

Top Stories

Fourteen dead as passenger helicopter crashes off Estonia



A Finnish helicopter carrying fourteen people has crashed into the Baltic Sea 5Km off the coast of Estonia. All onboard died.

U.S. Pentagon conference says weapons entered Iraq from Iran



Evidence reportedly indicated the quality and sophistication of the weapons was such that they may have been manufactured in Iran, but Rumsfeld was unable or unwilling to describe the weapons further. Timing of the Pentagon release coincides with the controversy over Iran restarting its nuclear facilities.

Featured story

Interview: Wikinewsie Kim Bruning discusses Wikimania



Regular contributor and conference attendee Kim Bruning talks to Wikinews about Wikimania.

Wikipedia Current Events

- In Chile, special Judge Sergio Muñoz prosecutes Lucía Hiriart and Marco Antonio Pinochet, wife and youngest son of Augusto Pinochet, on charges of tax evasion. Hiriart is confined in a military facility in Santiago and Marco Pinochet in Santiago's Capuchinos Jail..
- The Transportation Equity Act of 2005 is signed into law in the United States by President George W. Bush.
- Conflict in Iraq: 4 US Soldiers die following an insurgent attack in the oil-producing Kurdish town of Baiji, Northern Iraq.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Helicopter crash near Tallinn: A Sikorsky S-76 helicopter of the Finnish company Copterline has crashed into the Gulf of Finland near Estonia's capital Tallinn with 14 on board; eight Finns, four Estonians and two Americans. All passengers and crew are believed dead.
- The United States and the African Union have dropped their demands that last week's coup in Mauritania be reversed. The US is working with the military junta to ensure that multi-party elections are held as soon as possible.
- Yahoo Inc. is negotiating to pay approx. US\$1 billion, plus the transfer of its own China operations, in return for a 35% equity stake in Alibaba.com, China's second-largest e-commerce concern.

Fourteen dead as passenger helicopter crashes off Estonia

Fourteen people are presumed dead after a passenger helicopter of the Finnish company Copterline crashed into the Baltic Sea, 5 km off the coast of Estonia.

After hours of search, the wreck was found with a sonar at a depth of approximately 60 meters. The cabin is damaged but has remained in one piece, and passengers were found dead inside the cabin. Lifting of the wreckage is being planned at the moment.

The Sikorsky S-76 was on a scheduled passenger flight to Helsinki from Tallinn, the Estonian capital. The craft came down just three minutes after take-off at 12:43 pm (GMT+2). According to an eyewitness, two loud bangs were heard before the craft crashed down. No smoke or fire were seen after the bangs.

Onboard were six Finnish, four Estonian and two American passengers as well as two Finnish crew members. Both of the pilots were experienced, with over 10 years of

flight experience in the company.

Estonian rescue helicopters and boats have been sent, a Finnish rescue helicopter and mini submarines also at the scene.

Investigation of the causes of the accident is underway, but one possible reason is the bad weather as the area has been suffering from severe storms recently, the winds at the time are believed to have been 17-20 metres a second. "Many of the helicopters safety measures failed", said the spokesman from Copterline (the company arranging the flights between Helsinki and Tallinn). The safety measures include the ability of the craft to glide down in case of engine failure and the ability to float on water, both of which seemed to have failed. Copterline has cancelled all upcoming flights today, but are continuing as scheduled tomorrow morning.

Slovenian alpinist rescued from Himayalan peak

Today on an early morning (5:30 at a local time), the Pakistani military helicopter Lama III rescued Slovenian alpinist Tomaž Humar, who went up on a solo climb on one of the highest peaks in the Himalayas.

The climber Tomaž Humar became trapped by a bad weather and avalanches in a ice-cave on 5 August at an approximate height of 5900 meters with no food left for the last few days. After mr. Humar was back in the base-camp, the mission medic dr. Anda Perdan said he has some very beginning of chilblains on the foot fingers, but she expects there will be no serious consequences. By one of the Slovenian news-sites 24ur.com - Srečen, na trdnih tleh, he decided to stay in the base-camp after the rescue mission (and not being taken to the hospital), however, by the Reuters news agency, he has been later taken to a hospital located in the mountain town of Gilgit.

This article is a continuing story of the Slovenian alpinist in rescue on Nanga Parbat.

Volcanic activity expands McDonald Island off Australia



Satellite image by MODIS shows cloud formations at nearby Heard Island, caused by water droplets forming around dust spewed by McDonald Island volcanic activity.

The volcano on McDonald Island, approximately 4,000 kilometres south-west of Western Australia, is erupting for the first time since 2001. Magma is described as slowly "oozing" out of the volcano by Professor Michael Stoddart, chief scientist with the Australian Antarctic program, creating new land suitable for colonisation by local wildlife. The volcano is one of Australia's two active volcanos.

Senator Ian Campbell unveiled satellite images of the island today at the opening of the annual Australian Antarctic Division exhibition at Parliament House.

The small island group is rocky from its volcanic geological origins, and uninhabited. The recent activity on tiny McDonald Island caused it to almost double in size.

U.S. loses again in softwood lumber ruling

The United States has lost another battle in the ongoing U.S.-Canada softwood lumber dispute.

A NAFTA Extraordinary Challenge Committee (ECC) rejected U.S. allegations that an earlier ruling in support of Canada's position violated NAFTA rules.

This is just the most recent in a string of losses by the U.S., where it has been struck down both in NAFTA and WTO tribunals to prove that the Canadian government has been subsidizing lumber. On several occasions, the U.S. was told that it's

calculations and method of calculating losses were invalid. The NAFTA report on August 13, 2003 said the U.S. made a mistake in calculating its duties based on U.S. prices, and by not taking Canadian market conditions into consideration. It orders Washington to recalculate them. NAFTA decisions are legally binding and must be put into effect within 60 days.

However, two weeks later, a WTO panel concluded that the U.S. wrongly applied harsh duties on Canadian softwood exports. They also found that provincial stumpage programs provide a "financial benefit" to Canadian producers. But, the panel made it clear that the benefit is not enough to be a subsidy, and does not justify current U.S. duties.

"We are extremely pleased that the ECC dismissed the claims of the United States," said Canada's International Trade Minister Jim Peterson.

"This is a binding decision that clearly eliminates the basis for U.S.-imposed duties on Canadian softwood lumber. We fully expect the United States to abide by this ruling, stop collecting duties and refund the duties collected over the past three years," he said.

Negotiations between Canada and the U.S. are expected to resume next week.

While there have been suggestions that the ruling could bring the softwood dispute to an end after more than four years, the issue may not be resolved. The United States could still file legal challenges outside of NAFTA.

The United States has been collecting duties on Canadian softwood lumber since May 2002, after American lumber producers accused Ottawa of subsidizing lumber exports.

Detroit chemical plant experiences explosions, fire; residents evacuated

All residents within a one-mile radius of the EQ Resource Recovery chemical plant in southeastern Michigan were ordered to evacuate on Tuesday due to a chemical plant explosion. ClickOnDetroit is reporting that nearby residents not being evacuated are being told to close doors and windows.

The plant, located near Wayne and Romulus, is about 15 miles away from the city of Detroit. Initial reports state that a single explosion in a chemical tank is the cause of the fire. Detroit ABC affiliate WXYZ has confirmed that all employees had made it out of the plant before the explosions occurred, and that HAZMAT teams were on the scene of the fire.

Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans has announced that no injuries were reported.

The news comes as a chemical plant explosion in Story City, Iowa happened just a day before and three other similar explosions that occurred on July 28, all which took place in the state of Texas.

Oil in Alberta spill may be carcinogenic

The province of Alberta, Canada is considering legal action against Canadian National Railway for failing to warn that a derailment last week might have contaminated Wabamun Lake with a hazardous chemical.

The toxic substance suspected to be present in the spill of 700,000 liters of heavy Bunker C fuel oil is a polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon used to treat utility poles. Health officials say such chemicals may cause skin cancer if touched or other cancers if inhaled.

Wabamun Lake is a popular recreational site about 50 kilometers (30 miles) west of Edmonton, Alberta. Edmonton's health authority have ordered people not to swim, boat or rescue animals in the lake. They were also advised not to use the water for cooking, drinking, showering or brushing teeth. These warnings came only after many residents had entered the contaminated water to save wildlife injured by the spill and others had been routinely using the lakewater in their homes.

The 766-megawatt Keephills power generating plant, one of 3 in Wabamun, was shut down because the coal-fired plant uses water from the lake. Murky water near the ash pit of another TransAlta power plant on the lake in 2002 was found to have unacceptably high levels of aluminum, chromium, arsenic and copper, but water quality generally has been good.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

- 3114 BC - Epoch of the current era in the Maya Long Count Calendar.
- 480 BC - Spartan hoplites under Leonidas I, along with Thespians under Demophilus, fought to the last man in the Battle of Thermopylae, losing to a large Persian invasion force led by Xerxes I.
- 1492 - Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia was elected pope and became known as Pope Alexander VI.
- 1919 - The Weimar Republic adopted its constitution.
- 1970 - A trademark application for the word Spork was published by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.
- August 11 is Independence Day in Chad

Quote of the Day

"I do not believe that the tendency is to make men and women brave and glorious when you tell them that there are certain ideas upon certain subjects that they must never express; that they must go through life with a pretence as a shield; that their neighbors will think much more of them if they will only keep still; and that above all is a God who despises one who honestly expresses what he believes." ~ Robert G. Ingersoll

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