



### Top Stories

#### Man arrested in India after mid-air hijack threat on domestic flight

An Indian man has been arrested after threatening to hijack the domestic flight on which he was traveling on February 1. The flight was traveling between New Delhi and Goa in India. The IndiGo Airlines Airbus A320 was coming in to land at the time.



*Credit: Kprateek88  
CC-BY-SA*

#### Shoe thrown at Chinese PM during speech at Cambridge University in the UK

An unnamed 27-year-old man has been arrested and charged with "public order offenses" after he threw a shoe at the Chinese prime minister, Wen Jiabao while he was giving a speech at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom on Monday February 2. The speech was related to China's and the world economy titled See China in the Light of Her Development.



*Credit: World Economic Forum  
CC-BY-SA*

#### Automobile sales in the United States down sharply

Sales of automobiles in the United States fell as much as 35% in January, compared to the same month a year ago, as manufacturers reported their

### Top Stories

January sales. Chrysler was hardest hit among the domestically owned manufacturers with a plunge of 55%, while General Motors reported a 49% drop in sales.

### Wikipedia Current Events

Tom Daschle withdraws his nomination to serve as Barack Obama's Secretary of Health and Human Services and Nancy Killefer withdraws her nomination to serve as Obama's Chief Performance Officer, both due to tax problems.

- Barack Obama nominates Judd Gregg, a Republican Senator for New Hampshire, for United States Secretary of Commerce.
- The Governor of New Hampshire John Lynch nominates Republican Bonnie Newman to replace Gregg in the Senate.
- Israel announces restrictions on Al Jazeera broadcasts within its borders.
- Colonel Geva Rapp returns home to Israel, fearing arrest on war crimes charges while in the United Kingdom.
- Palestinians move to demand a probe into alleged war crimes committed in Gaza. The Palestinian Authority has recognized the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, but Israel continues to deny the court's application to them.
- Amid a budget dispute, the government of California runs out

### Wikipedia Current Events

of money and begins issuing IOUs on all expenditures not required by law.

- Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security eliminates a Pakistan led terrorist cell responsible for at least six suicide bombings in Kabul.
- The Sri Lanka Armed Forces claim to have captured an underground bunker complex used by the leaders of the Tamil Tigers.

#### Automobile sales in the United States down sharply

Sales of automobiles in the United States fell as much as 35% in January, compared to the same month a year ago, as manufacturers reported their January sales.

Ford Motor Company sales dropped 42% last month from the previous year. General Motors, reported a 49% decline. Chrysler was hardest hit among the domestically owned manufacturers with a plunge of 55%.

The decline in sales has not been limited to just US manufacturers. Japanese automaker Toyota reported a 32% drop in US sales from a year earlier, Nissan Motors dropped 30%, and Honda sales dropped 28%.

Subaru and South Korean Hyundai Motor Company were two of the few auto firms that reported an increase in sales. They posted

gains of eight and fourteen percent gains, respectively.

On an annual basis, sales overall have also been plummeting. Industry-wide US car sales dropped 18% last year to 13.2 million automobiles.

GM announced today that it will offer voluntary buyouts to 22,000 employees in the US, in an effort to reduce its expenditures.

Last month, GM and Chrysler were given loans worth US\$17.4 billion from the government after they warned of imminent bankruptcy.

### **GM, Chrysler offer buyouts and early retirement to workers**

General Motors and Chrysler have both begun to offer layoff packages to their workforces.

The automobile manufacturers have been hard hit in the recent economic downturn and have been forced to seek federal aid from the U.S. government. Reports say that GM's package includes a \$20,000 cash payment and a \$25,000 new vehicle voucher. Chrysler will offer a \$25,000 vehicle voucher and \$50,000 with healthcare and \$75,000 without. Both will offer the deal to most United Auto Workers (UAW) union members - 62,000 at GM, which is seeking to cut 31,500 jobs by 2012.

The two companies have received \$13.4 billion in federal loans to keep them operating, but Congress required them to produce viability plans to demonstrate they were making significant cost cuts and labor concessions in return for the money. UAW workers in Detroit earn \$28 an hour; their replacements will earn about half that. The UAW's "jobs bank", a system where workers without

duties are still paid, has stopped at both companies.

GM is also attempting to engineer a debt-for-equity swap, reducing its liabilities from \$27.5 billion in unsecured debt to \$9.2 billion. It is also seeking to sell a truck manufacturer, the Delco Electronics parts group and the Hummer and Saab Automobile vehicle brands.

The entire motor manufacturing sector has suffered under the economic downturn, with the Ford Motor Company NYSE: F announcing a \$14.6 billion annual loss, although it has not sought federal aid. GM and Chrysler both ran out of operating funds in December, leading to the federal bailout.

### **Scandinavian Airlines System to cut 8,600 jobs**

Sweden-based airline Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) said it will reduce payrolls by 8,600 jobs as part of its "Core SAS" restructuring plan.

The airline will cut 3,000 staff directly and eliminate 5,600 by divesting business ventures, reducing the workforce by 40% to 14,000. The restructuring comes after SAS posted losses of 6.32 billion Swedish krona in 2008. The company is also to sell airBaltic and Spanair and its stakes in Air Greenland, BMI, Estonian Air, Skyways Express, Spirit Airlines and Trust. Spanair is to be sold for €1. The company intends to switch to concentrating on its core Nordic market.

SAS is to seek 6 billion krona from shareholders, while the government of Denmark is to invest 600 million Danish kroner in the company. Currently, Denmark owns 14.3% of SAS, Sweden has

21.4% and Norway 14.3%. The rest is publicly traded.

The airline was founded in 1946 when the state airlines of Denmark, Sweden and Norway merged their longhaul services.

### **Baby in California born with 12 functioning fingers and toes, in a rare case of polydactyly**

A six-pound infant born in San Francisco, California has six perfectly formed and functional fingers and toes on his hands and feet, so that it isn't considered a disability or deformity, say doctors at Saint Luke's Hospital who were amazed by the oddity.

In a medical rarity, super baby Kamani Hubbard was born two weeks ago with 24 working digits. He is healthy and home with his parents in Daly City, California. Polydactyly, a congenital disorder is not uncommon in humans and animals, including cats, but to happen on both hands and feet is a rare hereditary condition.

"Nurses and doctors, looked so normal they couldn't tell, they told me he was six pounds in good health, that was all they said," said Miryoki Gross, Hubbard's mother. Her baby's specialness didn't even show up on prenatal ultrasounds. "I heard nothing before I gave birth so I'm still in shock, kinda," Gross added. Despite the mother's shock, Kamani's father, Kris, was the first to notice the condition.

Polydactyly (from Ancient Greek means 'πολύς' (polus) or "many" + 'δάκτυλος' (daktulos) "finger[s]"), also known as polydactylism, sexdactyly, hexadactyly, or hexadactylism, is a congenital physical disorder consisting of supernumerary fingers or toes.

In Kamani's case, however, all of the digits are perfectly formed and function or work normally. "I was in amazement, it took a little time for me to take it all in," said Kris, a postal worker, who has a family history of polydactylism, but none of his relatives can remember it happening on both hands and feet.

Mostly, cases of polydactyly are surgically corrected. Kris himself had nubs of sixth digits, which were removed during his early childhood, for having been non-functional. "My son has six fingers then I saw toes, and I thought, this is quite unique. Some family members have had six fingers, not completely developed. But not the toes," Kris noted.

"I would be tempted to leave those fingers in place. I realize children would tease each other over the slightest things, and having extra digits on each hand is more than slight. But imagine what sort of a pianist a 12-fingered person would be imagine what sort of a flamenco guitarist, if nothing else think of their typing skills," Dr. Treece remarked.

"I just want him to see what greatness will be in store for him," said Kris.

Fully developed and functional extra digits on both hands and feet are considered very rare as a genetic trait in medical history, amid some partial development of an extra digit occurs about twice in every 1,000 white male births. Ordinarily, polydactylism appears as an extra piece of non-functional tissue, typically occurring as an extra finger, sometimes with a bone, but no joint.

"It's merely an interesting and beautiful variation rather than a worrisome thing," said Dr. Michael

Treece, a St. Luke's Hospital pediatrician, and the OBGYN who delivered Kamani. He has postaxial polydactyly, which is 10 times more likely to occur in black children, and also more likely to appear in boys.

According to the Holy Bible, Goliath was known to have had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. The Old Testament passage in question goes as follows: In still another battle, which took place at Gath, there was a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot—twenty-four in all. He also was descended from Rapha. Again there was war at Gath, where there was a man of great stature who had twenty-four fingers and toes, six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot; and he also was descended from the giants. —2 Samuel 21:20; 1 Chronicles 20:6 - KJV

Blues guitarist Hound Dog Taylor, Get Carter, Little Tich, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and several other figures in history have had polydactyly. Sid Wilson, a turntablist of Slipknot, had been born with an extra finger and toe on his hands and feet which were removed shortly after his birth as doctors considered them to be dead.

### **Shoe thrown at Chinese PM during speech at Cambridge University in the UK**

An unnamed 27-year-old man has been arrested and charged with "public order offenses" after he threw a shoe at the Chinese prime minister, Wen Jiabao while he was giving a speech at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom on Monday February 2. The speech was related to China's and the world economy titled See China in the Light of Her Development.

Wen was on a seven day tour of Europe, his final stop being the University.

The man yelled "dictator" and asked the crowd, "how can this university prostitute itself with this dictator here, how can you listen...to him unchallenged," as he threw the shoe at the prime minister. Wen called the incident "despicable". The shoe never hit Wen, but landed a few feet from where he was standing.

"His [the man's] behavior met strong opposition of the entire audience. He was booed and taken away. The whole audience gave long and warm applause to Premier Wen for his excellent speech. The facts demonstrate that the despicable conduct of this troublemaker will win no sympathy, and will not hold back the tide of friendly cooperation between China and Britain," said the Chinese government in a statement posted on their website.

The University has also apologized for the incident saying, "[we] are very sorry that the incident happened and the person will be dealt with according to law. The university is a place for discussion, debate and considered argument, not for shoe throwing". According to authorities, there was never any real threat to the prime minister. The man will appear before a judge on February 10.

On Sunday December 14, 2008, an Iraqi journalist for an Egyptian Newspaper named Muntazer al-Zaidi was tackled by authorities after he threw his shoes at United States president George W. Bush during a press conference in Baghdad. Bush had made a surprise last visit to Iraq to sign a new security pact brokered by Iraq and the U.S. Bush ducked as the

flying shoes zipped past him, barely missing the former U.S. president.

In Arabic culture, hitting or throwing shoes at someone so the soles hit them is considered a great insult. In 2003, when Iraqi citizens tore down the statue of Saddam Hussein in downtown Baghdad, they began to smack it with the soles of their shoes.

**Yahoo announces closure of Briefcase**

Yahoo's Briefcase service is to be closed after ten years.

The directory-cum-internet portal's Briefcase, which offers 30mb of online storage of files up to 5mb, is to be shut down on March 30. Data not retrieved before then will be deleted.

Usage of the service has declined in recent years and has been superceded by other companies' offers. Google has plans for a GDrive service, whilst Microsoft's Live Mesh is now in beta. Yahoo! Mail now has unlimited storage, as do paid accounts with the Yahoo-owned photo- and video-sharing site Flickr. A spokesperson of Yahoo said that "[d]iscontinuing the service will allow us to focus our efforts on more broadly used products".

Yahoo has been losing market value since Microsoft's deal to buy the company fell through in May 2008 and the company has reduced staff. Yahoo still dominates the market for display adverts but this market is shrinking against targeted search adverts, where Google dominates.

**Man arrested in India after mid-air hijack threat on domestic flight**

An Indian man has been arrested

after threatening to hijack the domestic flight on which he was traveling on Sunday February 1. The flight was traveling between New Delhi and Goa in India. The IndiGo Airlines Airbus A320 was coming in to land at the time.

Jitendra Kumar has been charged with criminal intimidation and endangering life and personal safety. Another man and a woman were also detained but not charged. The jet moved to a quiet area of Gandhi International Airport where armed security forces surrounded it, arresting Kumar, who was unarmed.

The jet was carrying 160 people when Kumar, who stood up and refused to sit down when asked by flight attendants. He instead threatened to blow the aircraft up. It was suspected he may be drunk, but he was instead found to have low blood pressure. The other two were arrested as they had been seen speaking to Kumar earlier.

All passengers disembarked safely after about three hours. If convicted, Kumar faces up to seven years in prison. Indian airports and security remain on high alert after terrorist attacks in Mumbai saw gunmen kill 164 people on November 26.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- 100 basis points to 3.25%, the lowest level since 1964.
- Iran announces the launch of its first domestically constructed satellite, Omid, into orbit.
- Gunmen attack a police station in Athens with a hand grenade and automatic weapons fire.
- Suspected Taliban militants blow up a bridge in the border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan, suspending NATO supply lines.
- Indian Assistant Advocate General Anuradha Bali accuses former Deputy Chief Minister Chander Mohan of mistreatment following their split in late January.
- The Glastonbury Festival sells out five months ahead of schedule and with no headlining acts announced.
- The United Kingdom struggles to cope with its heaviest snowfalls for 18 years, with the forced closure of 4,500 schools and much traffic and public transport chaos.
- The British government is criticised after flying the Union Flag upside down at the signing of a trade agreement with China.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- The United States, European Union, Japan and Norway urge the Tamil Tigers to lay down their arms and enter negotiations with the government.
- The Government of Australia announces a \$A42 billion economic stimulus package to revive the economy in response to the global recession.
- The Reserve Bank of Australia cuts Australian interest rates by

**Today in History**

- 960 – Emperor Taizu began his reign in China, initiating the Song Dynasty period that would eventually last for more than three centuries.
- 1703 – Forty-six of the Forty-Seven Ronin committed seppuku (ritual suicide) in Edo, present-day Tokyo, as recompense for avenging the death of their master, Daimyo of Akō Asano Naganori.
- 1859 – German scholar Constantin von Tischendorf rediscovered the

Codex Sinaiticus, a 4th century uncial manuscript of the Greek Bible, in Saint Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt.

1957 – USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine, logged her 60,000th nautical mile, matching the endurance of the fictional Nautilus described in Jules Verne's novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.

2003 – Under a new Constitutional Charter, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was reconstituted into a loose confederation of Serbia and Montenegro.

February 04 is Independence Day in Sri Lanka (1948)

**Quote of the Day**

How long can men thrive between walls of brick, walking on asphalt pavements, breathing the fumes of coal and of oil, growing, working, dying, with hardly a thought of wind, and sky, and fields of grain, seeing only machine-made beauty, the mineral-like quality of life. This is our modern danger — one of the waxen wings of flight. It may cause our civilization to fall unless we act quickly to counteract it, unless we realize that human character is more important than efficiency, that education consists of more than the mere accumulation of knowledge.

~ Charles Lindbergh

**Word of the Day**

raconteur n

1. A storyteller, especially a person noted for telling stories with skill and wit.

<b>About Wikinews</b>
available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.
<b>License</b>
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License. Articles published in this Print edition were created by Wikinewsies. Other content released under the GNU Free Documentation License.
To view a copy of the CC-BY license, visit: <a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/</a> or send a letter to Creative Commons 543 Howard Street, 5th Floor San Francisco, California, 94105, USA
To view a copy of the GFDL, visit: <a href="http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html">http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html</a>
Wikipedia Current Events <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Current_events">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Current_events</a> Today in History <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page</a> Quote of the Day <a href="http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page">http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page</a> Word of the Day <a href="http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page">http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page</a>
<b>About Wikinews Print Edition</b>
For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit: <a href="http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print">http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print</a>

<b>About Wikinews</b>
We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including <b>you</b> ) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. By making our content perpetually