



Top Stories



Wikinews interviews Dalai Lama's representative

DHS: al-Qaeda and Hezbollah planning to attack U.S. within three years

Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and or single interest groups are planning to attack the United States within three years, according to a Wikinews investigation based on a U.S. Department of Homeland Security report obtained via Wikileaks.

Featured story

FBI document exposes symbols used by pedophiles

In an exclusive report, Wikinews has obtained an internal FBI document from Wikileaks detailing symbols used by organized pedophiles to identify one another.

Wikipedia Current Events

German train drivers begin a 62-hour strike, asking for a 31% pay rise.

•Pakistani forces kill at least 16

Wikipedia Current Events

Taliban militants in heavy fighting in the Swat valley.

•The European Parliament far right bloc, Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty, collapses after five Romanian MEPs resign following Alessandra Mussolini's claim that Romanians are "habitual law-breakers".

•A 7.7-magnitude earthquake hits northern Chile, near the town of Calama. Two deaths and over a hundred injuries are reported.

•President of Ghana John Kufuor is involved in a car accident in Accra, but is not hurt.

•Hossein Mousavian, a former Iranian nuclear negotiator, is charged with espionage by Iran's intelligence ministry. He allegedly gave classified information to the British embassy.

•Iraqi insurgency: A roadside bomb kills two civilians in Baghdad's Green Zone.

•2007 Pakistani state of emergency: Pakistani opposition leader Imran Khan is arrested at the University of the Punjab in Lahore.

•Danish prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen's liberal-conservative government has secured a third term in office following early parliamentary elections to the Folketing.

•High Speed 1 (formerly known as the Channel Tunnel Rail Link) opens for commercial use in Britain, linking London St.

Wikipedia Current Events

Pancras, which also opened for commercial use, to the Channel Tunnel. It arrived in Paris on time.

Chris Langham's sentence for downloading child porn reduced

British comedy actor Chris Langham has won an appeal to have the sentence reduced in his conviction for downloading indecent images of children from the internet. Originally sentenced to 10 months in prison, Langham's sentence has now been cut to 6 months, and he is set to be released today.

Langham, 58, had been found guilty on 15 counts for downloading child pornography. Police claimed that several images found on Langham's computer were of the worst category, "Level 5" severity. However, Langham claimed that he was using the images for researching a character in a TV series called Help. However, Dame Heather Steel, one of Britain's most senior female judges agreed that the sentence could be cut.

Langham was arrested in 2005. During his original trial, Langham was found not guilty of indecently assaulting an underage girl. He had appealed his sentence previously, but was rejected in October 2006.

Far-right faction in European Parliament dissolved

The far-right coalition Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty (ITS) in the European Parliament, collapsed today after the Romanian delegates withdrew over a dispute with Italian Alessandra Mussolini, grand-daughter of dictator Benito Mussolini.

After a Roma gipsy was accused of murdering the wife of an Italian naval officer recently, Ms Mussolini told the Romanian newspaper Cotidianul on November 2nd: "Breaking the law has become a way of life for Romanians. However, it is not about petty crimes, but horrifying crimes, that give one goose bumps."

In her comment, Ms. Mussolini did not distinguish between Roma gypsies and the rest of Romanians, which the leader of the Romanian deputies, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, found to be "a sacrilege toward our people". The far-right Greater Romania Party is running on an anti-Romani platform. Mr. Tudor went on to suggest that such a comment could be expected from the grand-daughter of Benito Mussolini, which Ms. Mussolini saw as an insult to her family.

After these five Romanian Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) left, the ITS only had 18 members left, whereas 20 members from six countries are needed to form a faction.

As a result of the dissolution, these MEPs will no longer be able to amend laws in the plenary meetings of the European Parliament, they will get less time to speech, and they will not be able to use the translator service or ask for certain financial contributions for their meetings.

The bloc now misses out on an estimated €1.3 million.

Immigration tensions have soared recently in Italy, resulting in the expulsion of 20 Romanians. Since Romania joined the European Union, their citizens should be able to travel freely within the European Union, but Italy is considering restrictions on this right.

Beside the Greater Romania MEPs and several politicians from Italy, the ITS bloc was composed of members from Austria (FPÖ), Belgium (Vlaams Belang), Bulgaria (National Union Attack), France (Front National) and individual politicians from the United Kingdom.

Attempts to form a far-right coalition in the European Parliament had previously been undertaken, but the ITS faction only came together last January, after Romania and Bulgaria had joined the European Union on January 1.

The survival of the group was already doubtful, according to polls which predicted an electoral whipeout for the Greater Romania party in the elections on November 20.

Reactions

Several other political groups welcomed the break up, and the official announcement today was reportedly followed by some applause.

German MEP Martin Schulz, head of the left Party of European Socialists, released a statement saying that: "The good news is that the [group] of the ultra-nationalists no longer exists and cannot use the money of the European taxpayer to support its

xenophobia and neo-fascism."

According to allied Liberal leader Graham Watson: "They are a casualty of their own philosophy which paints all foreigners into a single mould and encourages xenophobic and racist comments and remarks which have no place in the European Union. ... The irony of a Mussolini destroying the coherence of a far-right group will not be lost on Europeans from Bucharest to Brindisi."

English green MEP Jean Lambert put it this way: "This collection of unsavoury European politicians were united only by hatred - be it of other races, nationalities, sexualities or, ironically, the EU - and it was only a matter of time before they succumbed to a hatred of each other as well."

Dalai Lama's representative talks about China, Tibet, Shugden and the next Dalai Lama

Kasur Tashi Wangdi was appointed Representative of the Dalai Lama to the Americas on April 16, 2005. He had previously served as His Holiness' representative in Delhi, the Indian capital. He has served the Tibetan government-in-exile since 1966, starting as a junior officer and rising to the highest rank of Kalon (Cabinet Minister). As a Kalon, he at one time or another was head of the major ministries, including the Department of Religion and Culture, Department of Home, Department of Education, Department of Information and International Relations, Department of Security, and Department of Health. He is not a Buddhist scholar but describes himself as a civil servant. He possesses a BA in Political Science and Sociology from Durham University.

Wikinews reporter David Shankbone recently spoke to him about Chinese-Tibetan relations, the status of the Panchen Lamas, the awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal to Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th and current Dalai Lama, the appointment of Tibetan high monks by the Chinese government and some of the Dalai Lama's views on topics on religions and societal topics.

The Office of Tibet and the Tibetan government in exile

David Shankbone: What is this office's relationship with the government in exile?

Tashi Wangdi: I am the Representative of the Dalai Lama. We look after Tibetan affairs in North and South America.

DS: Are you essentially an embassy without a country?

TS: Yes.

DS: Professor Venerable Samdhong Rinpoche was elected the head of the Tibetan Administration cabinet--effectively a prime minister of the Central Tibetan Administration, the government-in-exile?

TS: Ever since His Holiness held leadership responsibilities at the age of 16 when he was in Tibet, he wanted to bring about social political reforms. He started those reforms in Tibet. Because of the Chinese invasion and the problem thereafter with the occupation, he could not get through the reforms he wanted to implement. Then in 1959, when the situation went beyond a solution and he had to leave Tibet, as soon as he went to India he continued with the reform and promulgated a draft Constitution. A parliament was elected by Tibetans in exile. He then brought about gradual changes for the democratization of

the system. The political leadership is now elected. We have had a parliament in existence since 1961 and seven years ago we elected a Prime Minister. His Holiness describes himself as semi-retired.

DS: Retired from administrative functions?

TS: Yes. The governing responsibility is now carried out by the elected political leadership.

DS: The Dalai Lama exists as a spiritual leader and essentially a figurehead, similar to Queen Elizabeth?

TS: As you know, we are not seeking independence, but it's more about the future of Tibet.

DS: As an autonomous region.

TS: Yes. We are seeking a solution within the framework of the Chinese Constitution for a meaningful autonomy. Until we are able to achieve that goal, we effectively have a government in exile with a charter—a Constitution. In that charter, his holiness is effectively head of state, and the prime minister is head of government, to use 'normal terms'. His Holiness, however, describes himself as semi-retired.

DS: He's a symbolic head of the people, whereas Rinpoche would be an administrative head? I understand you may want to shy away from using government-oriented terminology.

TS: No, we function as a government in exile. Nothing to be shy about; we want to be open and transparent. It is nothing to hide. Elected parliament, elected leadership; the Tibetan people consider that government as their government, so there is nothing to shy away from. But as I said, in that charter His Holiness is

described as head-of-state, and the elected leadership is head of government, in normal terms.

DS: What would be some of the first actions the Dalai Lama would undertake if he were to return to Tibet?

TS: He would hand over all of his responsibilities to the new leadership in Tibet. He made in very clear as far back as 1992, in a public statement, that as soon as we are able to reach an agreement with the Chinese government, the government-in-exile will be dissolved and the responsibility for managing future affairs will be carried out by Tibetans in Tibet. In other words, people like me who have no claim for leadership and responsibilities by the mere fact that in exile we have been working for Tibet; we will have no claim that we will be in some leadership role when we go back. His Holiness has made it very clear that the people in Tibet should take the responsibility.

DS: What are the functions or responsibilities of the Office of Tibet in the Americas?

TS: My responsibilities are to inform the governments, the people of the situation in Tibet and what we are trying to achieve. Simple as that.

The Chinese invasion and occupation

DS: How many Tibetans were lost during the Reign of Terror directly after the Chinese invasion?

TS: According to our research, we believe that 1.2 million died as a result of Chinese invasion and occupation. That would include people who were killed in fighting, who died of starvation, suicide; people who died being tortured in prison, and so on. 1.2 million. Between March 1959 and the end of 1959, according to China's own

documents—we got hold of the report of a Chinese military officer, an official document—in about nine months, in Central Tibet near Lhasa alone, 87,000 Tibetans are killed in nine months. That's an official Chinese military document. That document is available and been made public many times.

DS: How has the Chinese government's Western China Development program affected ordinary Tibetans?

TS: Of course, development per se is to be welcomed. One of the reasons why His Holiness has repeatedly stated for wanting to be part of China is the economic benefit. Tibet is underdeveloped; materially and economically it is backward, in a development sense. Tibetan people, they need economic development and assistance. If it is meant for the Tibetan people, it is to be welcomed.

But unfortunately, the development plan they have and the impact—we suspected and we now see—it first doesn't take into account the fragile environment; secondly, it is not benefiting the local Tibetans. It is providing facilities for the resettlement of Han Chinese in Tibet. At every point of development, and any casual visitor such as a tourist can see it, all the development is in Chinese towns and cities. The local people have become more and more marginalized. There are minor side benefits, of course, but if it continues Tibetans will become a completely insignificant minority increasingly marginalized. If Tibetans in Tibet were enjoying economic development, there would be no reason for them to be unhappy.

DS: The phrase used to describe this by the exiled Tibetan government is "Chinese

Apartheid?"

TS: Effectively it is the segregation of people; the economic benefits are not going to Tibetans, who are second class citizens in Tibet.

DS: How are the local people handling this situation?

TS: Resentment! But Tibet should be opened up and we've always said you should be able to ask these questions of local Tibetans, and not to me. It is better to be able to ask people in Tibet openly.

DS: But that's not possible.

TS: No, journalists are not allowed to go. Why? If Tibetan people are happy and free to express their views, then there is no reason why people should not be allowed to meet outside reporters. Journalists are not allowed to go, though. About four months back in the international news, it was reported that of the 74 Tibetans in the Tibetan Chinese Communist Party, 54 were dismissed.

DS: Why?

TS: For not being loyal to the party. They were Tibetans who were members of the Chinese Communist Party who are holding posts in the administration.

DS: Have any spoken out as to why they were dismissed?

TS: No.

[Tibetan reaction to the Dalai Lama's Congressional Gold Medal](#)

Drepung Monastery was surrounded by Chinese troops after the Dalai Lama was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. News agencies reported that monks were arrested for exhibiting their joy.

Image: Philipp Roelli.

DS: What happened when the Dalai Lama received the Congressional Gold Medal?

TS: Restrictions were imposed on people; in spite of that, people expressed their happiness. Better dresses were worn that day.

DS: Was there a crackdown?

TS: Yes. Why should that be if people are happy? We have always said that if people are happy we have no reason to continue.

DS: What is the status of the monks who were arrested after the Dalai Lama received the Congressional Gold Medal?

TS: According to the reports I have seen, a large number of people have been detained.

DS: At the Drepung Monastery?

TS: Yes, one of the monasteries was completely surrounded by troops. The movement of people was highly restricted and party members—retired people—were warned that they would lose their pension. I'm sure many of them who, despite these strong warnings, expressed their happiness may have suffered. I have no recent report on that.

DS: How difficult is it to receive information from Tibet?

TS: Not very difficult. Our job is to represent people in Tibet, so our main effort is to try to understand the situation and their feelings, their views. Therefore, it is very important to us to keep in touch with them and receive accurate, objective information from inside Tibet.

DS: Do you know the situation with Ronggay A'drak, the Tibetan nomad who was arrested?

TS: What he said is nothing—it was the basic asking for the release of prisoners, that His Holiness should be allowed to return to Tibet. Because of some democratic change there has been land pressures with Tibetan

nomads, so he also appealed to them to not fight amongst themselves for land ownership, which would never have happened in the past. In this country, nobody would even notice what he said.

DS: What will happen to him?

TS: He has already been sentenced to prison. I think it was 10 years.

DS: Is that standard?

TS: Yes. It's almost a treasonable act to make that kind of a call; unfortunately, it is a very serious crime in Tibet.

The disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the eleventh Panchen Lama

DS: Where is Chadrel Rinpoche, the man who selected Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the eleventh Panchen Lama?

TS: I have no information.

DS: Does anyone?

TS: There was a report, but I have no confirmed information. At one point I heard he was not in good health. He was appointed by the Chinese government to search for the new Panchen Lama and he was in touch with us with the knowledge of the Chinese government.

DS: The Chinese government knew he was in touch with the Dalai Lama over the selection?

TS: Yes. Some of his people went to Beijing when His Holiness' delegation was in Beijing. They met and even sent some offerings to His Holiness to pray for the quick discovery of the Panchen Lama. His Holiness has always made it very clear to the Chinese government that the search for the genuine—the important thing is we have to follow all the procedures to make sure that the

genuine reincarnation is discovered. It was made very clear to the Chinese government that His Holiness and the Tibetan leadership outside was willing to work with the Chinese government in this search. At that time I was His Holiness' representative in Delhi, so I had a number of meetings with Chinese officials to convey these messages. There were no behind-the-scenes.

DS: So at age six, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima just disappeared?

TS: When the final decision came close, there was a lack of willingness on the part of the Chinese leadership to involve His Holiness. Unfortunately, we then ended up having two people. Now we don't know because since the age of six he has disappeared. It is totally ridiculous on the part of the Chinese officials, who say he is kept in hiding at the request of his parents, for his security. That makes no sense.

DS: And nobody knows where he is.

TS: No, nobody.

DS: What do you think will happen to him?

TS: I have no idea.

DS: Do you think he is aware of his status?

TS: I'm sure. He is mature now.

DS: But at six years of age, it is probable he was not able to completely comprehend the fight between the two governments over who he was and what role he is to play. If they were to take him at the age of six and place him somewhere in Manchuria, re-educate him and deny him his heritage, it is possible he does not even know who he is?

TS: I suppose. It's speculative, but there are apprehensions on the

part of the Tibetans that this was the plan for taking him away and keeping him in isolation. To brainwash him. At the same time, by deduction, one could say neither he nor his parents and other relatives have given in to the Chinese government. Because if they had, they would have made some kind of public statement to say, "We do not think he is Panchen Lama, we have been treated well and we are ordinary people." Nothing has happened like that.

DS: There have been no rumors, no words through the grapevine as to his status?

TS: No. The logical deduction would be there is no cooperation from the Panchen Lama's side to follow the official line.

DS: That's pretty amazing when you consider it.

TS: It is amazing! It's also very silly. Unnecessary. It's a religious matter. Reincarnation is purely religious, and it is a very unique tradition in Tibet. If that is allowed to be followed-through, it is the best way of winning the hearts and minds of people. It's the best diplomacy and a wise way of dealing with things. Now they have screwed it up. Unnecessary.

DS: What do you think is the thinking on the part of the Chinese government that this six year old boy would be a threat to their power?

TS: They sense their lack of legitimacy. It's weakness. It's fear of illegitimacy. They think everything is going to blow up in their face. In the long run it's counterproductive.

DS: It would seem that by the Chinese government installing their own person, they have created their own symbol of

illegitimacy as opposed to allowing religious practice to happen whilst keeping their governmental authority intact. They have created a symbol in the form of Gyancaïn Norbu of their illegitimacy and meddling in the cultural affairs.

TS: That's right.

[edit]

Gyancaïn Norbu, the boy selected by the Chinese government

DS: Do you think Gyancaïn Norbu, the boy the Chinese government selected as the eleventh Panchen Lama, is a victim as well?

TS: As a good Tibetan, when he comes to his age of making his own decisions, which he is about that age—18 or 19—he will make the right decisions.

DS: What would be the right decision?

TS: I think if he wants to pursue religious leadership, in Tibetan customs we have more than one reincarnation. If he proves himself to be a good practitioner and religious leader, people will treat him as a reincarnation.

"It's a religious matter. Reincarnation is purely religious, and it is a very unique tradition in Tibet. If that is allowed to be followed-through, it is the best way of winning the hearts and minds of people. It's the best diplomacy and a wise way of dealing with things. Now they have screwed it up." Wangdi on the Chinese government's selection of the 11th Panchen Lama.
Image: David Shankbone.

DS: But if he insists on his status as the Panchen Lama?

TS: If through his own contact and learning he proves himself to be worthy of being a reincarnation—as I said there is more than one reincarnation in our tradition—then

people will treat him as a reincarnation. It's not a political institution. Panchen Lama is a religious institution. So you can have two reincarnations. I don't see it as a clash of interests.

DS: But he has no legitimacy now as the Panchen Lama, where as the one the Dalai Lama selected does have that legitimacy, is that correct?

TS: Yes, that's right.

DS: Gyancaïn Norbu has not made any statements?

TS: No. Lately he has not been seen in public. People are starting to ask questions and there have been speculative reports that he has escaped, or ran away. There was speculation, but I can't comment on this. The fact is that lately has not been seen in public. About a year or so ago he was prominently shown in public as a propaganda. For some reason of late he has not been physically seen or made any statements attributed to him. It raises questions, but I can't comment on speculation.

DS: What do the Tibetan people think about him?

TS: People will respond to him when he comes out on his own. I don't think people have any bad feelings against him personally. It's not his fault.

DS: But they are against what he represents.

TS: Yes. At the moment it is not against him, but against the Chinese authorities. Not against him, as a person. He's not asserting himself.

DS: He's not towing the party line but just keeping quiet.

TS: Yes, that's understandable.

DS: So in a sense he is a victim

himself?

TS: I suppose one could say that, yes.

The selection of the next Dalai Lama

DS: In September the Chinese government has said they must approve all high monks—

TS: Yes, the state council has promulgated some order. It's a religious matter and it's ridiculous for any government to interfere in religious affairs. No democratic government would interfere. Not here in the United States, not in India. China's government believes in atheism and doesn't believe in a religious tradition, which is the Communist government in China. It believes in religion as an opiate, a destructive element; to interfere in that is irrelevant, ridiculous and meaningless. It is interference in the affairs of followers of traditions.

DS: How will it affect the choosing of the next Dalai Lama?

TS: It will have no effect. You can't impose a Pope. You can't impose an Imam, an Archbishop, saints, any religion...you can't politically impose these things on people. It has to be a decision of the followers of that tradition. The Chinese can use their political power: force. Again, it's meaningless. Like their Panchen Lama. And they can't keep their Panchen Lama in Tibet. They tried to bring him to his monastery many times but people would not see him. How can you have a religious leader like that? When a Panchen Lama goes to his ministry thousands and thousands of people will come from all over Tibet and outside. He is an important Buddhist leader. But when they brought their Panchen Lama, they had to force government officials and the public to attend certain public functions.

DS: How do they force the public?
 TS: They said if you don't come you will be punished and each family has to send one person, and so forth.

DS: How do they keep track of that?
 TS: It's a totalitarian system. Look at the former Soviet Union and China itself. They keep track; the civil system is built like that. It's run on the basis of fear. They have developed an effective system of control and monitor.

DS: Did the Dalai Lama support India's nuclear testing?
 TS: His Holiness has always spoken against violence, arms sales; he has signed with the other Nobel laureates against arms sales and nuclear disarmament. When India exploded a bomb, he said India is a big country and has its foreign concerns, so it would be unfair with its security concerns to deny of that ability to defend itself. He also said that in the long run, all the nuclear countries should work towards total disarmament.

The views of the Dalai Lama

DS: What is His Holiness' view on abortion?

TS: He has said many times that as a Buddhist taking a life is wrong. But on abortion it depends on so many other factors and stages of the development of the fetus. And the circumstances. It's a question for the mother and the child, and he did say if there are developmental issues.

DS: He believes that it should be a personal decision and not a governmental decision?
 TS: Yes.

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama.

DS: But that it's frowned upon as a Buddhist principle?

TS: Yes. But he has certainly spoken very often on population control, but that is more on the preventative side.

DS: What are His Holiness' views on homosexuality?

TS: He said according to Buddhist practice it is wrong. In society, it is alright. I think of it like this. I am Buddhist. You are Christian, let's say. For me, I have to follow the precepts and principles as a Buddhist. For me it would be wrong to do that. But it would be wrong for me to say it is wrong for you because in multicultural, multireligious societies you can't do that.

DS: So if somebody is gay they could not be a proper Buddhist?

TS: I'm sure under certain precepts of Buddhist tradition, a person would not be considered as following ALL the precepts of Buddhist principles. People don't follow all the principles. Very few people can claim they follow all the principles. For instance, telling a lie. In any religion, if you ask if telling a lie is a sin—say Christian—they will say yes. But you find very few people who don't at some point tell a lie. Homosexuality is one act, but you can't say they are not a Buddhist. Or someone who tells a lie is not a Buddhist. Or someone who kills an insect is not a Buddhist, because there's a strong injunction against that.

DS: Have you ever killed an insect?

TS: I'm sure, yeah.

DS: Is the Dalai Lama planning on visiting Latin America any time soon?

TS: There's likelihood that it will be next year. We are looking at it. We have so many invitations from countries and every few years we

look to see what we can fit in.

DS: It's likely next year?

TS: We are thinking of it, yes.

DS: Do you know why the Dalai Lama has not explicitly said he is a reincarnation of the Dalai Lama?

TS: In the broader sense, it is a manifestation, so you can manifest in different ways. He is talking in that sense. It's a broad principle argument.

DS: It's that he believes he is a reincarnation, but whether he is the whole and sum of the 13th Dalai Lama is another question?

TS: Yes. Yes. Something to that effect.

DS: Do you have thoughts to share on the situation in Burma?

TS: His Holiness issued a statement soon after the recent crackdown in which he expressed his deep concern and sadness over the violation, and he expressed solidarity with the Buddhist monks and people asking for democracy. He appealed to the generals to refrain from using violence—they are Buddhists—and as Buddhists they should follow the teachings of Buddha and enter into meaningful dialog.

DS: Have you any information on their current status?

TS: No, we follow whatever comes into the media very closely. It's a Buddhist country and historically Tibet and Burma have good relations.

DS: It's such a difficult region with many complex disputes.

TS: There are ethnic differences, different religions, but through democratic process things can be resolved. Let's look at India and Pakistan. India is a huge country, so many ethnic, religious—they have the second largest Muslim

population after Indonesia—but through a democratic process and the federal structure that came into being the last six years, that's through democratic process. Unfortunately on the Pakistan side with the same people, same culture, the political system is not fully developed and you see more ethnic problems. With Burma if you see more democratic process I'm sure these problems will be worked out.

DS: All over Asia so many people have long-lasting conflicts and memories never seem to die.

TS: I think it's a problem that is remnant of the British rule and all these new states came into existence when British rule was withdrawn. But where democratic process came into place things are better. In places where interest groups came into rule, they divide. But democracy reduces special interest.

Arunachal Pradesh, an historically Tibetan area of India claimed by China

DS: What is your view on Arunachal Pradesh? Is the Government-in-Exile's relative silence over the issue due more to a recognition of India as a friendly government, or does the Government-in-Exile view the area as less Tibetan than the areas controlled by China?

TS: We are bound by the 1914 Simla Convention under which the McMahon Line was formed between India and Tibet. It has been accepted. Both by British India and the Tibetan government, so we are treaty bound. At that time the Tibetan government entered into and signed that agreement. We can't change. The McMahon Line is the international boundary and whatever falls on either side of that line is the territory of either India or, as of

now, the People's Republic of China (Tibet).

Shugden worship

DS: Christopher Hitchens criticized the Dalai Lama for his supposed suppression of Shugden worship?

TS: There's no suppression! His Holiness made it very clear that according to his own observations over many years—in fact, he himself used to worship Shugden—and over many years of his own experience and observation and investigation, he found that this practice is not according to Buddhist practice. That practice is also bringing in divisions within the Buddhist traditions. The practitioners are attaching more importance than the basic Buddhist practice, and therefore he felt that it's a practice that he would not approve of and therefore he advised people to not engage in it. But he made it very clear right from the beginning it was up to the individuals. He has a responsibility to explain the negative aspects of it and then it's up to the individuals to decide on their own. Officially there has never been any repression or denial of rights to practitioners. But after His Holiness' advice many monastic orders adopted rules and regulations that would not accept practitioners Shugden worship in their monastic order. The followers have set up their own groups and they are free to function. But it's in the right of institutions to make their own decisions.

DS: Was Lobsang Gyatso [the 5th Dalai Lama, (1617 – 1682) - ed] murdered by Shugden worshipers?

TS: Yes, that's a fact. There's some misunderstanding that groups taking their own actions is the policy of the Tibetan government, but it's not. Institutions take advice and it is

within their right to say they do not want Shugden worship. But now if a group of people say they want to set up their own institution because they are different practitioners, which is within their right.

Karmapa controversy

DS: What is the reason for the Dalai Lama's decision to become involved in the dispute over the identity of the current Karmapa [the leader of the largest sub-school of one of the four main schools in Tibetan Buddhism - ed.] by endorsing one candidate?

TS: There was no special decision. His Holiness was approached.

DS: By all sides?

TS: Yes. And then later on there was unfortunately some disagreement. Even Shamarpa—who had disagreements with the other regions at that time—even he did not dispute His Holiness' decision as to who should be the throne holder. There should be no dispute.

DS: Does he still play a role as a peacemaker?

TS: No, there's no need. It's accepted by the vast majority of that tradition.

DS: Do you think Ogyen Trinley Dorje [one of the two contestants in the Karmapa dispute - ed.] will be able to travel freely to visit his followers?

TS: He's traveling freely. Under the circumstances he escaped from Tibet there are security concerns about his personal safety. The government of India has to make sure he is not personally harmed, so in that sense there are some security restrictions. But as far as movement is concerned in India he can travel anywhere in India. There's no ban on his movement.

Pat Robertson endorses Rudy Giuliani for President

Conservative evangelical preacher Pat Robertson has endorsed Rudy Giuliani's bid for the 2008 U.S. Presidential election.

Robertson said that he was supporting the former New York mayor, despite their disagreements on social issues, because Giuliani was the best hope for the United States against "the blood lust of Islamic terrorists". Robertson said that Giuliani was a "proven leader who is not afraid of what lies ahead, and who will cast a hopeful vision for all Americans."

Giuliani is pro-choice while Robertson is pro-life. Giuliani also favors extending rights to gays although does not favor allowing gay marriage. Giuliani has had a turbulent family life. Giuliani is on his third marriage and after one divorce was living with two gay roommates. The Religious Right in the United States, including Robertson, often emphasizes what they call traditional family values and frown on divorce and non-standard home arrangements.

James Dobson, another prominent evangelical leader has warned that although the Religious Right has for a long time supported the Republican Party, they may vote for a third party candidate if the Republican Party Presidential candidate does not share their views on social issues.

Iran reveals nuclear designs to IAEA

According to reports, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has received copies of documents detailing the nuclear designs for Iran's nuclear program. It is reported that some of those designs could be used to produce a nuclear bomb.

According to the reports, within the documents are instructions on how to "cast uranium metal," into the shape of a warhead, which are often used on nuclear bombs.

Iran does not deny the documents existence, but said that it received the documents during times when they bought nuclear material on the black market, without being asked if they wanted them or not.

The IAEA, which came across the documents when investigating the nuclear activities of Iran, first asked for the information and designs in 2005. Iranian officials say that IAEA inspectors are permitted to go to Tehran to view the original document. They had previously denied the IAEA a copy or examination of the document.

Eurostar train service moves to new London terminal

Eurostar train services which link the United Kingdom with Europe via the Channel Tunnel have moved to a new London terminal. The first services from St Pancras International launched today following the completion of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link which promises to reduce journey times to Europe by 20 minutes.

The Channel Tunnel Rail Link, to be branded as High Speed 1, has been built in two phases; the first section was completed in 2003 and the second section was brought into use today.

Eurostar chief executive Richard Brown said: "Today marks a new dawn for short-haul travel in Europe. Our move to St Pancras makes Eurostar even more accessible to travellers across Britain. We will carry passengers with greater speed, ease and reliability than ever before, and our travellers will have the extra

reassurance of knowing that they are making far less environmental impact compared with flying."

Waterloo railway station, the previous international London terminal, will be returned to domestic use following the move to St Pancras.

FBI document exposes symbols used by pedophiles

In an exclusive report, Wikinews has obtained an internal FBI document from Wikileaks detailing symbols used by organized pedophiles to identify one another.

Wikileaks obtained the document via Spanish "childhood erotica" networks. According to Wikileaks, the unclassified parts of the document were only briefly published by the Ann Arbor, Michigan police department in a newsletter, which was later removed from the internet.

The document, which is titled Symbols and Logos Used by Pedophiles to Identify Sexual Preferences states that "pedophiles, to include those who sexually abuse children as well as those who produce, distribute, and trade child pornography, are using various types of identification logos or symbols to recognize one another and distinguish their sexual preferences."

According to the FBI, there are at least three groups that pedophiles can use to identify what age and or gender they prefer such as "boylove, girllove and childlove." Most of the logos have been found to be printed on coins, necklace charms and rings.

The first logo, 'The BoyLover logo' (BLogo) "is a small blue spiral-shaped triangle surrounded by a larger triangle, whereby the

small triangle represents a small boy and the larger triangle represents an adult man. A variation of the BLogo is the Little Boy Lover logo (LBLogo), which also embodies a small spiral-shaped triangle within a larger triangle; however, the corners of the LBLogo are rounded to resemble a scribbling by a young child," said the document.

The second logo, 'The GirlLover logo' (GLogo) is "a small heart surrounded by a larger heart, which symbolizes a relationship between an adult male or female and minor girl," the document stated.

The last logo, 'The ChildLover logo' (CLogo), "resembles a butterfly and represents non-preferential gender child abusers," added the document.

It is not known how the document came to be in the hands of Spanish childhood erotica enthusiasts. The logos were found during raids on computers and other items related to pedophile investigations.

Today in History

- 655 – Penda of Mercia was defeated by Oswiu of Northumbria at the Battle of the Winwaed.
- 1889 – A military coup led by Field Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca overthrew Emperor Pedro II and declared Brazil a republic.
- 1920 – The first general assembly of the League of Nations was held in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 1971 – Intel released the 4004 4-bit central processing unit, the world's first single-chip microprocessor.
- 1985 – Northern Ireland peace process: British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and the Irish Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald signed the Anglo-Irish Agreement, giving

the Irish Government an advisory role in Northern Ireland's government.

1988 – The Soviet Buran spacecraft, a reusable vehicle built in response to NASA's Space Shuttle program, was launched, unmanned, on her first and only space flight.

November 15 is Republic Day in Brazil (1889), Shichigosan in Japan.

Quote of the Day

panacea; n

1. A remedy believed to cure all disease and prolong life; a cure-all.
2. Something that will solve all problems.

Word of the Day

The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence;

not in silence, but restraint.

~ Marianne Moore ~

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