



**Top Stories**

**Chinese chemical plant explosion threatens water supply for major city**

A large scale environmental accident is causing wide-spread disruptions to water supplies in Harbin, China after an accidental release of toxins two weeks ago at a chemical plant. Water supplies are being shipped in amidst a relative calm, Thursday. Local officials have suggested normal water supplies may resume in some form as early as Sunday.

**60th anniversary of Nuremberg trials marked**

The city of Nuremberg has marked the 60th anniversary of the opening of the trials against Nazi war criminals.

**Featured story**

**Alleged Bush-Blair Al-Jazeera bombing transcript leaked**

An unverified document discovered by the UK tabloid The Daily Mirror claiming to have been leaked from Downing Street has been reported to contain a statement from US President George W. Bush about wishing to bomb the headquarters of Arabic TV station Al Jazeera in Doha, Qatar. According to The Daily Mirror, the President was dissuaded from bombing Al Jazeera's headquarters in Qatar by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

•15 people die after a Suicide Bomb attack in Hilla.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- Two people were injured in a balloon accident at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York when the balloon was tangled in a light pole and fell near Times Square.
- Prisoners at an Iraqi detention centre revealed to the BBC details of apparent widespread use of torture and abuse in prisons and detention centres in Iraq.
- At least thirty people have died following a car bomb outside a hospital in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.
- Khadim Sarhid al-Hemaiyim, one of the most important Sunni Arab Tribal leaders in Iraq has been shot dead, along with his three sons and a son-in-law in Baghdad. The Gunman appeared to be a member of the new Iraqi Army.

**Two injured in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade**

Two women were injured today when an M&M's balloon in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade hit a lightpost, causing the lamp atop the pole to fall upon two spectators. Two women, aged 11 and 26 were struck around 11:30 AM local time (1530 UTC) at West 43rd Street and Seventh Avenue. The women were visiting from Albany, New York to attend the parade. Neither sustained any serious injuries, and were released from the hospital by late afternoon.

Parade organizers were uncertain up to an hour before the parade began whether or not the participation of balloons would be limited. Conditions for the parade were windy, and there was a sprinkling of rain during the event, but it is unclear if the weather played a role in the accident.

The annual parade had a similar incident in 1997, when a Cat in the Hat balloon hit a lightpost, making it collapse. Two serious injuries were reported, both of whom recovered.

The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade has occurred every year since 1922, except from 1942 to 1944 during World War II.

**Chinese chemical plant explosion threatens water supply for major city**

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An explosion at a workshop of the No. 101 Chemical Plant of the Jilin Petrochemical Company in Jilin City on November 13 resulted in the accidental release of benzene and benzene-like organic compounds, including nitrobenzene, into the Songhua river. The upstream position of the plant relative to the Chinese city of

Harbin made the pollution a risk to the health of its populace; the solution of ceasing public water production will leave more than 3.8 million people without public drinking water for three or more days. Harbin, the capital of the neighboring Heilongjiang province, is located about 380km (230 miles) from the plant and is itself located near the middle of the 1,897 km long Songhua River— from which it derives the majority of its water supplies. Benzene is a carcinogen, and the levels initially released into the Songhua River were 108 times the national safety levels for the country. By November 21 the polluted area included roughly 80 kilometers of the Songhua river.

The State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA) as well as local experts and officials have worked on a pollution-control campaign and emergency schemes have been launched by the two provincial governments to limit the effects of the environmental incidents. Jilin also quickly acted to block the further entry of the pollutants into the river and released large volumes of water from a reservoir in order to dilute them; at this time Harbin added active carbon powders in quantities reaching 1,400 tons and more in order to purify the water. The densities of the benzene and nitrobenzene substances in the river near Jilin have dropped to levels within the state safety guidelines since the accidental release. The water which will pass through Harbin is expected to contain only small amounts of the toxic pollutants and to pass through Friday morning based upon its current speed. In preparation for the passage of these pollutants, the municipal government of Harbin has established an emergency

medical care system composed of 15 hospitals to treat residents that may be exposed to contamination.

Zhang Dingbang, deputy secretary of the municipal government, said, at the first press conference since the incident that was held Wednesday, that Harbin is drilling 100 new wells in order to obtain 80,000 tons of underground water in addition to its current output from 918 wells of 320,000 tons every day. Nevertheless, thousand of tons of purified water have been provided by neighboring regions and enterprise donations which will further increase this supply. Harbin residents have collected more than 300,000 tons of water as of Tuesday. Liu Yuzhu, a senior official with the municipal water supply and drainage corporation, has said that this supply is expected to provide for the daily average use of 18,600 tons per day for the three days required for the clear passage of the pollutants through the area.

#### Today in History

1034 - Malcolm II of Scotland died. Duncan, the son of his second daughter, instead of Macbeth, the son of his eldest daughter, inherited the throne to become the King of Scots.

1795 - Stanisław II August Poniatowski (pictured), the last King of Poland, was forced to abdicate after the Partition of Poland by Austria, Prussia and Russia.

1960 - The Mirabal sisters, who opposed the dictatorship of military strongman Rafael Leonidas Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, were beaten and strangled to death.

1984 - Band Aid: 36 leading pop musicians of Britain and Ireland gathered in a Notting Hill studio to record the song "Do They Know It's Christmas" to raise money for

famine relief in Ethiopia.  
1992 - Velvet Divorce: Legislators in Czechoslovakia voted to split their country into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, effective January 1, 1993.  
November 25 is National Day in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1943), Independence Day in Suriname (1975)

#### Quote of the Day

"Only by not forgetting the past can we be the master of the future." ~ Ba Jin

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