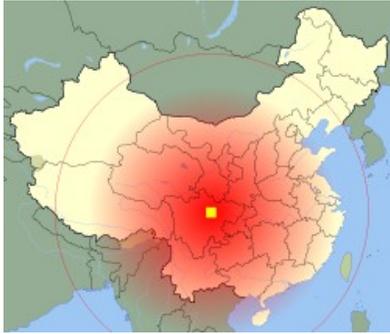




Top Stories



Large earthquake hits central China

A magnitude 7.9 earthquake struck eastern Sichuan Province in China at 6:28 UTC on Monday killing at least 8,700 people and injuring over 10,000. At least 900 students are reported to be trapped in rubble when their schools collapsed.

UK opposition leader says Myanmar aid should be air-dropped

David Cameron, Conservative Party, said that aid to Burma/Myanmar should be air-dropped if the country's government does not improve access for aid workers. Foreign Minister David Miliband disagrees, saying aid is not effective without on-the-ground experts.

Flight 38 suffered low fuel pressure

The investigation of the British Airways Flight 38 crash on January 17 has concluded that the engines stalled because of low fuel pressure. This was the first loss of a Boeing 777. Thirteen people were injured, one seriously.

Republic of Molossia announces new customs station

On May 11, President Kevin Baugh of the Republic of Molossia, a micronation located near Dayton, Nevada, inaugurated his country's first ever customs station near the American border.

Wikipedia Current Events

A magnitude 7.9 earthquake hits China's Sichuan province, killing at least 10,000 people.

- The first US relief airlift for victims of the cyclone takes off from U-Tapao International Airport in Thailand, as the official death toll reaches 32,000.

- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon says he is "immensely frustrated" at the State Peace and Development Council's slow response to the cyclone.

- Hezbollah clash with forces loyal to Druze leader Walid Jumblatt in the Shouf mountains, and with Sunni supporters of the government in Tripoli.

- US President George W. Bush offers to help improve the Lebanese Armed Forces.

- Shootings are reported in Khartoum, Sudan, one day after the rebel attack. Islamist leader Hassan al-Turabi is released from custody after being interrogated by police.

- Chad closes its border with Sudan and severs economic relations after being accused of

Wikipedia Current Events

backing the attack.

- Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's party Pakistan Muslim League (N) announces it has decided to leave the governing coalition because of differences over how to restore around 60 judges sacked by President Pervez Musharraf on November 3, 2007.

- Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez nationalises steel firm Ternium-Sidor, which is mainly owned by Argentina's Techint.

- Israeli police raid the Jerusalem city hall to seize documents related to alleged bribes received by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert from businessman Moshe Talansky.

- The President of Bolivia approves recall elections for himself and the governors of the nine departments on August 10, 2008.

- Russia's new PM Vladimir Putin announces his cabinet.

- United States federal authorities start sending aid to Missouri, Oklahoma and Georgia as the total death toll from the May 2008 tornado outbreak sequence reaches 22.

Dottie Rambo dies in tour bus crash

74-year-old American gospel singer and writer Joyce 'Dottie' Rambo died Sunday morning when her tour bus crashed into a highway embankment in southwestern Missouri.

The wreck occurred two miles east of Mount Vernon, Missouri, along Interstate 44. Police say seven other people were hospitalized with moderate to severe injuries in Springfield. Dottie was headed for a Mother's Day concert in North Richland Hills, Texas, when the accident occurred.

"I know Dottie is in heaven in the arms of God right now, but our earth angel will surely be missed," said Dolly Parton in a statement. A spokesperson for her recording label confirmed to a Knoxville, Tennessee television station that Dottie was asleep at the time of the accident.

Dottie started her career at the age of 12, and has written more than 2,500 songs since. She won a Grammy Award in 1968 for her album entitled "The Soul of Me". She was inducted into several halls-of-fame including the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in 2007, and into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame twice, first as a soloist in 1982 and again in 2001 as a member of the Rambos singing group with her daughter and Buck Rambo, former husband. Her newest album is set for release this summer and is entitled "Sheltered".

Republic of Molossia announces new customs station

On May 11, President Kevin Baugh of the Republic of Molossia, a micronation located near Dayton, Nevada, inaugurated his country's first ever customs station near the border with the United States, in the capital city of Espera.

It was built after Baugh noticed that the tiny nation had no welcoming spot for its visitors. Though the station is unmanned as of now, there are plans for a

customs officer to be stationed there in the near future. A sign asks that foreigners leave their pocket change as an entry fee.

Several items are banned in Molossia, including firearms, tobacco and incandescent light bulbs. The customs station was designed to ensure that these are not illegally brought into the country from the United States.

British Airways Flight 38 suffered low fuel pressure; investigation continues

The investigation into the crash of a British Airways Boeing 777 (B777) written off on January 17 after landing short of the runway at London's Heathrow International Airport has been updated. The crash of Flight 38 injured one passenger seriously and 12 others on board, including four crew members, as well as being the first hull loss of a B777.

The latest word from the United Kingdom's Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) is that both engines had low fuel pressure in their high pressure (HP) fuel inlets, leading to the failure of both engines. Having departed from Beijing, China the aircraft was on final approach for landing at Heathrow when the thrust on the engines first reduced and became unresponsive, then ceased completely. The copilot, who was flying the aircraft at the time, received significant media praise for gliding the aircraft past housing and airport barriers to crash land the airliner onto the grass at the runway threshold, likely saving the 136 passengers and 16 crew from death or further injury as well as preventing potential ground casualties. The landing gear collapsed and the airframe, wings and engines were significantly damaged.

Each HP inlet also exhibited "unusual and fresh cavitation damage to the outlet ports consistent with operation at low inlet pressure", according to the AAIB's latest report on investigatory progress, which also states engine failure was definitely caused by low pressure and that the autothrottle had opened up appropriate valves fully in an effort to increase fuel flow, but to no avail. The report indicates the investigation is now focusing on an area of unusually cold air over Russia which the B777 passed through at 40,000 feet on its journey. Between the Ural mountain range and East Scandinavia the air was found to have been as low as -76°C. The AAIB has ruled out fuel turning to ice as the fuel temperature never fell below -34°C. This is compared to an average freezing temperature of -47°C for jet fuel and test showing the fuel in the B777's tanks needed cooled to at least -57°C before it froze. Floating ice particles had previously been suggested as a possible causal factor.

However, it was stated that although the fuel did not freeze, it could have become unusually thickened, restricting its flow through the HP inlets, although the temperatures did remain within what are currently considered safe levels. Another possible explanation was that the fuel was contaminated or of inferior quality, but the AAIB has ruled this out. Also disproved are suggestions that the plane suffered a bird strike or that it was disrupted by electromagnetic interference from jamming devices set up to protect a motorcade carrying Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

The report says that there was also no evidence to suggest any control systems failed, that the aircraft encountered a wake vortex or that there was core engine icing or other evidence that the engines suffered core lock. There was no damage to the fuel systems excluding that caused by the low pressure and no blockages, therefore it is suspected that fuel flow was restricted.

The investigation has also begun analysing previous flights on comparable aircraft in a large sample of flights. Thus far, no parameters present on Flight 38 have been found that differ significantly from anything previously encountered. The purpose is primarily to identify potentially troublesome combinations of unusual operational parameters.

The report concludes by stating that interested parties to the investigation, specifically the Federal Aviation Administration, the European Aviation Safety Agency, the Civil Aviation Authority and British Airways are being kept fully informed of the investigation's progress.

Although this shows some progress, according to David Learmount, operations and safety editor at periodical industry magazine Flight International, "This report takes us absolutely nowhere, I think they still have no idea."

The B777 has never had any other hull losses or any fatal accidents and is considered to have one of the world's safest commercial airliners. According to one spokesman for British Airways "It has one of the best safety records of any commercial aircraft. At no stage since the accident has the

AAIB, Boeing or Rolls Royce advised against the continued operation of the Boeing 777."

The engines underwent analysis at manufacturer Rolls-Royce's facility in Derby, while airframer Boeing is studying the fuel systems in the United States. Rolls Royce's engine test bed was modified to replicate control inputs from aircraft control systems, and Boeing are working at replicating the cold conditions experienced over Eastern Europe. The investigation is ongoing.

Polish humanitarian Irena Sendler dies at age 98

Irena Sendler, a Polish humanitarian who saved the lives of 2,500 Jewish people during World War II, has died today in a Warsaw hospital. She was 98.

She was born on February 15, 1910 in Otwock, Poland.

In 1943, she was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo, but refused to give up the names of the children.

In 2007, she was honoured by the National Assembly for organising the "rescue of the most defenceless victims of the Nazi ideology: the Jewish children."

UK opposition leader calls for Burma aid to be dispatched by air if access for aid workers does not improve

David Cameron, the leader of the main UK opposition party, the Conservative Party, has said that aid to Burma should be dispatched by air if the Burmese government does not improve access to the country for aid workers.

David Cameron said this in a statement, which was released today. Below is part of the statement: "If the Burmese

government does not agree to the distribution of aid on the scale required, then the case for unilateral delivery of aid by the international community will only grow stronger. There was general frustration at what the United Nations itself can or would do. Again, as time runs out for the people of the Irrawaddy Delta, and as a fresh storm approaches the area this week, the case for the United Nations invoking the 'responsibility to protect' - which could trigger action by the rest of the international community - grows stronger too. The argument against this is that China - and Russia - would be bound to block it. But the Chinese have a choice: either they put effective pressure on the regime to save lives, in which case aid will get through - or not, in which case the argument for invoking the UN's 'responsibility to protect' will get stronger still."

However David Miliband, British Foreign Secretary and Labour Party member, told the BBC's Politics Show yesterday that air delivery is "not a very effective way of delivering aid" and that "humanitarian experts and aid workers who make all the difference on the ground are clear that that is very much the third, fourth, fifth or even sixth best solution."

Nick Clegg, leader of Britain's second largest opposition party, the Liberal Democrats, took Cameron's side however, saying that the international community ought to support direct aid-dropping "to show that we mean business".

22,464 people have been confirmed dead from Cyclone Nargis, with the majority of the casualties having taken place in

Burma. Only once rescue workers reached the hardest hit areas of the storm did they begin to realize the extent of damage that had occurred. At least 10,000 people died in one town alone, Bogalay in the Pyapon District of the country.

The United Nations has reported that one million people are homeless, or in need of help in some other way.

2007/08 Bundesliga: MSV Duisburg vs. Bayern Munich

MSV Duisburg

2–3 Bayern Munich

Bayern Munich's win over MSV Duisburg condemned Duisburg to second division football next term.

Bayern Munich took a 3-0 lead after 20 minutes, an Andreas Ottl goal along with quick-fire Lukas Podolski brace ensuring the champions had a comfortable ride through to half time.

However, the match took a sudden and dramatic twist in the ten minutes following the restart as Mihai Tararache and Markus Daun scored to hauled the Duisburg right back into the game, and an upset briefly appeared a possibility. However, Bayern Munich would go onto a comfortable win.

Large earthquake hits central China

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) a magnitude 7.9 earthquake has struck eastern Sichuan Province in China. The USGS first reported the quake to be a magnitude 7.8 which hit at 6:28:00 UTC. Officials say that at least 10,000 may have been killed and local reports indicate over 10,000 injured.

At least 107 people, some of them school children, were killed when

two schools collapsed. It is reported that 900 students remain trapped in the rubble. Two people were killed after a water tower fell over. According to the USGS, damage is expected to be "very heavy" and that "some reports of damage have been received. Felt widely throughout China." Officials now fear landslides and mudslides.

"The epicenter of today's quake was shallow, which means it released more destructive energy. We have to guard against mudslides and collapsing buildings," said China Seismology Bureau scientist, Zhang Guomin.

The quake's epicenter was located in the Aba prefecture, 90 kilometers (55 miles) west, northwest of Chengdu, Sichuan, China and was recorded at a depth of 10 k.m. (6.2 miles). At least 11,000 people reside in the area, and because of poor communications due to the quake, the total extent of the damage is not known.

Several counties have been hit hard, including Beichuan, in which 80% of the buildings have been reported to have collapsed. Deaths from this area have not been accurately accounted for yet. In another county, already 3,000-5,000 are reported to have died, with a further 10,000 injured.

The quake could be felt as far away as Bangkok, Thailand, Taiwan, Vietnam, Shanghai and Beijing. At least 13 large aftershocks with a magnitude ranging from 4.9 to 6.0 have been recorded.

This is the largest earthquake to strike the region in almost 60 years. The deadliest quake in China's history was of magnitude

7.5, striking Tangshan in 1976. Approximately 250,000 people were killed.

Ben Folds performs at Western Connecticut State University

Friday, May 9, Ben Folds played at Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) in Danbury, Connecticut, United States. Wikinews was there for the concert.

Billed as the main event for WCSU's annual "West Fest", the concert took place in the Feldman Arena, which is part of the O'Neill Center on the western campus of the university.

The opening act for Folds was Julia Nunes, who by all accounts is on her first tour. Nunes gained attention on YouTube and got featured on the front page for her quirky, self-recorded performances.

Nunes is a graduate of Fairport High School, New York and is now a college freshman. Nunes performed a half-hour set of songs, about half of which were of her own composition and the rest covers of other artists. During the first half of her set she played the ukulele and thereafter the guitar.

Despite Nunes' well-received set, it was clear that the crowd was there to see Ben Folds perform. The American singer-songwriter and former frontman of the musical group Ben Folds Five is widely acclaimed for his prowess as a pianist, songwriter and performer.

Ben Folds performed unaccompanied, aside from "tambourine man", a stage hand who appeared briefly during three songs. Folds told the audience that he had been nervous as this was his first solo performance in "a

while."

During the 100 minute concert, Ben Folds played many of his hits, including "Rockin' the Suburbs", "Annie Waits", "Still Fighting It" and "Zak and Sara".

Folds also played a couple of songs that he said he wrote during a contract dispute with a record company. He wrote the songs because they were "mandatory" in his contract. According to Folds, he asked how many songs he had to write to get out of his contract. They told him, he had to write 4.6 songs to complete his obligation. Thusly, one of the songs was called, "One Down And 3.6 to Go".

Near the end of the set, Ben Folds stood on his piano and directed the crowd as a choir. The audience was eager to participate in this experiment, which consisted of humming in different notes, and seemed to enjoy it. Folds seemed quite earnest in his appreciation of the audience's efforts.

After the set ended, the enthusiastic crowd of mostly WCSU students started to call out for Folds to reappear. He duly acquiesced and performed a few more songs before the crowd would go home.

Today in History

1619 – Dutch statesman Johan van Oldenbarnevelt was executed in The Hague after having been accused of treason.

1848 – Maamme, the national anthem of Finland written by German composer Fredrik Pacius and Finnish poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg, was performed for the first time.

1846 – The United States declared war on Mexico after a series of disputes in the wake of the 1845 U.S. annexation of Texas, starting

the Mexican-American War.
 1888 – Isabel the Redeemer signed the Lei Áurea into law, formally abolishing slavery in Brazil.
 1912 – The Royal Flying Corps (later the Royal Air Force) was established in the United Kingdom.
 1917 – Our Lady of Fatima: Ten-year old Lúcia Santos and her siblings Francisco and Jacinta Marto reportedly began experiencing a Marian apparition near Fátima, Portugal.
 1969 – Chinese-Malay race riots began in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, leaving at least 190 people dead, and leading the government to declare a state of emergency and suspend Parliament until 1971.
 May 13 is Rotuma Day in Fiji

Quote of the Day

Death and Light are everywhere, always, and they begin, end, strive, attend, into and upon the Dream of the Nameless that is the world, burning words within Samsara, perhaps to create a thing of beauty.
 ~ Roger Zelazny in Lord of Light

Word of the Day

- hypercube n
- (geometry) A geometric figure which is analogous to a cube in three dimensions.
 - A tesseract.

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