



### Top Stories

#### White House discussing troop withdrawals of up to 50% in Iraq

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#### Roadside bomb kills Canadian soldier, injures two others

The 55th Canadian soldier was killed in Afghanistan, when a large roadside bomb exploded. The blast killed Matthew J. McCully, 25, from Orangeville, Ontario on Friday at around 8:00 a.m. local time.

### Featured story

#### Exclusive video interview with New Zealand Opposition leader, John Key

John Key, New Zealand's Leader of the Opposition, and leader of the National Party, shared with Wikinews the details of his video blogging activities and future plans to make use of so-called 'new media'.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Iran claims to have uncovered an espionage network run by the United States and its allies.
- Fianna Fáil performs strongly in the Irish general election putting it in a strong position to retain government.
- Germany celebrates the 175th anniversary of the Hambacher

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Fest.

•Several thousand Ukrainian Interior Ministry troops head for Kiev in defiance of orders to support the President of Ukraine.

•At least 21 people have been killed in western China in landslides caused by heavy rain.

• Hamas militants are considering lighter ceasefire terms offered by Fatah, specifically Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. They are giving Israel until May 27 to respond to this agreement, that would only end Israeli operations in the Gaza Strip. Hamas has said however that they are not completely committed to their offer.

•Israeli attack helicopters made missile strikes on a various facilities, and a security facility near Palestinian Prime Minister Haniyeh's home. At least three people, all of whom were bystanders, were injured by the air strikes.

•Israel seizes another Palestinian Cabinet Minister of State Wasfi Kabha. A raid was made by the IDF on his village near the West Bank city of Jenin.

•Air strikes by the IAF made missile attacks on a Hamas Executive Force and its armed militia housing in Gaza City. At least five Executive Force members were killed and 30 other people were wounded, according to medics. The explosion also damaged a

### Wikipedia Current Events

kindergarten area next door, though no people were wounded.

#### Monster Pig killed by eleven-year old boy

The location is disclosed as a 2,500-acre commercial hunting preserve called Lost Creek Plantation, outside Anniston, Alabama.

The wild hog weighed 1,051 lbs. and was 9 ft. 4 in. from the tip of its snout to the end of its tail. The hog's head was mounted on an extra-large foam form and measured 54 inches around the head, 74 inches around the shoulders and 11 inches from the eyes to the end of its snout. The balance of the hog is being turned into approximately 500 to 700 lbs of sausage. Jerry Cunningham, an Oxford taxidermist, said it was, "[the] Biggest thing I'd ever seen". Wildlife specialist Dr. Jim Armstrong commented on the size said, "You might get a boar that weighs 300 or so, [Monster Pig] that's a big pig".

Stone said he shot the pig eight times using a Smith & Wesson Model 500 with a holographic scope and ported barrel firing 350-grain Hornady cartridges. Stone had to chase the hog for three hours through hilly woods before finishing it off with a point-blank shot.

"It was a pretty uneventful thing until the day after, I hadn't seen a lot of pigs up close. I didn't know it

was a monster pig. I just knew it was as big as a cow."

— Mike Stone, Father

The web host godaddy.com for the official web site monsterpig.com advised Stone that the number of hits totaled 1,246,464 as of Monday, May 21st.

Two previous record holders are Hogzilla a wild hog that was shot and killed in Alapaha, Georgia, on June 17, 2004, by Chris Griffin on Ken Holyoak's farm and hunting reserve. It was alleged to be 12 feet (3.6 meters) long and weighed 1,000 pounds (450 kg). It was later determined to weigh closer to 800 lbs. A second involved local news media that reported on January 5, 2007, an 1,100 pound (500 kg) hog was shot in Fayetteville, Georgia. The shooter was William Corsey, who hung the specimen from a tree in his yard. A spokesperson from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources said that large boars and feral hogs were common in South Georgia, but that no records are kept on them. The media latched on to the notion that this animal rivals the size of Hogzilla.

### **Controversial medical center demolished in Buffalo, New York**

A medical center, once the site of intense controversy over abortion in the 1990s, which has been vacant for nearly 10 years, was imploded in Buffalo, New York at 6:00 a.m. [eastern time] today.

Several streets in about a 2 block radius were shut down until the implosion occurred and the dust settled. At least 200 people watched in nearby parking lots and on rooftops of buildings to get a good look at the implosion.

The ground and the walls of buildings shook as the dynamite detonated and a brief shock wave could be felt as far as 1 1/2 blocks away. Witnesses even reported small pieces of bricks and concrete falling out of some buildings, but no one was injured.

The building, owned by Kaleida Health, once housed several medical offices, including an abortion clinic. Hundreds of people protested about the abortions outside the center during the Spring of Life Movement in 1992, but other medical procedures and treatments were also part of the center's services. It was built in 1965 and was 14 floors tall.

Kaleida Health had the building imploded so that the current Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus can be expanded. Several other major medical facilities are also in the same area including Roswell Cancer Institute and Buffalo General Hospital.

"This implosion of 50 High Street will continue the explosion of growth on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. This event will ensure future opportunity for investment, development and growth," said the CEO and President of Kaleida Health in a statement on Thursday.

### **New South Wales government turns out the light on Blue Mountains Freeway**

The New South Wales government has refused a federal government plan to conduct an engineering, planning and environmental assessment for a freeway across the Blue Mountains following the Bells Line of Road. Prime Minister John Howard announced AU\$10 million of funding for the study, contingent upon a matching contribution by the NSW

government.

Just hours after the announcement, NSW Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal turned out the light on the proposal by calling it a "blatant election stunt by a desperate prime minister".

Roozendaal speculated that the federal government would not, in the end, provide financial support for the project. "The reality is this project cannot be built without significant federal support and the Howard government has no intention of giving it, despite a multi-billion dollar surplus," said Roozendaal, and went on to quote federal minister for roads Jim Lloydas, who called the proposed Blue Mountains freeway a "very ambitious project" as recently as February.

The NSW Roads minister said the \$20 million for a study would be better used to improve safety on local roads in Central Western NSW.

However, supporters of the project have called on the NSW government to match the \$10 million contribution and move forward. "Research commissioned by the Bells Line Expressway Group (BLEG) found communities along the state's central west and western Sydney would benefit if the Bells Line Expressway were built," said Graham Blight, NRMA Motoring & Services regional director. "The Bells Line Expressway will provide a major economic boost for Sydney and western NSW, and ease the population pressure on Sydney by making housing west of the mountains more accessible to employment in western Sydney," he continued.

Roozendaal has dismissed the

BLEG study, released early in 2006, which projected the overall cost of the Bells Line of Road Expressway to be \$2 billion.

Roozendaal also said that he would not take up the offer to repeat a study which had been done two years ago. "The NSW government will not waste \$10 million of taxpayers' money to repeat a study which was only done two years ago." He was referring to a feasibility study released in November 2005 by state and federal governments, which found that the Bells Line of Road Expressway would require tolls of up to \$150 for cars and \$300 for trucks.

Former federal Labor MP and current NRMA director Gary Punch echoed Graham Blight's assessment. "The Bells Line Expressway would be a fantastic resource for towns and suburbs across the Blue Mountains because it would free them from highly dense traffic snarls, especially on weekends," said Punch. "This funding commitment today takes us one step closer to this goal," he said in reference to the PM's \$10 million offer.

### **U.S. minimum wage increase passed by Congress**

An increase in the United States federal minimum wage was approved by Congress on Thursday as part of the military funding bill. The minimum wage increase proposal was supported by President Bush while it was in the legislative process, who is expected to sign it into law.

The minimum wage raise was a campaign promise made by Democrats in the 2006 and is cited as one of the reasons the Democrats won control of the Congress.

Any previous wage hikes passed at the U.S. state level will be superseded by the new federal law that boosts the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25 per hour in two years.

The wage raise will happen gradually, being completed in two years. "Within 60 days, those who make \$5.15 an hour will receive \$5.85. Within a year, it will be \$6.55. Within two years, it will be \$7.25" according to Monique Newton of MyrtleBeachOnline.

### **Roadside bomb kills Canadian soldier, injures two others**

The 55th Canadian soldier was killed in Afghanistan, when a large roadside bomb exploded. The blast killed Matthew J. McCully, 25, from Orangeville, Ontario on Friday at approximately 8:00 a.m. local time.

Another Canadian soldier and an Afghan interpreter are in stable condition after also being wounded in the explosion, which happened in the Zhari district, 35 kilometres west of Kandahar, Afghanistan, where the Canadians are based.

"The wounds suffered are non-life threatening and he has spoken to his family," said deputy commander of Canadian troops in Afghanistan, Col. Mike Cessford. "The Afghan interpreter was slightly wounded and chose to remain with Canadians doing his duties."

Another roadside bomb struck a Canadian tank during the same day but no one sustained any injuries. The second one killed McCully, who is part of the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team which teaches Afghan soldiers skills to fight in organized units, from Canadian Forces Base

(CFB) Petawawa.

They were fighting in Operation Hoover located in the Zhari district west of Kandahar, Canada's latest offensive against the Taliban. Portuguese soldiers and British air support are also involved in the operation and the Afghan National Army are in the lead.

"As this soldier was moving forward, with other Canadians and other Afghan soldiers, an IED was triggered and he was killed," Cessford said. "We lost a good kid today. We're thinking about him and our thoughts are going out to the family. It's a pretty sad day. He was doing what he needed to do, what he wanted to do, and he was working closely with Afghan soldiers to achieve the right thing for this country."

He is the 55th Canadian to die in Kandahar. Canadian troops have been stationed in Afghanistan since 2002, and there are approximately 2,500 Canadian troops currently deployed there.

A farewell ceremony is now in the works at Kandahar Airfield. He will then be brought by plane to Canada, where a funeral will take place with his family and friends.

"Matt McCully was a tremendously professional soldier," Maj. Peter Sullivan told CTV today at Kandahar Airfield. "I found him certainly to be a mature young man, and somebody whose company was enjoyed by all, so he will be greatly missed."

This same week, on Tuesday, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper made a surprise visit to Afghanistan. He met with Canadian soldiers and had a brief discussion with Afghan President Hamid Karzai and visited diplomats

at the Canadian Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. Journalists were told last Friday to dress for a warm-climate and if they made Harper's visit public they could be a "Journalist in jail."

"I would say it's very interesting they decided to really promote the fact that we're doing more than just military in Afghanistan," Harper said during his three-day visit.

### **New Zealand newspaper poll projects majority for National Party**

A New Zealand Herald-DigiPoll survey has put the Opposition New Zealand National party so far ahead of the governing New Zealand Labour party that it would form a majority Government if a general election were held today.

The poll, taken in the week after the budget shows 50.9 percent of likely voters would give their party vote to National. Labour is more than 17 points behind, on 33.6 percent.

Translated into seats under New Zealand's MMP electoral system, this would allow National to govern independently with 64 seats in New Zealand's 120 seat Parliament with a two seat overhang.

In the preferred Prime Minister stakes, new National leader John Key has jumped 9.3% to 45.5%, ahead of the incumbent Helen Clark who has dropped 5.6% to 42.21%.

The poll follows a recent TV3 TNS poll which puts Mr Key ahead of Miss Clark as preferred Prime Minister, ending her eight year reign as preferred Prime Minister.

The New Zealand Herald-DigiPoll survey, polled 600 voters between

May 18 and 24 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 per cent. The survey was started one day after the 2007 Budget announcement, which announced further details to KiwiSaver, a retirement savings scheme, but did not announce any personal tax cuts.

The next New Zealand general election will most likely be held in the second half of 2008.

### **McLaren Mercedes drivers will start from top of 2007 Monaco Grand Prix**

McLaren Mercedes drivers Fernando Alonso and Lewis Hamilton will start from top of FIA Formula-1 2007 Monaco Grand Prix at the Circuit de Monaco in Monte Carlo. During the first qualifying session Alonso stayed in the shadow of his young companion, but in second and third he showed his true potential and won the pole for tomorrow.

During the early free practice Adrian Sutil, driving for Spyker-Ferrari, overcame Kimi Räikkönen on the wet but drying track by 0.127 s to lead that session. He was unable to compete on that level in qualification though.

Kimi himself surprised the spectators by stopping his Ferrari car in the Rascasse corner just like Michael Schumacher did last year. Though he restarted his engine and drove to the pits, he was out prior to the Q3 session. Felipe Massa became the only Red driver to battle for pole, conquering the third position.

### **Ivory Coast militia destroys weapons**

The Ivory Coast's pro-Government Great West Liberation Front (GWLF) militia destroyed their weapons in Guiglo on May 19, as

part of an on-going disarmament policy trailing the Ivorian Civil War.

President Laurent Gbagbo, who attended Saturday's ceremonial bonfire of weapons, thanked the militia members. Denis Maho Glofiei, leader of the militia, stated that "We've realised that since the signing of [the Peace Deal], we have no more reason to exist," while handing Gbagbo two rifles.

The GWLF is one of four pro-government militias operating in the country. Rebel forces have long claimed that they refuse to disarm until the militias are disbanded.

While Abou Moussa, head of the UN Operations in Côte d'Ivoire oversaw the ceremony, the ceasefire was actually brought about by President Gbagbo's autonomous negotiations with rebel leader Guillaume Soro who was named as the country's new Prime Minister in April.

### **Khamenei visits head of Islamic Iraqi Council**

Grand Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei visited Sayyed Abdul-Aziz Hakim while the latter was receiving medical treatment in Tehran, Iran.

Hakim has met with George W. Bush several times.

Earlier this month, Hakim was flew to Texas in the United States where he was diagnosed with lung cancer. According to his staff, he was coughing and had other ailments. Thence, he flew to Iran to receive medical treatment.

Hakim has been close to the heads of state of Iran and the United States which are bitter foes. Reports indicate that he went to Iran because he wanted to be close to his family members.

Hakim is a key player in Iraq's politics because his party, known as Supreme Islamic Iraqi Council, holds many seats in Iraq's legislature. It receives guidance from Iran's Supreme Islamic Jurisprudent Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. After the party changed its name recently from the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, there was speculation that Khamenei would cease to be the source of emulation for the party. Nevertheless, the party confuted such rumors.

Imam Khamenei serves as the source of Islamic jurisprudence to places as far away as Nigeria among other places. This is very much like Imam Khomeini who commanded followers even in Africa and Europe across sectarian lines.

### **White House discussing troop withdrawals of up to 50% in Iraq**

The White House and Pentagon officials have been discussing "concepts" to reduce the level of troops in Iraq by up to 50% and leaving a force of about 100,000 in Iraq by Mid 2008. The highest officials in the Bush administration that seem to be supporting these notion are Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

General David Petraeus and Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno have apparently not been involved with the discussions and they have both supported the current troop level increase. The current troop level surge does seem to be working but, at the same time attacks have been increased by insurgents. Also some reports have come out saying that Iran is stepping up its support of insurgents in Iraq in

order to counter and maybe discredit the troop surge. Ultimately the troop level surge will be reviewed in the fall by the Congress and White House.

Time Magazine has reported from Anbar Province that the troop surge and Iraqi involvement with the help of local tribes, shieks, and their militias have driven out a large part of Al-Qaeda and foreign insurgents out of the area.

President Bush referred to the Iraqi Study Group's Report four times in his Thursday press conference. The Iraq Study Group was led by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Interestingly enough the Iraq Study Group calls for most of the U.S Army to have been withdrawn by March 2008.

These "concepts" would not affect the current troop surge or shortly there after but, may be planned shortly after the new year. The new troop level would focus on training and supporting the Iraqi Security Forces.

The hope of the withdrawals by the Bush Administration would be to lessen the political pressure by both Democrats and Republicans who would like to withdraw sooner rather than later from Iraq and hopefully change the political talk from short-term withdrawal to long-term influence in Iraq and in the region.

### **Today in History**

1153 - Malcolm IV became King of Scotland at the age of twelve.

1860 - Expedition of the Thousand: Giuseppe Garibaldi and his Redshirts launched their attack on Palermo, capital of the Two Sicilies.

1919 - The flying boat NC-4

arrived in Lisbon, Portugal, becoming the first fixed-wing aircraft to complete a transatlantic flight under its own power.  
1937 - The Golden Gate Bridge, a suspension bridge spanning the Golden Gate in California, was opened.

1942 - Operation Anthropoid: Czech resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied Prague ambushed and mortally wounded Reinhard Heydrich, the chief of Reich Security Main Office and the Protector of Bohemia and Moravia.  
May 27 is Pentecost in Christianity (2007); Children's Day in Nigeria

### **Quote of the Day**

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:  
His truth is marching on.  
~ Julia Ward Howe ~

### **Word of the Day**

- jaywalk; v
- To illegally cross a street away from a legally designated crossing.

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