



Top Stories

50,000 people refuse evacuation after flooding in India caused by river changing course

The Kosi River changed course one week ago to a path which it has not taken for over one



hundred years. At that time 900,000 people were evacuated by rescue workers, although

Credit: Manoj nav
CC-BY 3.0

new data has revealed that 50,000 people have refused to leave their homes. These people were from the town of Saharsa.

Alleged 'rights group' involved with removal of anti-Scientology videos from YouTube doesn't exist; says EFF

On September 4 and 5, at least 4,000 anti-Scientology videos were removed from the video sharing website, YouTube. The videos removed were done so by a single Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) notice by an alleged 'rights group' called the American Rights Counsel LLC, which Wikinews has confirmed, does not exist beyond the scope of those requests. In an exclusive interview with Wikinews the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) acknowledged that they "don't know anything about" the Counsel and that any attempt to intentionally commit fraud by

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filing false DMCA requests, could lead to criminal charges.

Records reveal US Senator John Sununu had ties to convicted lobbyist

Wikinews has learnt that on October 24, 2001, convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff and four Alexander Strategies Group associates donated \$1,000 each to the Rely on Your Beliefs Fund. This political action committee in turn donated \$3,000 to Representative John Sununu's primary campaign in New Hampshire on the same day, through the political action committee Team Sununu. The Greenberg Traurig lobbying company, which also employed Abramoff, gave \$1000 to Team Sununu on December 16, 2002 for purposes of 'debt retirement.'

US presidential candidate John McCain now leads slightly in the polls

United States presidential candidate John McCain now retains a lead over Barack Obama in several polls conducted in the past few days. Both Zogby International and Rasmussen Reports have McCain with a slight, but not statistically significant lead. The most recent Gallup tracking poll has McCain with a statistical lead of 5.0 percent. The Day to Day Politics Poll Average also has a slight, but not statistically significant lead of 0.4% for McCain.

Wikipedia Current Events

Comedian Al Franken wins a primary election for the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party to challenge incumbent Senator Norm Coleman in the Minnesota Senate election.

- Military of Sri Lanka said 12 of its soldiers and 1 policeman were killed in Tamil Tiger's suicide attack in Mullaittivu.

- The Prime Minister of Malaysia Abdullah Ahmad Badawi states that the governing United Malays National Organization will punish a party official for a series of statements he made about Malaysia's ethnic Chinese population.

Records reveal US Senator John Sununu had ties to convicted lobbyist

On October 24, 2001, convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff and four Alexander Strategies Group associates donated \$1,000 each to the Rely on Your Beliefs Fund. This political action committee in turn donated \$3,000 to Republican Representative John Sununu's primary campaign in New Hampshire on the same day, through the political action committee Team Sununu. The Greenberg Traurig lobbying company, which also employed Abramoff, gave \$1000 to Team Sununu on December 16, 2002 for purposes of 'debt retirement.'

According to a report by the U.S. Senate Indian Affairs Committee,

Jack Abramoff commonly told Native American tribal clients to divert their funds through the Alexander Strategies Group. Earlier that October, Jack Abramoff had met with the legislative director of the Saginaw Chippewa tribe in Michigan. Representative John Sununu, now a sitting senator from New Hampshire, had served on the Appropriations Committee that helped draft the Department of Interior funding bill. In the section on Native American water claims, land claims, and miscellaneous payments, over \$6,000,000 in funding was given to Michigan fishing in the Great Lakes.

The event occurred a day before the presentation of a Department of Interior funding bill to President George W. Bush for signing, and a week after the conference report settling differences between the House and the Senate. Abramoff wrote to fellow lobbyist Michael Scanlon on October 4, 2001 via e-mail, "I had dinner tonight with Chris Petras of Sag Chip. He was salivating at the \$4-5 million program I described to him (is that enough? Probably not)."

Jack Abramoff was sentenced to four years in federal prison earlier this month. He had admitted to conspiring to defraud four Native American tribes that either operated or were interested in operating casinos. The other three donors to the fund linked to Sununu were all members of the Alexander Strategy Group, including its founder, former Tom DeLay chief of staff Ed Buckham. Donor Jim Ellis had led the group Preston Gates & Ellis, which also employed Jack Abramoff. A fourth contributor was J. Thomas Smith, Jr., who had served as the Alexander Strategy Group's lawyer.

The Alexander Strategy Group was shut down in January due to ties with Jack Abramoff and former House majority leader Tom DeLay. The Rely On Your Beliefs Fund, owned by former Rep. Roy Blunt, has already donated to charity \$8,500 equivalent to the amount personally contributed by Jack Abramoff in 2006. In November 2004, Gannett News Service had reported that Abramoff directed the Tigua tribe to contribute to the Rely On Your Beliefs Fund. In January 2006, John Sununu donated to charity \$3000 he had received from the Saginaw Chippewa from the Daniel Webster PAC.

50,000 people refuse evacuation after flooding in India caused by river changing course

The Kosi River changed course one week ago to a path which it has not taken for over 100 years. While 900,000 people were evacuated by rescue workers, new data has revealed that 50,000 people, from the town of Saharsa, have refused to leave their homes.

Advertisements in local newspapers have been used to encourage the people who are still remaining in the area to leave soon. People are encouraged to go to one of many camps, which are funded by the government, to seek refuge from the continued flooding.

People have also started to return to their homes, due to the fact that they have seen the water level drop by over half of a metre in some areas. This is despite statements by officials emphasizing that people may need to stay in the camps for up to six months.

Approximately 1.2 million people are estimated to have had their homes flooded by the disaster. 42 people have been confirmed dead, although The Australian has reported that the actual death toll is likely to be much higher.

The incident started when gushing waters quickly overflowed the channel boundaries on both sides at a rate of about 200 meters per day, flooding vast tracts in Supaul, Araria, Saharsa, Madhepura, Purnia, Katihar, parts of Khagaria and northern parts of Bhagalpur, as well as adjoining regions of Nepal. About 2.7 million people are affected by this flood disaster of massive dimensions, with about 900,000 people in the affected areas having moved to 285 relief camps and 249 health centers. An estimated 100,000 are still trapped in various villages without food or drinking water since several days ago when the crisis began.

During the last 250 years, the Kosi has moved its path up to 150km westward on multiple occasions, leaving behind a series of paleochannels. The river is a tributary of the Ganges, with catchment areas in the Nepal Himalayas, one of the fastest rising mountain chains, flowing through a 150-kilometer wide and 180-kilometer long alluvial fan. Fast silting of the channels by the tons of annuum brought down by the river makes it drift off so often that it is often cited as one of the text book examples of a dynamic river system to geologists.

Alleged 'rights group' involved with removal of anti-Scientology videos from YouTube doesn't exist; says EFF

On September 4 and 5, at least 4,000 anti-Scientology videos were

removed from the video sharing website, YouTube. The videos removed were done so by a single Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) notice by an alleged 'rights group' called the American Rights Counsel LLC, which Wikinews has confirmed, does not exist beyond the scope of those requests.

In an exclusive interview with Wikinews the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) acknowledged that they "don't know anything about" the Counsel and that any attempt to intentionally commit fraud by filing false DMCA requests, could lead to criminal charges.

"We don't know anything about this group. However, if these DMCA notices were sent improperly, there could be legal remedies. The particulars would depend on the particulars of the situation," Rebecca Jeschke, a spokeswoman for the EFF, told Wikinews.

The EFF first broke the story regarding the requests. YouTube received the notice all at once, in a single request. When Wikinews asked the EFF if they knew the names or links to the material in question, they stated that they do not know the names and that they have not seen the notice filed with YouTube.

According to Jeschke, the "EFF fights abuse of the DMCA. ..." but did not state where the EFF heard about the request.

"We have not seen the notices, merely heard about them [and] we don't know enough to know if the DMCA has been abused here. However, only copyright holders can issue DMCA takedowns," Jeschke said.

The EFF is investigating the incident, and it is not yet known who or what was behind the DMCA request. Some have speculated that the Counsel is a front for Scientology operated by a Dr. Oliver Schaper. In an exclusive interview with Wikinews, Schaper denied any involvement with the DMCA requests and also denied having any knowledge whatsoever of the Counsel.

"As many other people, and even members of the Church of Scientology received information about a company that removed anti-Scientology content from YouTube, shit hit the fan and members of Anonymous went on a full attack on me. I still have to this date no information about the American Rights Counsel and I have no connection, knowledge or involvement in this company which I have been informed of does not even exist," Schaper said.

Producer of XenuTV Mark Bunker defends Schaper and does not believe he is responsible. Bunker also believes that the Counsel is a fraud and called the DMCA requests a crime.

"I next did a Google search for American Rights Counsel LLC which brought up absolutely no results so clearly this was fraud from the beginning. I had never heard of Schaper before he was accused of this. I don't know anything about him other than he contacted me and said he was not involved. I don't know who was responsible. 4000 deletions in a matter of hours is a pretty major feat. It would be worth a subpoena to find out who committed this crime," Bunker said.

Currently the EFF does not represent any of the users or

groups who were affected by the mass take-down.

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United States presidential candidate John McCain now retains a lead over Barack Obama in several polls conducted in the past few days. Both Zogby International and Rasmussen Reports have McCain with a slight, but not statistically significant lead. The most recent Gallup tracking poll has McCain with a statistical lead of 5.0 percent. The Day to Day Politics Poll Average also has a slight, but not statistically significant lead of 0.4% for McCain.

Obama had a 6.0 percent lead in the Day to Day Politics Poll Average after the Democratic National Convention, but now is trailing after the Republican National Convention and the announcement of Sarah Palin as McCain's running mate. This is the first time McCain has led Obama in the poll average since the two candidates emerged as their party's presumptive nominees after the primaries.

After McCain chose Palin, the current Governor of Alaska, as his vice presidential candidate and the Republican National Convention, a Gallup poll had shown that the percentage of Republicans who are enthusiastic about voting has increased by 18%. The Democrats enthusiasm has only increased by 10% since the addition of Joe Biden to the nomination ticket and after the Democratic National Convention.

The Day to Day Politics Poll Average for the past week used the Gallup Tracking poll, the Rasmussen Tracking poll, the CNN

poll, USA Today/Gallup, Hotline/FD, the CBS News and the Zogby poll.

Wikipedia Current Events

The United Nations decides to withdraw aid workers from Tamil Tiger held areas of Sri Lanka.

- Hurricane Ike makes its second landfall on Cuba, near San Cristóbal, north of the Isle of Youth, on its way into the Gulf of Mexico.

- A Thai court rules that Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej must be removed from office for receiving payment for appearing on a television cooking show.

- US President George W. Bush pledges 4500 troops to Afghanistan over the next few months and orders 8000 Iraq troops home by February.

- Apple Inc. unveils the revamped iPod line-up including the redesigned, fourth-generation iPod Nano.

Today in History

1798 – At the Battle of St.

George's Caye, a small force of British settlers called Baymen defeated an invading force from Mexico who were attempting to claim what is now Belize for Spain.

1897 – A peaceful labor

demonstration made up of mostly Polish and Slovak anthracite coal miners in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, USA, was fired upon by a sheriff's posse comitatus in the Lattimer Massacre.

1898 – In an act of "propaganda of the deed", Italian anarchist Luigi Lucheni fatally stabbed Empress Elisabeth of Austria in Geneva, Switzerland.

1977 – Hamida Djandoubi became the last person to be guillotined in France, the official method of execution in that country. France

would later abolish the death penalty in 1981.

1990 – Pope John Paul II consecrated the Basilica of Our Lady of Peace in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, one of the largest churches in the world.

September 10 is National Day in Gibraltar (1967)

Quote of the Day

Better to write for yourself and have no public, than to write for the public and have no self. ~ Cyril Connolly

Word of the Day

ventriloquist n

1. Someone, especially an entertainer, who practices ventriloquism.

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Word of the Day

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page

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