



Top Stories

Russian Boeing 737 crashes with 88 aboard; All feared dead

According to Russian officials, a Aeroflot Airline, Russian Boeing



737 has crashed near the city of Perm with 87 people aboard, all feared to

have been killed. There were six crew and 82 passengers aboard the plane, which included one baby

Plans set in motion for the removal of Bob Barr as the Libertarian Party's U.S. presidential nominee

There is now a serious effort in the Libertarian Party to remove former congressman Bob Barr as its presidential nominee. A motion

has been written calling for his removal and at least one representative of the Libertarian National Committee has expressed a willingness to make it. If and when the motion is seconded, it will be brought to voting.

New polls show third party U.S. presidential candidates varying radically in popularity

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conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs, has independent Ralph Nader leading Libertarian Party nominee Bob Barr at 2%. The other, conducted by the John Birch Society, has Constitution Party nominee Chuck Baldwin leading all candidates - including those of the two major parties - at 33%.

Work on Lehman Brothers' rescue to continue over weekend

Lehman Brothers, a major American investment firm, is spending the weekend trying to find an investor that would save the firm from complete collapse. The company has lost 80 percent of its stock value since Monday, when it announced that it had not secured a deal with the Korean Development Bank, which was widely expected to occur. On Wednesday, Lehman published their biggest loss in the 158 years of their existence.

Wikipedia Current Events

city.

Child stabbed in West Bank arson, Israeli settlers retaliate

A series of clashes in the West Bank have left several injured, following an arsonist's targeting of the Israeli settlement of Yitzhar.

An unknown Palestinian man began setting fire to several buildings in the village, when a 9-year old child saw him and started shouting. The man stabbed the child, causing only light injury, but sparking retribution from hundreds of Israeli settlers who attacked the Palestinian village of Assira Kubilyeh, smashing windows, shooting erratically and overturning a vehicle.

The child was taken to an Israeli hospital with light injuries.

The military reports that they had worked to remove the settlers from the village, imposed a curfew and confiscated weapons from two Israeli settlers. Palestinian sources report six injuries while the security forces reported four.

In recent days the area, a part of the Shomron district, registered a number of incidents, where on a number of occasions settlers from both Yitzhar and Shalhevet accused Palestinians of coming to their area and burning fields. On the opposite, Palestinians had claimed that settlers caused damage to plantations and property, and attacked farmers.

Wikipedia Current Events

Boeing 737 Aeroflot Flight 821 crashes near the city of Perm in Russia, killing all 88 on board.

- Brazil suffers severe natural gas shortages following the cut off of natural gas supplies from Bolivia, which provides half of Brazil's natural gas.
- Government officials announce they plan to arrest Pando Governor Leopoldo Fernandez and that troops from Cobija airport will be sent to retake the

New polls show third party U.S. presidential candidates varying radically in popularity

Two nationwide polls released this week, one conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs and the other by the John Birch Society (JBS), show several third party U.S. presidential candidates varying radically in popularity.

Among the 1,018 adults surveyed in the Ipsos poll, 48% said they would vote for Democratic Party nominee Barack Obama, while 42% said they would vote for Republican Party nominee John McCain. 2% support independent Ralph Nader and 1% of respondents said they would cast their ballots for Libertarian Party nominee Bob Barr. The margin of error was reported as +/-3.1%.

The John Birch Society's online poll, however, is showing very different numbers. In it, in which 5,972 took part from late June through last week, Constitution Party nominee Chuck Baldwin leads Barr, McCain and Obama at 1,972 votes (33%). Baldwin is trailed by Barr, who received 1,712 votes (28.7%). Following Barr is McCain with 947 votes (15.9%) and, in last place, Obama with 341 votes (5.7%). 1,000 voters (16.7%) said that they were not voting for any of the candidates mentioned. The JBS poll does not cite any polling methods or margins of errors, and according to Wikipedia, the society has previously described itself as ultraconservative and this may have influenced the result.

It should be noted that both of the polls were taken before Barr's controversial snubbing of Republican Congressman Ron Paul's third party unity conference on Wednesday. Many of Barr's

supporters have since revoked their endorsements of him and joined other presidential campaigns, mainly Baldwin's and Nader's.

Channel Tunnel between France and Britain resumes limited service after major fire

The Channel Tunnel, which runs between France and Britain, has resumed limited services after an earlier fire. Of the two tunnels, only the South tunnel has been reopened to the trains that run the route, the blaze having seriously damaged the North tunnel.

The fire started on a freight train loaded with lorries. It burned for 16 hours and at its hottest was at 1,000°C. 27 lorries, six freight cars and a locomotive have been damaged. Significantly, the damage to the tunnel itself runs along a 700m stretch and exceeds the damage caused by an earlier fire last decade. The other fire required £200 million and a six month closure before the tunnel could be reopened.

The incident required 32 people, mainly lorry drivers, to be evacuated from the train, which was heading to Calais. Fourteen were taken to hospital, some suffering from smoke inhalation. Several of those who escaped have said that they had expected to die.

The fire's cause is unclear. The Guardian reports the fire started on board a vehicle carrying chemicals, but the BBC reports that the origin is unknown. Both sources confirm a lorry carrying carbonic acid was on board and French authorities say it is overturned near the seat of the fire, but it is unclear if this is the lorry the Guardian meant.

Eurostar are operating some

passenger trains through the tunnel, and limited freight services have also resumed, but long delays are expected. Car trains have not yet resumed.

Conservative transport spokesman Timothy Kirkhope commented that he felt the fire was worrying, saying "[w]hile thankfully nobody was killed in this incident, two significant fires in 11 years should act as a wake-up call."

However, operator Eurotunnel, who run regular evacuation drills, was pleased with the response by its staff.

French authorities are investigating the accident as it occurred at the French side, seven miles from the French exit of the 32-mile tunnel.

Los Angeles commuter train collides with freight train; over two dozen killed

At least 25 people have been killed and many more injured when a Metrolink commuter train collided yesterday afternoon with a Union Pacific freight train in the Chatsworth district of Los Angeles. Around 250 firefighters have responded to the accident scene.

Estimates are that 350-400 people were on the number 111 commuter train which departed from Los Angeles' Union Station at 3:35pm PDT. The collision occurred at about 4:25pm PDT on Metrolink's Ventura County Line. The area in which the crash took place is hilly and contains a single track; it is just north of the Chatsworth Metrolink station.

The force of the collision sent the locomotive of the Metrolink train to penetrate deep into the lead bi-level passenger car of the three-car train. The collision then

knocked the Union Pacific and Metrolink locomotives on their side along with the lead passenger car.

"This is the worst accident I've ever seen. Clearly the injuries are going to mount and so are the fatalities." —Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor of Los Angeles

According to various sources, upwards of 10-15 passengers, possibly even more than 20, have been killed, including a Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) officer. The LAPD has not released the name of the officer. The engineer of the Metrolink train is believed to be another of the fatalities.

The number of injured is believed to be 135, although the precise number is still unclear. According to emergency responders, the injured have been transported to Los Angeles area hospitals, including the University of California, Northridge Hospital Medical Center, Providence Holy Cross Medical Center and Huntington Hospital.

"This is the worst accident I've ever seen. Clearly the injuries are going to mount and so are the fatalities," Mayor of Los Angeles, Antonio Villaraigosa, said.

It is unclear how the accident occurred. Some of the possibilities include a signal malfunction, a failure by a crew member to notice a signal or a lapse in protocol for moving trains safely in the area. According to Metrolink and the Los Angeles Times, the National Transportation Safety Board has a team on scene and is investigating.

In a completely unrelated incident less than an hour after the crash in Chatsworth, another Metrolink

train collided with a car in Corona, California, killing the female driver of the automobile.

UK's XL Leisure Group enters administration

XL Leisure Group — the United Kingdom's third largest tour operator — has collapsed and entered administration. About 85,000 passengers have been left stranded outside the UK as a result.

The Civil Aviation Authority is working to bring these people home, and Air Travel Organisers' Licensing scheme stated that "repatriation aircraft" had been scrambled. Both flights chartered specially for the purpose and scheduled services with spare seats are being used.

XL operated a number of subsidiaries, including XL Airways, Travel City Direct and the Really Great Holiday company. Including parent company XL Leisure, 11 companies are effected. Their collapse has also left people stranded in UK airports and delayed other flights as airlines who had chartered XL aircraft for their services sought alternative planes.

Passengers booked with XL have been advised to keep away from their departure airports. Refunds will be available for most, but some who booked via XL's website or call center and did not use a credit card or Visa debit card are not able to claim their money back.

Around 50,000 XL package holiday customers and 10,000 other XL Airlines passengers are stranded abroad. 25,000 people booked with other operators who had deals with XL have also been hit, and a total of 200,000

holidaymakers are believed affected. In addition, XL Leisure had 1,700 employees.

XL's CEO Phil Wyatt blamed a combination of himself, high oil prices and economic instability for the problem. He said he was "devastated" and apologised to those affected, but said they were forced to give up after lenders pulled out.

Sebastian Vettel takes pole for 2008 Italian Grand Prix

Scuderia Toro Rosso–Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel won the pole position for the Sunday FIA Formula One 2008 Gran Premio Santander d'Italia race at Autodromo Nazionale Monza, Italy.

The track was wet during most of the Friday practice sessions and all the qualification triplet, a rare event for the Formula One at Monza. Heavy rain conditions on the racing circuit caused a couple of surprises for the spectators.

First was the major defeat of Kimi Räikkönen (Ferrari) and Lewis Hamilton (McLaren-Mercedes), two major competitors in the Drivers' Championship. They totally lost the second qualifying session and will start 14th and 15th in the tomorrow race. This was accompanied by Vettel setting the best time in the session of 1:35.837.

The German driver repeatedly set the best time in the final session. His pole position was endangered by Felipe Massa, but the second Ferrari driver came only 6th in his final attempt and Heikki Kovalainen, Hamilton's teammate in McLaren, made better progress netting second position just before the chequered flag closed the session.

Work on Lehman Brothers' rescue to continue over weekend

Lehman Brothers, a major American investment firm, is spending the weekend trying to find an investor that would save the firm from complete collapse. The company has lost 80 percent of its stock value since Monday, when it announced that it had not secured a deal with the Korean Development Bank, which was widely expected to occur. On Wednesday, Lehman published their biggest loss in the 158 years of their existence.

According to the Financial Times, Bank of America is trying to create a joint takeover bid with JC Flowers and the China Investment Corporation (CIC), which is a Sovereign Wealth Fund. The CIC invested \$5 billion in Morgan Stanley, when that bank need a cash infusion in December 2007. It is unclear if the CIC will act as lead investor or act through JC Flowers, with which the CIC has established a fund.

The Federal Reserve and Treasury Department are working with Lehman to find a suitable bidder. Hank Paulson, Treasury secretary, promised that no government money will be given to Lehman, unlike the takeover of Bear Stearns in March of this year.

Paulson has also met with several executives of Wall Street firms to discuss the crisis and try and find possible investors. In a meeting initiated by Timothy Geithner, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, it was pressed upon the banking industry that it needed to handle the crisis. The Wall Street executives included John Mack, the chief executive of Morgan Stanley; John Thain, chief executive of Merrill Lynch; Jamie

Dimon, chief executive of J.P. Morgan Chase; Lloyd Blankfein, chief executive of the Goldman Sachs; Vikram Pandit, chief executive of Citigroup; and representatives from the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and the Bank of New York Mellon Corporation. Christopher Cox, Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission was also present.

The firm, which has over 25,000 staffers, has suffered bad results due to the subprime mortgage crisis.

Plans set in motion for the removal of Bob Barr as the Libertarian Party's U.S. presidential nominee

Controversies surrounding Libertarian U.S. presidential nominee and former congressman Bob Barr rose to new levels on Friday afternoon.

There is now a serious effort by some in the Libertarian Party to remove Barr as its presidential nominee. In order for this to happen, the matter must be voted upon by members of the Libertarian National Committee. A motion has been written calling for Barr's removal and at least one representative has expressed a willingness to make it. If and when the motion is seconded, it will be brought to voting. The motion can be read in its entirety below.

Until polls are released, it will not be known whether Barr has decreased or increased in voter popularity since his last minute refusal to attend former Republican presidential hopeful Congressman Ron Paul's third party unity conference at the National Press Club in Washington, DC on Wednesday.

Barr instead decided to hold a press conference of his own two hours after Paul's at the same location.

"I'm not interested in third parties getting the most possible votes," Barr told reporters. "I'm interested in Bob Barr as the nominee for the Libertarian Party getting the most possible votes."

Several of Barr's supporters were furious with his remarks, some even going so far as to retract their endorsements of him. Bloggers quickly picked up on the story and by Thursday evening there was an Internet frenzy, which continued into Friday.

Removal motion

WHEREAS, Article 12, Section 5 of the Libertarian Party's bylaws provide for the suspension of the party's presidential candidate by the Libertarian National Committee; and

WHEREAS, said bylaws provision requires a 3/4 vote of this body; BE IT KNOWN that Bob Barr, the Libertarian Party's 2008 presidential nominee, is hereby suspended on the basis of the following causes:

- Failure to appear, with little or no notice, at a major media event to which he had been invited and to which he had committed to appear;
- Vicious public attacks by his campaign staff on the character and reputation of the event's host (1988 Libertarian Party presidential nominee Ron Paul) and sponsor (Campaign For Liberty);
- The disrepute and discredit which the aforementioned misbehaviors have brought upon the Libertarian

Party.

The committee advises Barr that he has seven (7) days to appeal this action to the party's Judicial Committee. Absent a successful appeal, his nomination will be deemed null and void and he will be replaced as the party's presidential nominee.

Today in History

786 – Harun al-Rashid became the Abbasid caliph upon the death of his brother al-Hadi.

1607 – Flight of the Earls: Hugh O'Neill, 2nd Earl of Tyrone, Rory O'Donnell, 1st Earl of Tyrconnell, and their families and followers departed Ireland for Spain.

1752 – In adopting the Gregorian calendar under the terms of the Calendar (New Style) Act 1750, the British Empire skipped eleven days (September 2 was followed directly by September 14).

1812 – The French invasion of Russia: Following the Battle of Borodino seven days earlier, Napoleon and his Grande Armée captured Moscow, only to find the city deserted and burning.

1901 – Theodore Roosevelt became President of the United States eight days after William McKinley was fatally wounded by anarchist Leon Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York.

September 14 is Mid-Autumn Festival in the Chinese lunar calendar (2008)

Quote of the Day

Patriotism is proud of a country's virtues and eager to correct its deficiencies; it also acknowledges the legitimate patriotism of other countries, with their own specific virtues. The pride of nationalism, however, trumpets its country's virtues and denies its deficiencies, while it is contemptuous toward the virtues of other countries. It wants to be, and proclaims itself to

be, "the greatest," but greatness is not required of a country; only goodness is. ~ Sydney J. Harris

Word of the Day

unabashed adj

1. Not disconcerted or embarrassed.
2. Not concealed or disguised, or not eliciting shame.

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