



### Top Stories



**Former Indonesian president, Suharto in critical condition**

**Lakota Freedom Delegation says spokesman Russell Means 'hijacked' organization**



Wikinews has learned that the Lakota Freedom

Delegation, also known as Lakotah Oyate, an organization of activists fighting for the Sioux Indian Nation to withdraw all treaties with the United States, was "hijacked" by its spokesman, Russell Means, an activist for Native American Indians.

### Featured story

tonight's ABC Democratic debate broadcast is "violating [ABC's] obligation to operate in the public interest", by barring Dennis Kucinich. The debate also bars Duncan Hunter, a Republican candidate recently interviewed by Wikinews.

### Wikipedia Current Events

A Venezuelan Let L-410 Turbolet carrying at least 14 people crashes near the Los Roques Archipelago.

- The 2008 Dakar Rally is canceled due to safety concerns in Mauritania.
- North Korean officials accuse the United States of not fulfilling its promise of humanitarian aid after an international disarmament agreement.
- Winter storms in California cause power outages, destruction of property and flight delays in San Francisco.

affected by the flooding, with many evacuated to a local school.

There are no reports of any injuries.

In neighboring California, the fierce Pacific storm system brought winds of up to 240 kilometers an hour, leaving more than one million people without power Friday.

One of the hardest hit areas is the Sierra Nevada mountain region, where the storm turned into an arctic blizzard in the upper elevations. Forecasters say the region will get anywhere from two to three meters of snow by Sunday.

Forecasters also say the storm could dump as much as 25 centimeters of rain on parts of southern California.

The heavy rains could trigger flash floods and mudslides in areas burned during last year's massive wildfires. Officials have ordered a mandatory evacuation of thousands of homes near Los Angeles.

### 2008 Dakar Rally canceled over terrorist threat

The threat of terrorism has caused the cancellation yesterday of the 2008 Dakar Rally, due to start today. The race, which was to be the 30th consecutive rally, was to start in Lisbon, Portugal and end on January 20 in Dakar, Senegal having crossed the Sahara Desert.

### Featured story

**Kucinich suggests tonight's Democratic debate unfair, files FCC charges versus ABC**



Late Friday, the "Kucinich for President" campaign filed an emergency complaint with the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC). They suggest

### Nevada, Northern California struck by massive storm

Authorities in the western U.S. state of Nevada say near-freezing waters from a ruptured canal have flooded about 800 homes following a powerful winter storm.

Authorities east of the city of Reno say a nine-meter-long section of the Truckee Canal broke early Saturday, sending a nearly one-meter-high flood into the small town of Fernley. They say more than 3,000 people have been

The endurance event is the world's biggest off-road rally and Paris-based organisers Amaury Sport Organisation had said as late as Thursday that more than 500 cars, trucks, motorcycles and quads from fifty different countries were ready to go as scheduled. However, the organisation changed its mind under pressure from the French government.

Al-Qaida-linked groups are believed to have planned to attack the rally, and it is reported that specific threats were made against it by al-Qaida in the Islamic Magreb, a regional African offshoot. The day before Christmas a French family on holiday in Mauritania was murdered and al-Qaida are believed to be responsible; the rally was scheduled to spend eight days in Mauritania.

Al-Qaida in the Islamic Magreb have recently seen a crackdown by authorities, but are continuing their operations and are now seeking to strike international targets. Last month they bombed the United Nations headquarters in Algiers; that attack killed 37.

The Mauritanian government had promised a 3,000-strong security force to protect the competitors but the remote location of the desert and scrubland involved would make effective security arrangements almost impossible. French security consultant Louis Caprioli, former anti-terrorism head at the Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire, said "You would need really incredible security precautions, and I don't think it's possible with the new techniques of attack, such as suicide bombings."

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said yesterday that

Amuary had been warned by government officials that it would be too dangerous to go ahead with the plan. After last-minute meetings with ministry officials. "No other decision but the cancellation of the sporting event could be taken," said a statement on Amuary's website.

Caprioli said the terrorists intended to prove "They can chase out the infidels. The cancellation was wise. But it gives the impression that the terrorists have won."

Patrice Clerc, head of Amuay, stated "When you are told of direct threats against the event and when the sinister name of al-Qaeda is mentioned, you don't ask for details. It was enough for me to hear my government say the danger is at a maximum."

Security has caused many concerns for the race over the years. Extremists tend to view the race as a prime target, as it is highly covered by the media, and is a rare concentration of Westerners. As a result, major security measures have had to be undertaken by French and African authorities. Almost 50 people have been killed, several of whom at the hands of African fighters. Although there are fears for the future of the race, Amuary said that the event would continue in the future. "The Dakar is a symbol, and nothing can destroy symbols," they said. "The cancellation of the 2008 edition does not endanger the future of the Dakar." However, they have confirmed that it is unlikely Mauritania will be a destination in future events. Competitors in the event, however, are less optimistic, with many saying that they feel the race will not go ahead next year. Newspapers in Senegal have described the cancellation as a

death sentence. Meanwhile, the town of Portimao in Portugal, intended to be the rally's first scheduled stop, are considering filing for damages against Amuary.

Victor Anderes, vice-president of a New York firm specialising in high-profile event security, called the cancellation an unprecedented in sporting history, saying "Smaller cultural events have been cancelled, but this hasn't happened with such a major international event." However, he did accept that "The threat is significant. It would be almost impossible to secure the entire course."

### **Childhood pneumonia can be cured at home**

A new study by researchers of Boston University's School of Public Health and colleagues sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) shows children with severe pneumonia can be effectively treated at home and do not need to be hospitalized. This finding is hugely significant for developing countries where children cannot be brought to a hospital easily or where no hospitals exist.

Per the study the change of treatment could save many children's lives and take pressure off health systems. Every year pneumonia kills 2 million children under the age of 5. The researchers found that antibiotics given at home could significantly reduce deaths.

The group examined 2,037 children between 3 to 59 months in seven areas in Pakistan. About half of them were given antibiotics and sent home while the other ones got intravenous antibiotics in the hospital. Both groups were found to show equal progress in

healing off the illness.

Current WHO guidelines recommend that pneumonia should be treated in a hospital with injectable antibiotics. With the new study there are indicators that pneumonia can be treated just as effectively at home with oral antibiotics.

### **Kucinich suggests tonight's Democratic debate unfair, files FCC charges versus ABC**

Late Friday, the "Kucinich for President" campaign filed an emergency complaint with the United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC). They suggest tonight's ABC Democratic debate broadcast is "violating [ABC's] obligation to operate in the public interest", by barring Dennis Kucinich.

His campaign stressed that while his "opponents share very similar policy platforms", Kucinich has unique ideas on major issues. Excluding him "is contrary to 'the public interest to afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views of issues of public importance'."

Filed by campaign Legal Counsel Donald J. McTigue, a scan of the complete complaint is available online as an Adobe Acrobat (PDF) file.

Among the main points of Kucinich's submission are that he has hundreds of campaign volunteers, as well as a significant paid staff roster, received significant financial contributions from New Hampshire (the state to next have a "caucus"), has won in online polls by Democracy for America, the Virginia State Democratic Party, Independent Voters, and Progressive Democrats of America and the Nation, and

even winning an ABC News poll asking "who won the Democratic presidential primary debate on August 19, 2007."

Kucinich did not contest the inclusion rules when they were announced, ABC spokesperson Cathie Levine said. As she hadn't seen the FCC filing at the time, she did not comment further to the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Recently Kucinich was excluded from Des Moines Register debate, yet was actor and activist Sean Penn's personal pick for President.

Democrat Mike Gravel and Republican Duncan Hunter were also barred from the broadcast, which starts at 7 pm EST tonight.

### **Queen voted Britain's greatest band**

British rock band Queen have been voted Britain's greatest band by BBC Radio 2 listeners.

More than 20,000 people voted for the band, which was one of five finalists selected by listeners over the previous week. DJ Mark Goodier then hosted a three-hour live show on New Year's day to discuss the five contenders.

Votes were cast via email, text and phone, with Queen up against The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Take That and Oasis. It was then revealed live on air that Queen were the winners, with The Beatles just 400 votes behind.

### **Baby attacked by dog in New York**

An eight-month old boy, Andrew, was attacked and killed by a Doberman pincher in Brooklyn, New York. The dog was a three-year old named Mackabee, who is also neutered.

The grandmother was babysitting the boy. While she was in the kitchen she heard the boy scream and ran next door to a neighbor for help. The neighbor took the dog off the boy, rescued him and brought him to his house to try and perform CPR on the boy, while he called 911 for help.

Police said the baby's head was in bad shape and the dog broke the boy's skull. Andrew was sent to Kings County Medical.

The doctors tried to save his life by working on him for nearly an hour, but the boy died at 3:06 pm local time. The parents of the child were not home at the time of the incident. The dog was shot with a tranquilizer and was sent to a care center. The city Department of Health is investigating. The dog may have to be put down because of the incident.

According to the US Centers for Disease Control, the Doberman Pinscher is not frequently involved in attacks on humans in comparison to several other dog breeds such as German Shepherd Dogs, Rottweilers and others. They only attack when they feel their space or family is in danger or if they are mistreated. By reputation, Dobermans are known to be a loyal dog breed and good around families.

### **Former Indonesian president, Suharto in critical condition**

Former Indonesian President Suharto, 86, is in a Jakarta hospital in critical condition. Doctors say he is suffering heart problems. Chad Bouchard reports from Jakarta.

The former president was admitted to a hospital on Friday with swelling throughout his body. Doctors say Mr. Suharto's heart

has become too weak to pump blood properly, and his kidneys are deteriorating.

Andi Mallarangeng, spokesman for current president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, says the president visited Mr. Suharto in the hospital Saturday and found him too weak to talk.

"He was conscious, he was not in a coma in that sense, he was conscious, but he was very weak" —Andi Mallarangeng, spokesman for current Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

"He was conscious, he was not in a coma in that sense, he was conscious, but he was very weak," he said. "The presidential doctors informed the president that President Suharto is in [a] critical situation."

Suharto ruled Indonesia for 32 years, stepping down after widespread demonstrations and rioting during the Asian economic crisis of 1998.

He has since lived quietly in an upscale district of central Jakarta.

The anti-corruption organization Transparency International says Mr. Suharto embezzled more from Indonesia than any other modern leader, an estimated \$15 billion to \$35 billion. Mr. Suharto has steadfastly denied such accusations.

### **President Bush urges progress on Palestinian state**

President Bush will go to the Middle East next week where he is hoping to encourage Israeli and Palestinian talks towards an independent Palestinian state.

President Bush says his job is to keep Israeli Prime Minister Ehud

Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas focused on the big picture, despite what he says are considerable roadblocks toward an independent Palestinian state.

"It's to give them confidence and encourage them to come up with what a state will look like, to define that state so that people there in the region can have hope that this long-time conflict will finally come to an end, and the first step is the definition of a state," he said.

Mr. Bush spoke Friday in an interview with al-Hurra, the U.S. government's Arabic-language satellite television network.

His trip follows-up November's conference in Annapolis, Maryland where Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas agreed to begin regular talks on a Palestinian state.

The president leaves Tuesday for Israel and the West Bank where he will hold separate talks with the Israeli and Palestinian leaders before continuing on to Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

Mr. Bush says he hopes to convince friends and allies in the region that there must be strong support for both Palestinians and Israelis in order to make the two-state solution work.

The president has set the goal of having the outlines of a Palestinian state in place before he leaves office one year from now. While he admits there is a lot of work to be done, Mr. Bush says he still believes that is possible.

"Palestinian security forces have to be reformed, which we are helping

with, by the way," he said. "The entrepreneurial class of people has to be encouraged with new capital. The institutions of government need to be strengthened."

During the trip, White House officials say the president will meet with U.S. civilian and military commanders from Iraq for an update on the fighting there. He will also press for another round of sanctions against Iran, which Mr. Bush says is crucial to force Tehran to stop enriching uranium.

The president says he will meet with regional leaders to discuss the situation in Lebanon, where he says Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is the main obstacle to Lebanon's selection of a new president.

"President Assad must understand that if he wants better relations with the United States, and frankly better relations in the region, the first thing he has got to do is stop interfering in the Lebanese presidential process," he said.

During the trip, President Bush is scheduled to meet with U.S. troops, speak with leaders of women's groups in Kuwait, and visit a Holocaust museum in Jerusalem.

### **Extremist group claims responsibility for killing of American diplomat in Sudan**

A previously unknown militant group has claimed responsibility for killing a United States diplomat in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum on New Year's Day.

The group, calling itself Ansar al-Tawhid (Companions of Monotheism), said its members shot 33-year-old John Granville and his Sudanese driver Abdel Rahman Abbas. The name of the

militant group has been used by many other groups of extremists in other areas of the world.

It was not immediately possible to authenticate the claim, which was posted on a Web site used by Islamists.

Granville was being driven home on New Year's Day when another vehicle cut his car off, and assailants opened fire.

FBI agents and other U.S. investigators have traveled to Sudan to investigate the shooting.

Sudan's foreign ministry has said the shooting was an isolated incident with no political connotations. Sudanese media reports quoted a government official earlier this week as saying there is no evidence the attack was an act of terrorism.

U.S.-Sudanese relations have been tense because of the violence in Sudan's Darfur region. The shooting happened one day after a joint United Nations-African Union force took over peacekeeping duties in Darfur.

### **Lakota Freedom Delegation says spokesman Russell Means 'hijacked' organization**

Wikinews has learned that the Lakota Freedom Delegation, also known as Lakotah Oyate, an organization of activists fighting for the Sioux Indian Nation to withdraw all treaties with the United States, was "hijacked" by its spokesman, Russell Means, an activist for Native American Indians.

On December 19, 2007, Means and the "delegation" went to Washington, D.C. and hand-delivered a letter, signed by the Delegation, to the U.S. State

Department claiming that the Lakota Indian Tribe was declaring that all treaties between the tribe and the U.S. have been withdrawn or canceled. They also held a press conference declaring their freedom.

"We are no longer citizens of the United States of America and all those who live in the five-state area that encompasses our country are free to join us. This is according to the laws of the United States, specifically article six of the constitution," said Means during the press conference.

Since then, Russell Means has gone on to announce the formation of a "provisional government" of the "Republic of Lakotah" with himself as Chief Facilitator, as well as to promote the establishment of a bank and a utility company for the country. Despite the claim Means has made, Naomi Archer, liaison of Lakotah Oyate stated to Wikinews that Means took control of the organization and hijacked it and its website on December 29. Archer also said that Lakotah Oyate or the delegation are not a government entity and do not make decisions for the Nation.

"The legitimate actions of the Lakota people are not determined by one person [Russell Means] or even one group, but by the [Lakota] people themselves," added Archer.

Other signers of the withdrawal letter are all still involved in the movement, including Canupa Gluha Mani who heads the Strong Heart Warrior Society which will "probably become the paramilitary force" of Lakotah, said Archer. Wikinews asked Archer if Means would still be involved in the movement, but she refused to

comment.

The Bank of Lakotah and Provisional Government of Lakota are not supported by Lakotah Oyate; Means is acting without having consulted the other elders of Lakotah; Means is himself, at age 69 [sic], an elder, and "people need their elders to set better examples than that," said Archer.

While the idea of establishing a power company, bank, and other such institutions was an idea that had come from Means and the rest of Lakotah Freedom Delegation knew that he was going off to Washington D.C. on his own to conduct negotiations, they did not know what the negotiations were going to be regarding. Lakotah Oyate hopes that this dispute will be resolved in a few weeks because this "all has to be about the people".

Since the Delegation's press conference, the Rosebud Sioux Tribe and the Cheyenne River Reservation have rejected Means's and the delegation's declaration of secession.

"They're individuals acting on their own. They did not come to the Rosebud Sioux tribal council or our government in any way to get our support and we do not support what they've done. We do not support what Means and his group are doing and they don't have any support from any tribal government I know of. They don't speak for us," said Rosebud Sioux Tribe president, Rodney Bordeaux.

Despite those rejections, Archer said that the Pine Ridge Reservation's council will "consider the proposal." A representative for the Standing Rock Reservation's council has said that that reservation is also considering

Lakotah Oyate's proposal. Lakotah Oyate have also been holding discussions with "about 150" other indigenous organizations in the U.S. and mentioned particularly the Native Hawaiians.

**Today in History**

1661 – Thomas Venner and the Fifth Monarchists unsuccessfully attempted to seize control of London from the newly restored government of Charles II.

1781 – At the Battle of Jersey, British forces stopped France's last attempt to militarily invade Jersey, the largest of the Channel Islands in the English Channel.

1838 – Samuel Morse and his assistant Alfred Vail successfully tested the electrical telegraph for the first time at Speedwell Ironworks in Morristown, New Jersey, USA.

1907 – Italian educator Maria Montessori opened her first school and day care center for working class children in Rome.

1995 – A suspicious fire in a Manila flat led to the foiling of the Bojinka Plot, a precursor to the September 11, 2001 attacks.

January 06 is Epiphany in Western Christianity.

**Quote of the Day**

Yesterday we obeyed kings and bent our necks before emperors. But today we kneel only to truth, follow only beauty, and obey only love. ~ Khalil Gibran

**Word of the Day**

incunabulum n

1. A book, single sheet, or image that was printed in Europe before the year 1501.

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