



Top Stories

Katrina survivor searchers prepare for the worst



Workers are scouring New Orleans for any remaining survivors of Hurricane

Katrina, and are vigorously searching for dead bodies. 25,000 body bags have been prepared in advance, in the event that the death toll from Katrina is that high.

Red Cross asks for more volunteers



American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is seeking at least 40,000 more volunteers to replace current relief workers suffering from fatigue in Hurricane Katrina

affected areas.

Featured story

Chile remembers its own September 11 anniversary



September 11, 2005 is not only a sad day for the

United States, but for Chile as well. On September 11, 1973, General Augusto Pinochet took control of Chile and established a military dictatorship.

Wikipedia Current Events

• Israel withdraws the last of its troops from the Gaza Strip, effectively completing its unilateral disengagement plan.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Following the pullout many Palestinians rush into abandoned Israeli settlements in celebration, some burning down synagogues which Israel's ministers voted against dismantling due to their spiritual significance, while others ransacked the remains of settlement homes, taking furniture, doors, electricity cables and what ever else they could find.

•Several hours after the pullout two Qassam rockets are fired by Palestinian militants from the Gaza Strip. The first lands near the Israeli town of Sderot, while the second lands near Kibbutz Yad Mordechai.

•According to Palestinian witnesses, the Egyptian border patrol police opened fire at crowds swarming the Egypt-Gaza border at Rafah, killing a Palestinian man and injuring another. An Egyptian spokesman later denied that Egyptian troops fired the shots that killed the man.

•Canadian Premier of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty, rejects the use of Islamic sharia law as well as religious arbitration of all other faiths, declaring that one public law is to be used for all family disputes. The decision follows a year of debate and worldwide protests.

•Oracle Corporation announced that it has agreed to purchase Siebel Systems for approximately \$5.85 billion in cash.

•England wins Ashes Series 2-1. Final Test match ends in a draw.

•Panic buying of petrol and diesel is in full swing across Britain, with long queues outside service stations in a worrying echo of the 2000 Fuel Protest.

Hong Kong Disneyland opens to the public



The Walt Disney Company and the government of Hong Kong officially opened the world's eleventh Disney theme park, Hong Kong Disneyland, today at 13:00PM local time.

The park, located in Penny's Bay, Lantau Island, is the major attraction at the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, which also features two luxurious hotels and a recreational lake with stunning views of local Hong Kong scenery, unlike previous Disney theme parks.

Chinese Vice President Zeng Qinghong, chief executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, and vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, Tung Chee-hwa, were present at the ceremony, as were joint Walt Disney CEOs Michael Eisner and Bob Iger, among a host of Disney Imagineers who helped design and create the park.

The park has been criticised for its apparant lack of attractions compared to the other Disney theme parks around the world, but senior show designer for the park, Tom Morris, told journalists that the Imagineers had left much room around the park for

expansion, and if all goes well financially, much construction will be going on in the next few years.

Sixteen thousand guests attended the park today, and officials expect five million will follow in the next year. Over seventy percent of all visitors will come from Hong Kong and mainland China.

Michael Brown, Director of FEMA resigns



Michael Brown, head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has announced his resignation as Director. Brown had come under criticism for FEMA's slow reaction and handling of the devastation in New Orleans caused by Hurricane Katrina. Last week Michael Chertoff, head of the Department of Homeland Security, relieved Brown as leader of the relief efforts in New Orleans and appointed Coast Guard Admiral Thad W. Allen in his place.

Brown told the Associated Press that the focus had to be FEMA and the efforts of people in the disaster areas. Brown also said that his resignation was in the best interests of the agency and President Bush, who himself, has received criticism over the handling of the disaster.

Los Angeles Undergoing Large Power Outage

A power outage in a large portion of Los Angeles, California occurred

at approximately 13:00 PST (20:00 UTC). Reports from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power indicate that this was not an act of terrorism, but a worker that accidentally cut a line. This incident caused a chain reaction that took out power to a large part of the city.

According to local television stations, power is being returned to some of the city, including the UCLA Medical Center. Police are on "full tactical alert", meaning that they will only respond to serious calls and all officers must remain on duty. Most officers are directing traffic.

Los Angeles International Airport briefly was affected but generators engaged shortly thereafter. No flights were delayed or cancelled.

According to the Department of Water and Power, the shutdown happened because of a mechanical problem at two receiving stations. The system automatically triggered a shutdown when a line was cut. DWP spokesman Ron Deaton said that if there is an increase in the power stations automatically shut down. "You cut the wrong wire and it triggers the system to shut down. We have finished repairing the transmission systems. Some units are not up yet, but we have other generating parts of the system. All that remains is the distribution of the power to the individual customers."

The DWP is currently restoring power by redirecting it from other areas.

eBay to acquire Skype

eBay, the largest online marketplace agreed to buy Skype, company providing the most

popular internet telephony service, for \$2.6 billion in cash, stock and rewards, but it may pay further \$1.5 billion if the company's financial targets are met (in 2007 and 2008).

Skype technology is to be introduced on eBay's website, allowing sellers to receive calls or leads from the site users for a fee.

It is the biggest acquisition in eBay's history. The company hopes to diversify its profit sources and gain popularity in areas where Skype holds strong position, such as China, Eastern Europe and Brazil.

eBay expects to cut 2006 earnings per share by \$0.12 due to the acquisition.

NZ opposition leader admits to Fundamentalist links

Don Brash, leader of the opposition National Party in New Zealand, admitted that he was aware that members of the Exclusive Brethren church were going to release contentious brochures attacking his political rivals. Mr Brash said he had met members of the church a number of times. He has admitted today that he was aware of the group's intention to publish brochures that were critical of the Labour Party and The Greens. A spokesman for the Group admitted to having spent NZ\$500,000 on the campaign so far.

The pamphlets were published without the link to the Church being obvious. However, former members of the Church identified the men as belonging to the church which has been described as a sect. The Exclusive Brethren are a closed order. Its members are not allowed to listen to Radio,

Television or use computers at all. There are approximately 2000 members in New Zealand and active branches in the US and Australia. They are linked to political support for George Bush and other conservative politicians.

US peace activist to be deported from Australia



Flag of Australia

A US peace activist and history teacher, Scott Parkin, has been arrested in Melbourne after his visa was revoked on grounds of character. He was deemed "a threat to national security" by the Australian Department of Immigration, according to a spokesperson from Anti-Deportation Alliance. The ABC has reported that the Federal police have confirmed an American man was arrested on the orders of the Immigration Department (DIMIA) and is in custody.

Mr Parkin participated in an anti-war profiteering protest outside Halliburton in Sydney on August 31, and was also reported to have attended the Forbes Global CEO Conference protest.

Liz Thompson from the National Anti-Deportation Alliance (NADA) said Mr Parkin was held by Federal Police at Carlton West police station before being moved to Melbourne Custody Centre on Saturday September 10. She said the incident seemed to contradict Philip Ruddock's denial that Australia was turning into a police state.

"This is a major attack on dissent, free speech and the anti-war movement. This should be a warning to everyone about the greater powers that ASIO may soon be granted," Ms Thompson said. She was referring to the proposed legislation to increase police and ASIO powers in dealing with suspected terrorists.

Federal Attorney-General Phillip Ruddock stated that he knew of the case, and that it was an issue for the Immigration Minister. He said that a security assessment of Mr Parkin had been conducted, and it was this security assessment that provided the basis for the decision to revoke his visa.

"I understand the decision was based upon a security assessment, and security assessments are not something about which I can comment in any detail," he said. "I understand it's a decision that's been taken by the Minister for Immigration and that there may be legal proceedings surrounding it."



Protestors Mr Parkin attended outside Forbes Global CEO Conference in Sydney

Spokesperson for the Brisbane Peace Convergence Kim Stewart said Mr Parkin's detention and deportation posed a "dangerous precedent to free speech in Australia".

"By arresting and threatening to deport Mr Parkin, the government is already using its power to silence non-violent peace campaigners and discourage peaceful dissent in our community," Ms Stewart said.

Julian Burnside QC, a prominent human rights lawyer, asked why it took so long for authorities to act if indeed Mr Parkin is a security threat.

"They've got the right but the question is whether that right has been exercised in a way that provides sufficient protection for ordinary citizens of Australia," he said.

Greens Senator Bob Brown also criticised the arrest, suggesting that pressure may have been applied by the United States government.

"The Howard government appears to be doing the Bush administration's bidding. As far as I know, Mr Parkin has broken no Australian law. He was granted a visa to enter this country, so his arrest contradicts the government's own assessment of his credentials,"

"It seems to have nothing to do with terrorism. The Howard Government will do whatever Washington asks of it and I am very concerned the request for his arrest came in the wake of information from Washington," Mr Brown said.

The government is currently calling for increased police powers ostensibly to protect the country from terrorists. Some groups are concerned that these powers will be used against critics of government policy.

"Our fears that these [Anti-terrorist] powers would be used against activists have been justified by yesterday's police action," said Kim Stewart.

Scott Parkin, on the day of his arrest, was due to give a workshop titled: Bringing Down The Pillars - People power strategies against war and capitalism. The workshop was sponsored by Forest Action Trust, Pt'chang Nonviolence Training Project, and Friends of the Earth Melbourne.

Greenpeace is providing legal help to Mr Parkin and advised that he had instructed his lawyers to appeal to the Migration Review Tribunal to review the basis on which his visa was withdrawn.

Danny Kennedy, Greenpeace campaigns director, said: "The burden of proof in the Scott Parkin expulsion case lies morally with the Commonwealth, to prove that he is a danger. When the Government brought in anti-terror legislation, they promised the public that these laws would only be used to confront a real and present risk of a terrorist attack, not a sweep-all approach against citizens. Peace is not terrorism. Peace is not a threat to national security. No democratic government should expel a foreign citizen because [it] opposes his political opinions."

Protests against the detention and deportation of Scott Parkin have taken place outside the Melbourne custody centre today, as well as in Sydney.

Bush approval rating sinks to 38%

A new Newsweek poll shows that President Bush's approval rating has fallen to an all-time low of

38%. The drop comes largely in response to the Bush Administration's -- and in particular FEMA's -- inability to handle the recent rescue and recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Louisiana.

The poll also shows that 57% of people have lost faith in the Administration's ability to handle a natural disaster. 52% do not feel Bush has the ability to make good decisions in a time of crisis.

The poll of 1,009 people, which has a margin of error of 4%, also showed that the country is still split on issues such as dealing with terrorism, Homeland Security, and military action in Iraq. An overwhelming 66% are not satisfied with the current direction of the country.

The combination of the above issues are likely contributing to President Bush's declining approval rating. The strong and vocal criticism from Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans may be one factor in the near-term decline. Nagin has given a number of publicized interviews during the recovery crisis, and the following is from the Sunday, September 11 broadcast of MSNBC Meet The Press:

MR. RUSSERT: What's the biggest mistake you made?

MAYOR NAGIN: My biggest mistake is having a fundamental assumption that in the state of Louisiana, with an \$18 billion budget, in the country of the United States that can move whole fleets of aircraft carriers across the globe in 24 hours, that my fundamental assumption was get as many people to safety as possible, and that the cavalry would be coming within two to

three days, and they didn't come.

Responding to public criticism, President Bush stated he intends "to lead an investigation to find out what went right and what went wrong." [2] The U.S. Congress is expected to investigate the disaster response on the local, state, and federal level as soon as is practical.

Koizumi wins electoral mandate for postal reform

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi is set to win the election that has resulted from the previous dissolution of half the legislature over privatization and reform of the Japanese postal system. The Japanese postal system deals with post and banking and life insurance services as well, and Koizumi earlier proposed legislation to divide the postal system and to privatize it, which failed, with governing Liberal Democrat members crossing the floor on the issue. Koizumi then dissolved the lower house in order to gain a mandate for the reforms.

Polls have predicted Koizumi will win this election by a landslide, permitting the Liberal Democrats to govern without any alliances. The opposition Democratic Party leader Katsuya Okada has said he will resign if the election was lost.

There have also been reports of electoral "assassins", attractive candidates, who were intended to push out the rebel Government ministers who helped defeat the postal reform bills.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

533 - Belisarius and his legions defeated Gelimer and the Vandals at the Battle of Ad Decimum, and began the "Reconquest of the West" under Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian I.

1814 - The bombardment of Fort McHenry during the War of 1812 inspired Francis Scott Key to pen The Star-Spangled Banner, which later became the U.S. national anthem.

1847 - Los Niños Héroes fought to their death defending Chapultepec, Mexico against an American attack.

1987 - Goiânia accident: A radioactive item was stolen from an abandoned hospital in Goiânia, Brazil, contaminating hundreds of people.

1993 - PLO leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin formally signed the Oslo Peace Accords.

September 13 is Independence Day in Venda (1979)

Quote of the Day

"Miss Manners does not mind explaining the finer points of gracious living, but she feels that anyone without the sense to pick up a potato chip and stuff it in their face should probably not be running around loose on the streets." ~ Judith Martin, widely known as "Miss Manners"

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