



### Top Stories

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### Wikipedia Current Events

The Pentagon extends the tour of duty of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit in Afghanistan.

- The European Central Bank increases interest rates in the Eurozone to 4.25 per cent to tackle inflation.
- French authorities charge Continental Airlines and five individuals over the Concorde disaster.
- MV Princess of the Stars disaster: The Board of Marine Inquiry says that two of four ballast tanks were empty, leaving the ship unstable.
- Google is ordered to divulge the viewing habits of every user to Viacom if they have watched

### Wikipedia Current Events

Youtube videos.

#### President Bush plans to attend opening of Beijing Olympics

United States President George W. Bush is scheduled to attend the opening ceremony of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing on August 8, the White House said Thursday.

The visit will be part of an August trip to China, South Korea, and Thailand, where he will discuss issues such as bilateral relations, U.S.-Korean trade and North Korea's nuclear program.

Human rights groups have appealed to Bush not to attend the Olympics, citing the Chinese government's crackdown on Tibetan protesters as evidence of human rights abuse. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Czech Republic President Vaclav Klaus have said they will boycott the opening ceremony as a political protest. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown says that he will not attend the opening, but he will be at the closing.

Chinese President Hu Jintao with George W. Bush.

U.S. senator and former Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was among a group of senators who sent Bush a letter urging him not to attend the Olympics. Presumptive Presidential nominees Barack Obama and John McCain have also weighed in.

Obama wants Bush to boycott the ceremony if China doesn't respect human rights in Tibet and pressure Sudan on the violence in Darfur, while McCain has said that if he were President, he wouldn't attend.

Representatives of the Chinese government have begun talks with the Dalai Lama to ease tension between China and Tibet. French President Nicolas Sarkozy said earlier this week that his attendance at the Olympics will depend on the outcome of these talks.

However, Bush has previously said that he would go to the Olympics to support American athletes, not to make a political statement. "He sees this as a sporting competition," said White House Press Secretary Dana Perino. "But at the same time, just as he will this week when he sees President Hu, he will talk to him about these important issues of human rights and especially religious freedom."

### **Military storehouse explodes near Sofia**

An explosion woke up the Bulgarian capital city of Sofia around 6:30 AM EEST. The sequence of reports were caused by explosion in a military storehouse in Chelopechane. Police, ambulances and "Citizen Protection" arrived at the scene.

According to general Zlatan Stoikov, speaking for the Bulgarian National Radio, the military base in Chelopechane is currently inaccessible and under closing down. "There are 1494 tons of explosives stored in the Chelopechane base", said the Minister of Defence Nikolai Tsonev, according to "Focus" Agency. The restricted area is 2 square kilometers. In the moment of the

first explosion there were two guards in the storehouses, who didn't note anything moving. A radius of 6 kilometres is inspected for shrapnel.

Some was noticed near the Kvebek approach to the Sofia Airport, said the Minister of Transport Petar Mutafchiev. The part was 4-5 cm and it is removed. Some of the flights to Sofia were redirected to Plovdiv and passengers were transported to Sofia by buses. After being inspected by internal specialists and group from the Ministry of Transport, the Sofia airport is working again.

Many windows were broken by the explosion, even in some parts of Sofia. The mayor of Sofia, Boiko Borisov, said that many citizens called the municipality to find out what has happened. 1,438 calls to the emergency services number were received between 6:30 and 6:45, the Minister of Emergencies Emel Etem reported to the national legislature, according to "Focus" agency. The people that called it in didn't know the exact location of the explosion. The explosion was heard at 6:28; the first call was at 6:30. The police arrived in 5 minutes and all other services in 10.

A detachment from the 38th Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Protection Regiment - Musachevo was sent to the scene. There were rumours about toxic gases and even radiation, but they were denied by the chemical squad, arrived at the scene.

The cause of the explosion is currently unknown and is under investigation. The investigators will wait at least 24 hours before approaching the scene.

### **Mongolia's ruling party wins elections as rioting subsides**

Mongolia's ruling People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) has been declared winners of the country's legislative elections, two days after allegations of vote-rigging leveled against the ruling party sparked violent protests in the capital of Ulaanbaatar.

Preliminary results show the MPRP with 47 seats out of 76 in the State Great Khural, General Election Committee spokesman Nergui reported. The opposing Democratic Party won 26 seats, Nergui said, with the remaining seats divided between minor parties. The official results are expected to be revealed tomorrow. Nevertheless, the preliminary results indicate a decisive victory for the former communist party.

International observers say the vote was largely fair. There were some irregularities reported, but according to William Ifante, Mongolia director of The Asia Foundation, "they were in no way widespread" and the election "appeared to have been transparent and free throughout."

This did not stop Democratic Party supporters from taking to the streets on Tuesday in protest of alleged election fraud. Rioters clashed with police, setting fire to the MPRP headquarters and a cultural center. Five people were killed in the violence, over 300 were injured, and around 700 protesters were detained. President Nambaryn Enkhbayar declared a four-day state of emergency in the capital, which will stay in effect until Saturday.

Calm has since been restored in Ulaanbaatar, although a heavy police presence remains in the city. "Life is steadily coming back

to normal. Military equipment has been moved from the city and traffic restrictions have been lifted," said Justice Minister Monk-Orgil. Protests have been banned during the state of emergency, but Democratic Party leader Tsakhiagiyn Elbegdorj does not expect a recurrence of the violence.

However, Elbegdorj still asserts that the elections were marred by fraud, and he is demanding a recount. "I am deeply saddened that this vote was stolen," he said. "It was stolen and there needs to be a recount. The result is false."

### **Sulpicio Lines pay PHP6.2 million for death of man in 1998 ferry disaster**

Sulpicio Lines, a ferry company in the Philippines, have been ordered to pay PHP6.24 million over the death of a man on board MV Princess of the Orient, which sank in stormy weather off Batangas in 1998. Ernesto Unabia was one of seventy confirmed fatalities in the disaster, which left eighty more missing.

Unabia was a 37-year-old seaman who worked on international vessels, and earned a ₱120,000 salary. According to widow Verna Unabia, who filed the case with her three children, he was going to work on for thirteen more years and then retire. Unabia's case is the first to be concluded, although most victims settled with Sulpicio without claims being filed.

Although Sulpicio lost their appeal several weeks ago, reporters have only today received access to documentation concerning the case.

Under Philippines law, employers are responsible for their employees actions. However, in *Pestaño vs.*

Sumayang the Supreme court ruled that if it could be proved an employer had taken appropriate diligence when selecting employers then they could not be held responsible.

It was viewed that Sulpicio was responsible as they failed to remove captain Esrum Mahilum from the vessel despite a number of incidents involving the ferry while he was in command of it. Princess of the Orient had struck the bottom of Manila's North Harbour, sideswiped a container ship and suffered a crippling engine fire while berthed at North Harbour, being towed first to Cebu and ultimately Singapore for repairs.

Despite these serious incidents while the ship was under Mahilum's care, however, he was not removed from captaincy or even disciplined. A Board of Marine Inquiry (BMI) investigation into the ultimate sinking of the Princess of the Orient would later say that Sulpicio did not have enough initiative to take action against him. The court ruled this made them responsible for his actions.

On September 18, 1998, the day of the sinking, Captain Mahilum was warned before starting out that severe weather was approaching. He wrongly calculated that the storm was safely distanced and left port regardless, running into the storm two hours later. Princess of the Orient began listing to the left and a distress call was sent, but she sank before help arrived. The BMI's report blamed the disaster on the captain making "erroneous maneuvers of the vessel before it sank." He remains missing to this day.

After the court ruled that this

made Sulpicio liable to pay civil damages an appeal was filed, in which Sulpicio said that the captain "valiantly tried to save his ship up to the bitter end. He heroically went down with his ship." Although he failed to properly supervise the abandonment order he gave, he was last seen helping passengers to board life rafts. Sulpicio further alleged that careful analysis of the BMI report showed he did not directly cause the disaster.

The court rejected the appeal, with judge Estella Alma Singco saying that while the failure to remove the captain wasn't the direct cause, "such failure doubtless contributed materially to the loss of life." Sulpicio were ordered to pay P6.240 million in lost earnings, P100,000 moral damages, P50,000 indemnity - which Sulpicio had already offered to all the families of the deceased - and P50,000 in pursuer's litigation costs.

### **Continental Airlines charged over Air France Concorde disaster**

United States air carrier Continental Airlines and two of their employees have been charged over the crash of Air France Flight 4590. The disaster involved a Concorde crash on July 25, 2000 near Charles de Gaulle International Airport, Paris, France that killed all 109 on board and four more on the ground. It was carrying mostly German tourists to John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.

The crash occurred after a metal strip detached from a Continental DC-10 that departed before the Concorde and was left behind on the runway. When Concorde took off afterwards it hit the strip, which punctured a tyre. As the tyre disintegrated a piece of debris

punctured a fuel tank, triggering a large fire as the jet took off. The badly damaged aircraft crashed into a hotel before it was able to perform an emergency landing. The final report was not released until 2004.

One Continental employee, mechanic John Taylor, is being charged over making and installing the non-standard strip. Head of maintenance Stanley Ford is being charged for allowing the part to be modified by Taylor without clearing the changes properly, and the airline is charged for allowing the widebodied passenger jet back into the air and having failed to maintain it adequately. It is also claimed the titanium strip should have been made of softer aluminium, which had a lower risk of damaging tyres.

Three further individuals have been charged as well. Henri Perrier, head of the initial Concorde programme at Aerospatiale, Jacques Herubel, Concorde chief engineer at the time and Claude Frantzen, ex-head of technical services at the French civil aviation authority are all facing charges. The charges are primarily for involuntary manslaughter.

As a result of the Concorde disaster the aircraft was grounded pending emergency modifications. It was official removed from service in 2003 by its only two operators, British Airways and Air France. The model's first commercial flight was in 1976, and it was the world's first supersonic airliner. It was developed as a collaboration between Britain and France.

### **New study shows children's perception of rainforest wildlife**

A recently released study has

shown how dramatically children's perception of wildlife differs from the animal's effect on the rainforest. The study said that it aimed to "investigate UK children's perceptions of the biodiversity and ecology of rainforest environments," by evaluating "children's perceptions by assessing their drawings of rainforests."

The study showed that children have a greater awareness of the animals like tigers and spiders, instead of the more common species like ants, which are often considered less exciting. This is despite the fact that these species have the greatest effect on the rainforest.

Children from aged 3 to 11 were included in the study, and all age groups had a disproportionately large amount of mammals and birds in their drawings. Around half of the participants were aged over eight, and both the three to five and five to seven age group covered around a quarter of the participants each.

### **Australian murder victims killed in different ways**

A 69-year-old grandfather, who cannot be named for legal reasons, stands accused of murdering three victims in the small New South Wales town of Cowra. All victims were killed in different ways.

Media organisations have reported that the 69-year-old man killed his five year old grand daughter by drowning; her seven year old brother was killed by a blunt force trauma to the back of the head, and his wife was killed by multiple axe wounds to her body - including her head.

New South Wales Police could not

confirm the post-mortem examination, saying that the results of the post-mortem examination are not expected to be finalised for a couple of days and may not be immediately made public.

The 69-year-old man, who went before Deniliquin Local Court on July 1, 2008, was refused bail and charged with three counts of murder and one count of attempted murder. He is currently in a special holding cell on 24-hour watch at the Junee Correctional Centre. A further appearance is due in Wagga Wagga Local Court via an audio-visual link on July 7, 2008.

### **Search-and-rescue dog that found 9/11 survivor to be cloned**

A German shepherd who recovered the last survivor of the September 11, 2001 attacks is to be cloned. His owner, former Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada police officer James Symington, entered an essay writing contest about why his dog should be cloned.

Trakr, the 15 year old German shepherd suffering from degenerative neurological disorder, was the subject of a contest-winning essay about why Trakr should be cloned that was written by Symington. Trakr and Symington received Humanitarian Service Awards from Jane Goodall for their heroics at Ground Zero. Symington is now an actor of film and television, sometimes credited as Peter James.

BioArts International sponsored the essay-writing contest. Five more dogs are to be cloned by its Best Friends Again program. While Trakr will receive free replication, the other dogs will have to participate in an auction with a

starting bid of US\$100,000.

BioArts is going to send the DNA of the 6 dogs to Sooam Biotech Research Foundation in Seoul, South Korea. A Sooam researcher said that the dog should be born in November.

### **Former science director sues Texas over intelligent design e-mail**

Christine Comer, former director of the science curriculum for the Texas Education Agency (TEA), is suing the Commissioner Robert Scott for wrongful dismissal. Comer alleges that she was "illegally fired for forwarding an e-mail about a lecture that was critical of the teaching of intelligent design in science classes." Her suit alleges she was "terminated for contravening an unconstitutional policy" which required "employees to be neutral on the subject of creationism – the biblical interpretation of the origin of humans."

The Dallas Morning News reported, "The policy was in force even though the federal courts have ruled that teaching creationism as science in public schools is illegal under U.S. Constitution's provision preventing government establishment or endorsement of religious beliefs." Among Comer's supporters is Philosopher and National Center for Science Education speaker Barbara Forrest who was the presenter at the lecture Comer mentioned in the email.

News 8 Austin reported, "The TEA was not available for comment late Wednesday."

### **Hillary Clinton attends grand opening of the Erie Canal Harbor in Buffalo, New York**

Junior Senator of New York and

former United States 2008 presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton attended a ceremony marking the grand opening of the Erie Canal Harbor in Buffalo, New York. This marks the first time in nearly 100 years that the inner harbor of Buffalo's Canal waterfront has seen significant development, dedicated to tourism and the people.

"Hello Buffalo!" stated an enthusiastic Clinton. "It is such a privilege and joy to see this project and all that it means not only for Buffalo, but Western New York. This truly has been a labor of love. All of the people before you, plus so many others have seen this vision and have been committed to making it a reality," stated Clinton to a crowd of about 500 people.

"In a few minutes [I will] walk to the center of truss bridge and reenact that famous ceremony that took place 183 years ago," added Clinton. "[The original development] took so many immigrant workers and so many leaders who never ever wavered. Local economies boomed, commerce exploded and this (the Canal) became one of the greatest infrastructure achievements in the history of the world," Clinton added.

In 1825, then state governor DeWitt Clinton dedicated the canal to the city in almost the same spot where Clinton stood. Off to her right, the Buffalo Fire Department sprayed water into the harbor from a fire fighting boat, just as it did over 100 years ago. Cannons were also fired into the air just like they were when governor Clinton celebrated building of the Canal.

"I am very proud to support the redevelopment of the Erie Canal

Harbor. The progress we are celebrating today, will continue. I am as convinced as can be, that as we see progress here at the inner harbor and the outer harbor, we are going to see the revival of Buffalo continue," said Clinton.

The project cost almost US\$55 million to build, and its not over yet. A stretch of lakeside parks, trails and mixed use commercial and residential development is also planned for Buffalo's waterfront. City mayor Byron Brown says the redevelopment will attract hundreds of millions of dollars in new projects.

Several other politicians were also present such as Senior N.Y Senator Charles Schumer, former Buffalo mayor Anthony Masiello and congressman Brian Higgins.

"By reclaiming our past, we are forging our future. The Erie Canal project is an economic shot in the arm for Buffalo and Western New York that will spur business, jobs and tourism," stated Schumer.

### **19th century stable in Buffalo, New York officially saved from demolition**

Buffalo, New York – Developer and CEO of Savarino Companies, Sam Savarino, has confirmed to Wikinews that he has bought, and is planning to restore a severely damaged stable and livery on Buffalo's West Side. The building partially collapsed on June 11, which originally caused 15 homes to be evacuated.

Savarino bought the building from owner Bob Freudenheim for US\$1.00 and states that he hopes to save as much of the building as possible, including the facade, at least 20 feet of the side walls, all of the back walls including the elevator tower and if possible all

three floors. There is one major downside to the purchase; he inherits the over \$400,000 tax lien against the property.

"It was a "NYS Lotto" purchase ('a dollar and a dream'). I do inherit the City's lien of \$400,000 though," stated Savarino to Wikinews. The fee is what the city has been billed for the limited demolition it paid for before Savarino bought the building. Currently the city is suing Freudenheim to force him to pay for those fees.

The building is currently undergoing minor demolition in preparations to make the rest of it stable. Once complete, Savarino plans to evaluate the extent of the damage and begin his plans to make the building into residential living spaces.

"Only unstable parts are being demolished. We will see what we have to deal with as the demolition proceeds but tentative plans are for living units on two floors with parking on the ground floor," stated Savarino. Construction is expected to begin as early as this year, but "more than likely next year," he added.

Originally the city ordered an emergency demolition on the building after Freudenheim gave them permission to demolish it on June 12 during an emergency Preservation Board meeting. His reason was because he would not be "rehabilitating the building anytime soon."

Freudenheim, along with his wife Nina, were part-owners of the Hotel Lenox at 140 North Street in Buffalo and were advocates to stop the Elmwood Village Hotel from being built on the Southeast corner of Forest and Elmwood

Avenues. They also financially supported a lawsuit in an attempt to stop the hotel from being built. Though it is not known exactly how long Freudenheim has owned the stable, Wikinews has learned that he was the owner while fighting to stop the hotel from being built. Residents say that he has been the owner for at least 22 years. Residents successfully halted demolition after winning a restraining order in New York State Supreme Court, which will continue to monitor developments in the case. The next hearing is scheduled for September 2.

Savarino states his project could cost at least \$3,500,000 and before construction can begin, all plans must be approved by the city's planning board.

### Today in History

993 – Pope John XV became the first pope to canonize a saint, Ulrich of Augsburg.

1776 – The Continental Congress of the Thirteen Colonies in British North America adopted a Declaration of Independence, considered to be the founding document of the United States.  
1865 – Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was first published, based on a story he first told Alice Liddell and her sisters exactly three years earlier in a rowing boat travelling on the River Thames from Oxford to Godstow.

1941 – German AB-Aktion operation in Poland: After capturing Lwów, the Nazis executed approximately 45 professors of the University of Lwów.

1976 – Israel Defense Forces raided Uganda's Entebbe International Airport to free hostages taken by hijackers.  
July 04 is

### Quote of the Day

Happiness in this world, when it comes, comes incidentally. Make it the object of pursuit, and it leads us a wild-goose chase, and is never attained. Follow some other object, and very possibly we may find that we have caught happiness without dreaming of it.

~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

### Word of the Day

gurgitator n

1. A competitive eater.

### About Wikinews

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