### Wikipedia Current Events

Dima Bilan of Russia wins the Eurovision Song Contest 2008 with the song "Believe" with 272 points.

- Tornadoes of 2008: Two people from Colorado die in a tornado

fact that it was removed from the Wikipedia database.

In a similar incident the occurred last month, a student at Glen A. Wilson High School in Hacienda Heights, California was arrested on suspicion of making criminal threats against students. The student arrested, described as a male minor by Hacienda La Puente Unified School District police, confessed to making threats against students at the high school via a post to the Wikipedia article about the school.

### **Boeing push back 737 replacement development**

United States airframer Boeing has announced that development of a replacement for their 737 narrowbody airliner, begun two years ago, has been pushed back several years, Boeing saying that further advancement of technology is required.

Spokeswoman Sandy Angers said that that the team formed to look at the development had been merged into the parent product development team and would cease looking at specific designs. Boeing say airlines demand performance improvements of 15-20% are required if a new airliner is to be commercially viable.

"We've reduced our airplane-design effort and are focusing more on the technology breakthroughs," said Angers. "We need technology breakthroughs in engines, aerodynamics, materials and other systems. You can't simply shrink the 787 and expect the same benefits for the narrow-body market. We've got difficult challenges."

One important difference is that the plastic composite used for the

fuselage of the 787 would not offer as significant a weight saving on a smaller aircraft. The delivery date for the plane is now anticipated to be around 2020, and not 2015 as previously hoped. This coincides with the expected date for Airbus to deliver their A320 replacement. Industry analysts predict development of one to trigger development of the other. Boeing had hoped to have their's ready for 2012.

Boeing Commercial Airplanes CEO Scott Carson said "We're continuing our research effort until we find the right solution. It has to be a 25-year product."

Since its 1967 debut 5,700 737s have been delivered to date, with orders for 2,200 more, keeping the jet in production until at least 2014. It is Boeing's most popular airliner.

### **Police arrest two over Exeter bomb explosion**

Police have arrested two men in connection to Thursday's bomb explosion in a cafe in Exeter, United Kingdom. The man suspected of being the bomber remains in hospital in a stable condition and is yet to be formally interviewed.

Ten armed officers arrested the pair from outside a cafe in Plymouth, Devon, and are questioning them. Their names have not been released.

The bomb that exploded in the Giraffe was composed of sodium hydroxide, kerosene, strips of aluminium foil and nails. Suspected bomber Nicky Reilly emerged moments later with a bloodied face and is under police guard in hospital, where he has undergone surgery to graft skin over lacerations to his face.

Experts have gone over Reilly's mobile phone, home telephone records and his computer. It is reported that his computer screensaver featured the World Trade Centre in flames after being struck by two hijacked airliners during the 9/11 attacks, and that his mobile revealed that shortly before the explosion he had received a text message apparently encouraging an attack with the bombs.

A second similar bomb was defused nearby. Both were described as highly volatile devices that could be activated by shaking. It is being investigated whether the bombs were supposed to be placed in the toilet with the belief that they were powerful enough to blow out the facade of the building.

### **2008/09 FA Premier League: Chelsea F.C. sack Grant**

Chelsea F.C. have fired Manager Avram Grant today. This comes 3 days after Chelsea F.C. lost to Manchester United in the 2008 UEFA Champions League Final in Moscow. Avram Grant's tenure has been scrutinized ever since he took over for Jose Mourinho last September.

Despite the constant questioning of his appointment as Manager of the first team, he was able to guide Chelsea F.C. in taking Manchester United to the final day of the Premier League title race after going level on points and narrowly missing out on European glory on penalties. The club only lost two Premier League matches during his tenure, but he was criticised by fans who claimed that his teams lacked style.

A statement on the club read: "Chelsea Football Club can confirm that Avram Grant has had his

contract as manager terminated today. This follows meetings over the last two days," "Everybody at Chelsea FC would like to thank Avram for his contribution since taking over as manager last September," and "We will now be concentrating all our efforts on identifying a new manager for Chelsea and there will be no further comment until that appointment is made."

Former Barcelona Head Coach Frank Rijkaard, Inter Milan Head Coach Roberto Mancini and Russia Head Coach Guus Hiddink have all been linked to the position at Chelsea F.C.

### **2008 USL First Division: Seattle Sounders vs. Vancouver Whitecaps**

Seattle Sounders

2-0

Vancouver Whitecaps

Vancouver Whitecaps lost their 2nd game of the season after losing 2-0 to Seattle Sounders on last night. Seattle effectively took control of the Interstate 5 derby after early goals from Josh Gardner and Sebastien Le Toux.

Whitecaps fans were left in shock after only 7 minutes, as Seattle "blitzed" the home-side with two quick goals in the opening exchanges.

It took just 3 minutes for the Sounders to score the opening goal, as Gardner got on the end of a Le Toux through ball before hitting the shot past a diving Whitecaps goalkeeper Srdjan Djekanovic to give the Seattle the lead.

Seattle extended their lead through the reigning Player of the Year in Le Toux on 7th minutes with a right-footed shot that went

past the diving Whitecaps goalkeeper Srdjan Djekanovic.

Whitecaps centre back Omar Jarun underlined the disappointment of his team's start. "The first few minutes were an absolute disaster from us defensively," he told [whitecapsfc.com](http://whitecapsfc.com). "We came out flat, and that's disappointing because everything we put into this game in terms of preparation went to waste. It's hard to keep the team's head up after something like that. But tomorrow is another day, and hopefully we can put this defeat out of the way in Portland. Like Seattle, they are another good team, and if do not come out ready to play, it will be another nightmare."

Schmetzer was naturally delighted with the way his side claimed an important away victory in Vancouver. "I think we played well," he said. "When you get a couple of early goals, you are in control of the game. With both goals, we were able to dictate the pace of the game."

The 1st half ended with jeers from the home crowd.

A host of substitutions ensued early in the 2nd half, with Arze, Justin Moose, and Jason Jordan all replacing Valente, Donatelli, and Addlery, as Vancouver tried to bring some spark to what had been a below-par Whitecaps performance.

There was also a Whitecaps debut for new signing Chris Pozniak, as he replaced centre back Omar Jarun on the hour mark. "Give credit to Seattle tonight," Pozniak said of the defeat. "They were the better team over the 90 minutes. They are so well organized, and I tried to speed up the play when I came in, but it didn't work. With

the game tomorrow night, it might better for us mentally to get another crack at playing and show that we are better than the performance tonight."

As the match entered the five minutes of time added on, a deflected shot from Pozniak was the extent of Vancouver's efforts to pull a goal back before the final whistle, as Seattle ran out comfortable winners in the end.

### **Morgan Tsvangirai returns to Zimbabwe**

Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of Zimbabwe's largest opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has returned to the Zimbabwean capital city of Harare after a period of self-imposed exile in South Africa. He hopes to begin rallying support for the presidential run-off election against current President Robert Mugabe.

Tsvangirai had originally planned to return on May 17, but this was postponed when his party learnt of an assassination plot against him. Allegations of treason were also levelled at him last month by Justice Minister Patrick Chinamasa. President Mugabe's party, Zanu-PF, called the alleged plot "fantasy", but security among the MDC is still high, Mr. Tsvangirai being whisked away from Harare airport earlier today in a three-car convoy.

Nevertheless Mr. Tsvangirai has told reporters that he feels "quite safe" and "not at all afraid". He is confident that his activities in the last 6 weeks have managed to "ensure an African consensus about the crisis in Zimbabwe" and said in a telephone interview in Harare that he is "excited to be home and gearing for the election" and "if Mugabe thinks he has

beaten people into submission, he will have a rude shock on the 27th".

Human rights groups and MDC members have claimed that Zanu-PF have been intimidating and violently oppressing Zimbabweans in order to win the run-off, Tsvangirai accusing Zanu-PF of wanting "to decimate MDC structures," and Bloomberg have reported that inflation in the country, estimated in March at 355,000%, is the highest in the world.

The MDC won the parliamentary elections and beat Mugabe's Zanu-PF in the first round presidentials but the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission is organising a run-off election due to the MDC only purportedly gaining 47.9% of the first round vote, with Zanu-PF taking 43.2%. The run-off election is set to be on July 27 and the Southern African Development Community, which Mr. Tsvangirai says can "instill confidence in the people of Zimbabwe", will be monitoring the polling.

### **Israel scrambles fighters to intercept unresponsive aircraft carrying Tony Blair**

Israel scrambled two fighter jets to intercept a suspicious aircraft that was failing to respond to air traffic control (ATC) and had moved into attack positions, only to discover the it was carrying International Middle East peace envoy and former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair.

The aircraft was an executive private jet carrying delegates including Blair from Sinai, Egypt where they had attended the World Economic Forum to Bethlehem on Wednesday when the aircraft entered Israeli airspace and failed to respond to multiple

demands from ATC to identify itself, it emerged yesterday. Amid terrorism fears, the Israeli Air Force scrambled two fighters as is standard procedure for unresponsive aircraft. These then manouvered themselves above and behind the aircraft, which is an aggressive position considered optimal should a shutdown be required.

The fighters were then able to make direct contact with Tony Blair's flight, which then identified itself and informed the fighter pilots of who was on board. It later turned out the aircraft had suffered a technical fault that had prevented them hearing ATC's request for identification.

Matthew Doyle, a spokesman for Blair who was on the flight, said "Mr. Blair was one of a number of delegates on a flight back from the World Economic Forum in Sharm e-Sheikh. We were not aware of any problem at the time, and have not been notified of any issue with the flight." He also said they only found out after reporters began asking them what had happened.

The Israeli Defense Force refuses to comment on operational matters, but officials speaking anonymously have confirmed the incident occurred.

### **Seven Moroccans killed in bus crash in central France**

A bus crash in France's Loire Valley has left seven of the Moroccan passengers dead. 22 of the 32 on board were injured, four critically, after the bus smashed into a concrete pillar on the A10 near Blois in the small hours of yeaterday morning.

The bus had departed Tiznit in South Morocco on Wednesday and was headed to the Parisian suburb

of Les Mureaux. It had been hired by Aziz, a French company that provides buses to tourists and small traders heading between France and Morocco.

Media images show the vehicle's front end stuck several feet up the pillar, with the roof trapped against the top of the bridge it supported by the pillar. The entire wreck is left leaning at about a forty degree angle back towards the road, and has left the road at a fairly steep angle directly into the pillar. The remains of a trailer it was towing can be seen still attached at the rear of the coach. Transport Minister Dominique Bussereau, who visited the scene shortly after the accident, said that "The incredible state of the bus showed that the impact was extremely violent."

The pictures showed the bus was in the livery of travel company Labat.

The French Interior Ministry took the rare step of activating an emergency plan to ensure rapid response from large numbers of rescuers and resources. The scene was attended by four helicopters, 140 firefighters and 25 police officers, who had to free multiple victims from the wreck. The A10 was closed off.

Six died immediatly, and the seventh victim died shortly afterwards. All the deceased were adults, and included one of the two drivers, the other of whom was seriously injured. It is unclear which was driving at the time.

Investigators believe no other vehicles were involved, but the exact circumstances remain unclear. "It looks like a loss of control. Is this linked to a mechanical problem, drowsiness or

a totally different cause?" Bussereau said at the scene. His ministry's accident investigation bureau will conduct a major investigation inquiry, and a separate investigation will be launched by local prosecutors.

One possible cause is that the driver fell asleep at the wheel. Investigators are also examining the bus to try to determine any sign of mechanical trouble. There was good weather in the region of the town of Suevres, where the accident occurred, and very little traffic was using the road at the time, thought to be around 2.50am (0050 GMT).

Morocco's King Mohammed VI has announced he will personally pay for care of the injured and repatriation of those killed. He also asked the ambassador to France to pass on his condolences.

### **Court rules against Texas officials in FLDS case**

An appeals court in Texas has ruled that Texas Child Protective Services should not have taken the children from the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) compound as they were unable to prove that the children in the compound were at risk of immediate physical harm.

401 allegedly abused children were taken into state custody last month after officials received a call from a distressed 16-year-old girl. The children were found in a 1700-acre compound belonging to the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. It is now believed that the original phone call was actually a hoax.

Police were monitoring the compound ever since it was bought by the group one year ago. According to Texas law there must

have been "a danger to the physical health or safety of the child which was caused by an act or failure to act of the person entitled to possession and for the child to remain in the home is contrary to the welfare of the child".

In addition to the above there must also be "the urgent need for protection required the immediate removal of the child and reasonable efforts, consistent with the circumstances and providing for the safety of the child, were made to eliminate or prevent the child's removal"

Finally, for state custody to be allowed there must also have been "reasonable efforts have been made to enable the child to return home". A lower court was given 10 days to make a decision on whether the above requirements are met. Although originally the mothers were allowed to stay with the children, they are now required to be separate unless the parents are aged under eighteen or the children are very young. The FLDS said in an open letter to the Governor of Texas that a "critical crisis" was unfolding due to these recent incidents.

The Texas courts system released documents on its website regarding the recent decision. It said that: "the only danger to the male children or the female children who had not reached puberty identified by the Department was the Department's assertion that the pervasive belief system of the FLDS community groomed the males to be perpetrators of sexual abuse later in life and taught the girls to submit to sexual abuse after reaching puberty."

The document also noted that:

"There was no evidence that the male children, or the female children who had not reached puberty, were victims of sexual or other physical abuse or in danger of being victims of sexual or other physical abuse." The website reported that: "While there was evidence that twenty females had become pregnant between the ages of thirteen and seventeen, there was no evidence regarding the marital status of these girls when they became pregnant or the circumstances under which they became pregnant other than the general allegation that the girls were living in an FLDS community with a belief system that condoned underage marriage and sex."

The report claimed there were five possible cases of abuse, "There was no evidence that any of the female children other than the five identified as having become pregnant between the ages of fifteen and seventeen were victims or potential victims of sexual or other physical abuse".

In addition to Texas, the group has compounds in Hildale, Mancos and many other locations. The church has around 10,000 members in total, and was founded in the 1930s. The church split from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints due to the fact that it abandoned polygamy.

The Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is led by Warren Jeffs – jailed last year for the rape and forced marriage of a 14 year old girl – is a breakaway branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which abandoned the practice of polygamy in 1890.

### **President Bush to meet with LDS Church leaders in Utah**

United States President George W.

Bush is set to meet with leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints next week in Utah. President Bush's primary purpose in visiting Utah is to raise money for Republican presidential candidate John McCain's general election campaign. The Deseret News and The Salt Lake Tribune have reported that the meeting is scheduled for May 29.

According to spokesmen for the church, also called the Mormon Church or LDS Church, President Bush will meet with the three-member First Presidency which includes the new president Thomas S. Monson. Monson became the 16th president of the Mormon Church in early February after the death of the previous president, Gordon B. Hinckley.

This is President Bush's first visit with the new First Presidency leadership since the death of former president Hinckley. Bush last met with the three Mormon Church leaders when he was in Utah for a speech at the American Legion convention in August 2006.

According to Deseret News President Bush will attend a US\$70,100-a-couple fundraiser and reception at the Deer Valley home of Mitt Romney, and may potentially stay overnight at Romney's vacation home. Money from the reception will go into a joint fund-raising account called McCain Victory 2008.

"Romney had a very powerful fundraising operation with a lot of donations coming out of this area, and of course now he can leverage that to help McCain," said Brigham Young University political science professor Quin Monson in a statement in The Salt Lake Tribune.

The Salt Lake Tribune reports that statements from McCain's campaign show he raised \$502,650 from Utah donors through the end of April. Romney had raised \$5.5 million before before dropping out of the Republican primary for the presidential nomination and subsequently endorsed McCain. Romney is the former governor of Massachusetts, and headed the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Utah.

### **Centennial of 'father of contemporary Thai cinema' celebrated**

Thailand's National Film Archive in Salaya, Nakhon Pathom unveiled a new museum and cinema on Thursday night for the 100th anniversary celebration of the birth of Rattana Pestjoni, a filmmaker who is considered the "father of contemporary Thai cinema".

With Pestonji's family, movie stars, filmmakers, government officials and fans on hand, the National Film Archive's museum was opened for tours, and the facility's 120-seat cinema hosted the screening of a documentary film, *Signature: The Life and Work of R.D. Pestonji*.

Pestonji was born in Bangkok on May 22, 1908, to a Parsi-Indian (ethnic Persian) family. For his first short film, *Tang*, in 1937, he received an award from Alfred Hitchcock at a film festival in Scotland. Pestonji directed his first feature film, *Dear Dolly*, in 1951. He was known for his skills as a cinematographer, and he shot the first Thai feature film to be submitted to an overseas film festival. Pestonji also pushed for innovations in the Thai film industry, such as using 35mm film, and raising the level of cinematography as an artistic

element of the films, said film historian Dome Sukwong, director of the National Film Archive.

The now-lost *Santi-Weena* was submitted to the Asia-Pacific Film Festival in 1954 in Tokyo. Pestonji served as cinematographer on it as well as *Forever Yours*, in 1955. He then directed four features, *Country Hotel* in 1957, *Dark Heaven* in 1958, *Black Silk* in 1961, and *Sugar Is Not Sweet* in 1964. His films were never box-office successes, which led to Pestonji retiring from feature-film work to make television commercials, Sukwong said.

Pestonji died of a heart attack on August 17, 1970 at the Montien Hotel Bangkok, while giving a speech to government officials and film industry executives about the prevalence of Hollywood films in Thailand's cinemas.

### *Pestonji's legacy*

Contemporary directors who were influenced by Pestonji include Wisit Sasanatieng and Pen-ek Ratanaruang (*Last Life in the Universe*). Sasanatieng was among the filmmakers present at Thursday's event.

"Prae Dum [*Black Silk*] is the film that remains my single major influence," Sasanatieng was quoted as saying by the Bangkok Post. Sasanatieng's colorful features, *Tears of the Black Tiger* and *Citizen Dog* bear many of the hallmarks of Pestonji's films. "Khun Ratana was not simply a master storyteller ... he knew how to use color, art direction and camera angles to create subtle nuances and charge the movie with strong emotions."

Pestonji's sons, Santa and Edel, have continued in the film business. The Bangkok film

production house their father started now houses a firm that hires out equipment and film crews to foreign films shooting on location in Thailand. Films that the company has been involved with include *Heaven & Earth* and *The Beach*. Pestonji's daughter, Ratanavadi Ratanabhand, was the lead actress in 1961's *Black Silk*.

#### *New facilities*

The Pestonji centennial celebration was the first major event held in the new facilities at the National Film Archive, which moved around 10 years ago to the Fine Arts Department compound in Nakhon Pathom Province, about 50 kilometers from Bangkok, where the archive had been previously located. The museum and cinema complex were built in the last year, and Thursday's event was the first major function held at the facility, said Chalida Uabumrungjit of the Thai Film Foundation, which has worked closely with the National Film Archive to preserve Pestonji's legacy. The foundation holds the rights to Pestonji's films and plans to issue a DVD set of his works later this year.

The centerpiece of the archive's museum is a wax figure of Pestonji, seated with his prized Mitchell camera in front of a recreation of the set from his 1957 musical comedy *Country Hotel*.

In a manner similar to Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, handprints, footprints and signatures of celebrities are being collected in the concrete outside the museum's cinema. That initiative started on Thursday with actor Prompong Nopparit, a spokesman for the Ministry of Culture, being the first to make his marks.

Other stars making impressions

included actor Suthep Wongkamheng, who starred in Pestonji's *Dark Heaven*. A rain storm dampened the festivities, but didn't keep 1970s action star Sombat Metanee from making his mark in the slab, albeit under cover of umbrellas. Other figures adding their marks to the wet cement were pioneering animator Payut Ngaokrachang and Santa Pestonji, Ratana's eldest son.

#### **No prosecution for UK minor who called Scientology a 'cult'**

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) of the government of the United Kingdom told the City of London Police on Friday that there will be no prosecution for a 15-year-old boy who called Scientology a "cult" at a May 10 peaceful protest. The City of London Police had previously confiscated the boy's protest placard and gave him a court summons at the demonstration, which took place near St Paul's Cathedral at the Church of Scientology's London headquarters on Queen Victoria Street. The boy's poster read: "Scientology is not a religion, it is a dangerous cult". The human rights organization Liberty has come out strongly against the City of London Police for their actions at the protest, and said they are pursuing an inquiry into the police force for what they say is a troubling freedom of speech issue.

The placard used by the boy, and the written warning issued by City of London Police  
Image: nickstone333.

Individuals from the group Anonymous have held monthly international protests against the Church of Scientology since February, as part of the anti-Scientology movement Project Chanology. The Project Chanology

movement began when the Church of Scientology attempted to get a leaked Scientology promotional video featuring Tom Cruise removed from websites YouTube and Gawker.com.

Members of Anonymous were motivated by the actions of the Church of Scientology, and bombarded Scientology websites and were successful in taking some of them down. Anonymous later changed tactics towards legal measures, and held international protests against Scientology on February 10, March 15, April 12, and most recently May 10.

"I am going to fight this and not take it down because I believe in freedom of speech."  
—15-year-old boy

City of London Police approached the 15-year-old boy at the May 10 protest and cited section five of the Public Order Act 1986, which deals with "harassment, alarm or distress". In response, the boy cited a 1984 judgment given by Mr. Justice Latey in the Family Division of the High Court of Justice of Her Majesty's Courts of Justice of England and Wales, in which Latey called Scientology a "cult" and said it was "corrupt, sinister and dangerous". In the actual 1984 judgment made by Judge Latey, he stated: "Scientology is both immoral and socially obnoxious. [...] In my judgement it is corrupt, sinister and dangerous. [...] It is dangerous because it is out to capture people, especially children and impressionable young people, and indoctrinate and brainwash them so that they become the unquestioning captives and tools of the cult, withdrawn from ordinary thought, living and relationships with others." The boy told fellow protesters he was not

going to take the sign down, saying: "If I don't take the word 'cult' down, here [holding up his sign], I will be either, I think, most likely arrested or [given] a summons. I am going to fight this and not take it down because I believe in freedom of speech, besides which I'm only fifteen."

"... it is not abusive or insulting and there is no offensiveness, as opposed to criticism, neither in the idea expressed nor in the mode of expression. No action will be taken against the individual."  
—Crown Prosecution Service

When the boy refused to take his sign down, City of London Police removed it, cited him with a court summons and informed him that the matter would be referred to the Crown Prosecution Service. The boy was the only protester who did not comply with the police requests to remove signs which referred to Scientology as a "cult". According to The Guardian, a CPS spokesman stated Friday that: "In consultation with the City of London police, we were asked whether the sign, which read 'Scientology is not a religion it is a dangerous cult', was abusive or insulting. Our advice is that it is not abusive or insulting and there is no offensiveness, as opposed to criticism, neither in the idea expressed nor in the mode of expression. No action will be taken against the individual."

"The CPS review of the case includes advice on what action or behaviour at a demonstration might be considered to be threatening, abusive or insulting. The force's policing of future demonstrations will reflect this advice," said a spokeswoman for the City of London Police in a statement in The Guardian.

The 15-year-old boy's mother called the CPS decision a "victory for free speech", saying: "We're all incredibly proud of him. We advised him to take the placard down when we realised what was happening but he said 'No, it's my opinion and I have a right to express it'."

The incident has generated significant interest on the Internet, from civil rights groups and anti-cult groups, and in the press. Shami Chakrabarti, director of Liberty, and Ian Haworth of the United Kingdom-based Cult Information Centre were highly critical of the actions of the City of London Police. George Pitcher of The Daily Telegraph called the actions of the City of London Police "a mockery of the law". Other publications also criticized the actions of the police, compared the boy to past civil rights protesters, and analyzed how the characterization of "cult" applied to Scientology. The Guardian reported that human rights activists "were outraged" when reports of the actions of the City of London Police at the protest surfaced this week. Marina Hyde wrote in a comment piece in The Guardian that the City of London Police should spend a little less time "reaching for the collar of free-speaking children". An article in The Guardian about the boy's court summons hit the front page of the website Slashdot on Wednesday, and an article about the statement by CPS hit the site's front page on Friday. The anti-Scientology website Enturbulation.org devoted its front page to the incident on Saturday.

"The police may have ended their inquiries into this tawdry incident but rest assured that Liberty's inquiry will continue."  
—James Welch, legal director at

Liberty

BBC News reported that attorneys for Liberty represented the 15-year-old boy to the CPS. In media statements Friday, Liberty said it would continue its inquiry into the actions of the City of London Police. "The police may have ended their inquiries into this tawdry incident but rest assured that Liberty's inquiry will continue. Democracy is all about clashing ideas and the police should protect peaceful protest, not stifle it," said James Welch, legal director at Liberty. "Reason has prevailed in the case of the anti-Scientology protester", wrote Welch in a comment piece in The Observer. According to The Press Association, Liberty's inquiry may result in actions taken against the City of London Police.

The City of London Police has faced controversy in the past for its close association with the Church of Scientology. When the City of London Scientology building opened in 2006, City of London Chief Superintendent Kevin Hurley praised Scientology in an appearance as guest speaker at the building's opening ceremony. Ken Stewart, another of the City of London's chief superintendents, has also appeared in a video praising Scientology. According to The Guardian over 20 officers for the City of London Police have accepted gifts from the Church of Scientology including tickets to film premieres, lunches and concerts at police premises.

Unlike the City of London Police, the Metropolitan Police Service (the territorial police force responsible for Greater London excluding the City of London) has not raised an issue with protesters using placards with similar wording at protests against Scientology,

according to The Guardian and Londonist.

Each of the Project Chanology international protests against Scientology has had a theme: the February protest called attention to the birthday of Lisa McPherson, who died under controversial circumstances while under the care of Scientology, the March protest was arranged to take place two days after Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard's birthday, the April protest highlighted the Church of Scientology's disconnection policy, and the May protest highlighted the Scientology practice of "Fair Game" and took place one day after the anniversary of the publication of Hubbard's book *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*. Another international protest is planned for June 14, and will highlight the Church of Scientology's elite "Sea Organization" or "Sea Org".

### **Myanmar to allow foreign aid says UN's Ban Ki Moon**

After travelling in-person to Myanmar, the Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-moon, has announced that international aid-workers will be granted access to the cyclone-ravaged country.

Ban, who met with Senior General Than Shwe, considered the head of Myanmar's military junta, told reporters, "I had a very good meeting with the senior general, particularly on these aid workers."

"He has agreed to allow all the aid workers, regardless of nationality. I urged him that it would be crucially important for him to allow aid workers as swiftly as possible and all these aid relief items also be delivered to the needy people as soon as possible."

International observers and aid organizations met the news with skepticism and were reported as "puzzled" and "surprised" at the announcement and expressed concerns that the offer was not genuine.

"We'll believe it when we see the aid workers on the ground in the delta," Zoya Phan, of the Burma Campaign UK, said. "The generals have a long track record of lying to the UN. If the regime is genuine, then we'll know within 24 hours, as they'll take down the army checkpoints which are stopping Burmese and international aid workers getting into the delta."

"This discrepancy is a confidence gap that has to be verified, that has to be reconciled," said the ASEAN secretary general, Surin Pitsuwan. "Whether the Sunday pledging conference will be successful or not depends on the ability to reconcile the difference."

The UN says that over a million people are still in dire need of food, water, shelter and medical supplies, while the official Myanmar position is that "the emergency phase of the operation is over."

"Seeing is believing," said Tom Casey of the United States Disaster Assistance Response Team to reporters in Washington. "We certainly will continue to test that by pushing for visas for our DART team, among others, and hopefully we'll see a change in behavior."

US aid workers are still awaiting visas before they can enter Myanmar. Team leader William Berger was given a tour of the affected region along with a briefing, though he was not allowed to give his own

assessment.

### **New law to help asbestos sufferers in Victoria, Australia**

New legislation in Victoria, Australia will provide for greater compensation for victims suffering from effects of exposure to asbestos. The legislation is called "Bernie Banton law", after the late campaigner for asbestos-related issues. The law will remove a restriction which prevented asbestos victims from making another claim after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Banton contracted mesothelioma after working for the Netherlands-based company James Hardie, and died in 2007.

Asbestos fibers lodged in the lungs  
Image: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Prior to the Banton law victims of asbestos exposure could seek compensation for asbestosis, a disease resulting from exposure which causes lung scarring, but were unable to seek compensation if they were later diagnosed with mesothelioma.

Mesothelioma is a cancer which develops in the sac surrounding the lungs and chest cavity, abdominal cavity, or the sac surrounding the heart. Patients with malignant mesothelioma generally do not have positive outcomes, and once diagnosed have six months to a year to live. Asbestos usage has been banned in Victoria, Australia since 2003.

Allowing an exception to the normal rule that court-awarded compensation is final will allow compensation for the true effects of asbestos exposure."

—John Brumby

Victorian Premier John Brumby

welcomed the legislation, saying: "Victorian workers deserve fair compensation for illnesses and injuries they have received just by doing their job." Brumby acknowledged that Victoria had lagged behind other states in its asbestos compensation practices. "Allowing an exception to the normal rule that court-awarded compensation is final will allow compensation for the true effects of asbestos exposure," explained Brumby.

Bernie Banton's widow, Karen Banton, stood alongside John Brumby as the legislation was announced, and spoke out in favor of the law. "The uncertainty that these Victorian families have suffered up until this point, the dilemma of whether I claim and whether I wait ... it would be a terrible choice to have to make," she said. She said her late husband would have been honored by the legislation's passage, and was appreciative that his name was associated with the cause of justice in the country. "I'm sure Bernie's looking down from heaven, feeling very honoured and humbled that his name continues to be associated with the fight to correct injustice," she said.

"There's a lot of asbestos around, this is a live issue for the community and we strongly welcome this initiative."  
—Steve Dargavel

The Australian Manufacturing Workers Union and the Victorian Trades Hall Council supported the legislation's passage, as did Martin Kingham of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Victoria. Kingham said that in the past asbestos sufferers were wary about whether or not to make a claim: "They've had to gamble on whether to make a claim now and to cut off any

compensation for more serious fatal illness or to, basically, sit it out and wait and see what happens to them and potentially not getting compensated for their original asbestosis."

"There's a lot of asbestos around, this is a live issue for the community and we strongly welcome this initiative," said Australian Manufacturing Workers Union Victorian secretary Steve Dargavel. Victorian Trades Hall Council secretary Brian Boyd called the legislation "a good and decent thing" but said more action was needed to better protect asbestos victims' families. The additional claims are expected to help approximately 50 people each year. The legislation will be introduced in the State Parliament next year.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

According to Colombian Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, FARC founder and commander Tirofijo died in March 26.

- In continuing battles against anti-foreigner violence in South Africa, police shoot and kill one man in Johannesburg. The Red Cross warns it is struggling to help the thousands of displaced peoples.

- Also in Colombia, a 5.6 earthquake with epicenter in the Department of Meta strikes the Central and West areas of the country; 30 deaths confirmed El Tiempo.

- Flooding in Chile kills at least five people, displaces at least 15,000 people and closes the Pan American Highway south of Santiago, Chile.

- A coroner suggests the entire fleet of British Royal Air Force Hawker Siddeley Nimrod aircraft

**Wikipedia Current Events**

should be grounded on safety concerns.

- Cyclone Nargis - The authorities in Myanmar allow foreign help into the country following initial resistance.

- Wen Jiabao, the Premier of China, estimates that the eventual death toll from the 2008 Sichuan earthquake could rise as high as "80,000 or more".

- Prince Joachim of Denmark marries French Marie Cavallier. Prince Joachim previously married to Hong Kong-born Alexandra Manley.

**Today in History**

1521 – The Diet of Worms declared Protestant Reformer Martin Luther an outlaw and a heretic, banning his literature, and requiring his arrest.

1946 – Abdullah bin Husayn, Emir of the Emirate of Transjordan, was proclaimed King of the renamed "Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan".

1961 – During a speech to a Joint Session of the United States Congress, U.S. President John F. Kennedy announced his support for the Apollo space program, with "the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth".

1977 – Star Wars, a science fantasy film written and directed by George Lucas, was released, becoming one of the most successful films of all time.

2000 – Israel withdrew its army from most of the Lebanese territory after 22 years of its first invasion in 1978.

May 25 is Independence Day in Jordan (1946); Liberation Day in Lebanon (2000); African Liberation Day in various African countries

**Quote of the Day**

Any man who can hitch the length and breadth of the galaxy, rough it, slum it, struggle against terrible odds, win through, and still knows where his towel is clearly a man to be reckoned with. ~ Douglas Adams in The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

**Word of the Day**

cornucopia n

1. An abundance or plentiful supply.
2. (originally) A mythical goat's horn, endlessly overflowing with fruit, flowers and grain, or full of whatever its owner wanted.

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