

**Top Stories**

**Prices at the pump spike overnight**



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**British Airways strike grounds flights at Heathrow**

What began as a ground crew strike on Thursday has escalated into the grounding of all flights from Heathrow's Terminal 4 until at least 6pm Friday.

**Featured story**

**Slovenian alpinist rescued from Himalayan peak**

A Pakistani military helicopter Lama III rescued Slovenian alpinist Tomaž Humar, who went up on a solo climb on one of the highest peaks in the Himalayas.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar is shot dead by a sniper in Colombo in what may be an attack by the Tamil Tigers.
- At least 70 people have died and over 5,000 are sick in the western Indian state of Maharashtra following the recent floods.
- An unofficial strike by ground staff at Heathrow forced British Airways to cancel over 100 flights. They have now returned to work.
- Salva Kiir, the new vice-president of Sudan, says he is opposed to independence for the country's south. (BBC) The government of Uganda has shut down a radio station for broadcasting a debate on the cause of death of former Sudanese vice-president John Garang.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter launches successfully from Cape Canaveral, Florida, at 11:43 GMT
- Omar Bakri Mohammed has been banned from ever setting foot on British soil again.
- The former Israeli sergeant Taysir Hayb was sentenced to eight years in prison and an additional two years suspended sentence for the shooting of Tom Hurdall.

**Prices at the pump spike overnight**



*Overnight gas price hike shown at a Chicago area BP-Amoco station (background). The Shell station (foreground) has not yet posted the whopping 12 cent price hike.*

All this week, prices at the pump have been reaching record levels across the United States. Since yesterday, the price for a gallon of gasoline increased by as much as fifteen cents in some places. Large cities in California, such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, have reported gas prices that top \$3.00 a gallon for regular grade, twenty cents higher than the state's average of \$2.80. Chicago is reporting gas prices beyond \$2.80. These price hikes are a direct reflection of the record price of crude oil at \$67 per barrel and the fact that 12 U.S. refineries have reported issues that have affected output.

These price increases are concerning some who worry that those with considerable financial hardships will endure more of a burden. A poll was conducted for The Associated Press and America Online News

about whether or not these gas prices will cause problems with people's personal finances and the poll found that 64 percent say gas prices will cause money problems for them in the next six months, while 35 percent did not think so.

According to a AAA Texas motor club spokesman, additional price increases will more than likely continue into the weekend.

*This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.*

**Iran stands firmly against nuclear agency resolution**

In a nationally broadcast radio sermon by former Iranian president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Friday, he said of the U. N. watchdog group adopting the resolution for Iran to stop nuclear enrichment activities, "The decision was a cruel one."

The Thursday adoption in Vienna by the governing board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), was unanimous and legally non-binding in asking Iran to suspend all nuclear fuel related activities. The board also requested a report from the agency's chief, Mohamed ElBaradei, on its compliance by Tehran.

On Thursday, an Iranian member of their nuclear negotiating team, Sirous Nasseri, read in London a statement made by his republic at the emergency governing board meeting of the IAEA regarding the Nuclear proliferation treaty (NPT):

How can this body be called to react to an act, which is in full conformity with the NPT and the safeguards and constitutes a limited manifestation of the exercise of an inalienable right? A right, which by its own simple meaning, cannot be alienated from anyone.

IAEA spokeswoman Melissa Fleming, said yesterday, "The resolution on Iran was just adopted without a vote, by consensus. So, full consensus. All 35 members of the board

agreed to the language of the resolution text."

International concern over the Iranian nuclear enrichment program was led by the European Union countries of France, Great Britain and Germany (EU-3), along with the United States. The pressure brought by these nations succeeded in obtaining language calling for the re-instatement of seals that were removed at the Uranium Conversion Facility in Isfahan. The seals were removed during the recent installation of surveillance cameras by IAEA.

The agency is to monitor Tehran for compliance to halt uranium enrichment. After a September 3 deadline, Iran again faces a possible referral to the U.N. Security Council where it could face economic sanctions.

Meanwhile, the United States is likely to grant an entry visa to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to attend the United Nations opening session next month in New York City, New York.

The Bush administration probe into whether Ahmadinejad was connected to the 1979-1981 Iranian hostage crisis is looking like it was a case of mistaken identity. The decision remains tentative as intelligence reports within the administration continue to circulate, according to The Washington Post citing U.S. officials.

### **Pro-democracy demonstrations erupt in Maldives**

Pro-democracy demonstrations took place throughout the atoll nation of Maldives today, ousting the authoritarian president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. Reports indicated that the president was unable to approach the capital to take control.

The protestors, led by members of the newly-registered Maldivian Democratic Party, reportedly were demanding the release of political prisoners and the president's resignation.

Gayoom has been president since 1978, and brooked little dissent during his tenure.

### **Former Japanese prime minister Hashimoto indicated his retirement**

On the 11th August, the former Prime Minister of Japan Riyutaro Hashimoto (68) formally indicated he would not run for Okayama 4th constituency of the House of Representatives, the Lower House of Japan, due to defectiveness of his physical condition, possibly nominally. Since the current prime minister Junichiro Koizumi had resolved that House, an election will be held on September 11. At the next day of that announcement, on the 12th, the Liberal Democratic Party executive committee showed they had no intention to recognize him as candidacy to proportional representative constituency either, there might be no possibility for him to run for the coming election as LDP candidate and his political career will end inevitably.

On the July, 2004 it was reported that Hashimoto hadn't stated the donation of 1 hundred million yen from a lobbyist organisation, in the annual political financial income & outgo report which is legally mandatory to all minister and parliament speakers. Hashimoto had received that donation from Japan Dental Political Federation, which has been one of his main supportive organisations. His relation between medical and pharmacy lobbyists has began at least 1963 when he was appointed as a secretary of Minister of Health and Welfare. In the same year he ran for a constituency for which his father had run since the death in that year. Later he was appointed to the Minister of Health and Welfare and played a roll of representative of this ministry during his career.

Hashimoto had been a speaker of the House of Representatives since September 1963. He hadn't lost his seat until now since then. He was appointed to the Minister of Health and Welfare, the Minister of Industrial Minister successively. He was the president of Liberal Democratic Party from 1995 till the lost of LDP at the election of the House of Councillors in 1998, and the Prime Minister of Japan from 1996 till his resignation from LDP presidency. In 2001 he ran again for the presidency of the party, but was defeated in the present Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro.

### **British Airways strike grounds flights at Heathrow**

What began as a ground crew strike on Thursday has escalated into the grounding of

all flights from Heathrow's Terminal 4 until at least 8pm Friday.

The row began with a funding crisis of meal provider, Gate Gourmet, which resulted in the axing of 200 full-time staff earlier on Wednesday. In reaction, unions of ground crews and baggage handlers from British Airways announced a stop work from Friday, which escalated into a full close-down of Terminal 4 on Friday due to overcrowding and backlog.

British Airways grounded more than 100 flights on Thursday evening, and by Friday evening, around 550 flights look to be cancelled. Other airlines which utilise Terminal 4 are also affected, including Qantas, Sri Lankan Airlines and Finnair, with incoming longhaul flights now being redirected to other European airports, including Frankfurt.

### **Julian McGauran makes rude gesture to Australian Senate**

The Senator Julian McGauran in the Australian Senate had made an "unseemly" gesture across the floor of the Senate whilst it was in session on August 11, apparently as a result of interjections about a division taking place.

Whilst this was not immediately debated, Senator Bob Brown had asked the Acting Deputy President of the Senate to look into the matter. Later the President of the Senate ruled that the gesture was "unseemly but not obscene".

This ruling caused a fierce debate, with Senator Brown saying that McGauran's "arrogant and disgusting" actions exemplified the Government's attitude towards its new-found Senate majority, whilst Senator Ron Boswell, the National Party Senate leader, had criticised Brown of hypocrisy, stating that Brown had "broken every law in Australia" and "every law in Tasmania" (which Bartlett noted as a point of order as being hyperbole).

Senator McGauran then spoke, stating that he "regret[ted] his actions". Brown however noted that this was not an unqualified apology. A motion was then put that the President's ruling be dissented from, which debate was set for another sitting. Senator Chris Evans, the Labor Senate leader and

Senator Brown had called for McGauran's sacking as Chief Government whip; his National Party superiors have said that they will speak to McGauran about the incident.

### **Scientists warn thawing Siberia may trigger global meltdown**

Russian researchers warn that Western Siberia has begun to thaw as a result of global warming. The frozen peat bogs in this region may hold billions of tons of methane gas, which may be released into the atmosphere. Methane is a greenhouse gas 22 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Sergei Kirpotin, of Tomsk State University warned *New Scientist* that the event is "ecological landslide that is probably irreversible and is undoubtedly connected to climatic warming".

David Viner, of the University of East Anglia told the *Guardian* newspaper: "When you start messing around with these natural systems, you can end up in situations where it's unstoppable". He also warns that this event was not considered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

University of Alaska scientists found methane "hotspots" in eastern Siberia where the gas bubbles out from thawing permafrost bogs at a rate that prevents the surface from freezing.

The permafrost had been intact for 11,000 years and started melting 4 years ago.

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## Today in History

- 1521 - Conquistador Hernán Cortés captured the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, destroying most of the city.
- 1704 - The Battle of Blenheim, a pivotal event of the War of the Spanish Succession, took place. England and Austria claim victory over France and Bavaria.
- 1913 - Harry Brearley developed stainless steel.
- 1920 - The Battle of Warsaw began during the Polish-Soviet War.
- 1961 - Construction of the Berlin Wall, a long barrier separating West Berlin from East Berlin and the surrounding territory of East Germany, began.
- August 13 is Independence Day for the Central African Republic (1960)

## Quote of the Day

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