



### *Top Stories*

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#### **Magnitude 5.4 earthquake shakes Pakistan**

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#### **Chinese cargo ship sinks after being shot by Russian navy**

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### *Wikipedia Current Events*

The Tamil Tigers aerielly attack Colombo, Sri Lanka, killing two people and injuring at least 40 others.

•The United States will return Benyam Mohammed to the United Kingdom after four years

### *Wikipedia Current Events*

of imprisonment at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base's detention camp.

•Israel seizes 425 acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank for a Jewish settlement.

•Latvian Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis and his government resign.

•Gold futures reclaim the US\$1,000-an-ounce mark.

•New York State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo subpoenas Bank of America Chairman and CEO Kenneth Lewis for misleading investors during the purchase of Merrill Lynch.

•Saab Automobile files for bankruptcy protection.

•Israeli President Shimon Peres selects Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu to form the country's next government.

•A suicide attack kills 25 people in Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan.

•Forty-seven people are injured when a Northwest Airlines flight from the Philippines to Japan experiences severe turbulence.

•India investigates 25 deaths caused by the hepatitis B virus in the western state of Gujarat.

#### **Chinese cargo ship sinks after being shot by Russian navy**

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while the others remain missing.

According to Natalia Gelashvili, a spokeswoman for the Far East Transport Prosecutors office in Nakhodka, the cargo ship New Star fled on Feb. 12 after the shipment of rice it unloaded was rejected by the buyer, who then requested the court to seize the ship while suing for damages. But the Beijing based Global Times reported that the ship was sequestered for alleged smuggling.

Russian Federal Security Service spokeswoman Natalya Rondaleva confirmed that the ship was fired upon by Russian vessels. An unnamed source asserts that warning shots were fired before more direct shots were taken.

The ship began sinking while being escorted back to the port.

The sinking of the boat forced all 16 crew members to abandon the ship by taking two life boats. One boat carrying eight people was saved by Russian sailors while the other was engulfed in the waves. The missing crew include seven Chinese and one Indonesian. The Canadian Press reports that they are presumed to have drowned.

"The cause of the sinking isn't clear because the incident occurred during a storm," said Captain Veniamin Ivanichev of the Marine Rescue Center in Vladivostok.

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs today said it asked Russia to

investigate the "mishap" and identify the cause as soon as possible.

All the rescued crew members have gone back to Nakhodka while the Russian keep looking for the missing sailors. The Russian News Agency said the coast guard found only an empty boat in a three-day search.

China's foreign spokeswoman Jiang Yu declined to comment on the Russians' opening fire on the ship.

The ship was registered in Sierra Leone and the owner is a shipping company based in Hong Kong.

### **Turbulence on Northwest Airlines flight injures 47**

47 people were injured on Friday after Boeing 747-400, operated by Northwest Airlines, encountered severe turbulence on the Manila-Tokyo leg of a flight bound for Los Angeles. The aircraft was carrying 408 passengers and 14 crew members.

The aeroplane was circling off the coast of Chiba, east of Japan's capital of Tokyo, waiting to land, when turbulence forced it to make a rapid descent.

Many of the passengers who were not wearing their seat belts were thrown out of their seats. Most sustained injuries to their heads and necks by colliding with overhead lockers. None of the injuries were life-threatening, although six of the injured are expected to be hospitalised for up to three weeks.

The aircraft landed safely at Tokyo's Narita International Airport, whereupon ambulances took the injured to nearby hospitals.

"I was so scared, I thought I would die," said an unnamed passenger, describing the incident. "My whole body was lifted into the air."

"The person in front of me flew up to the ceiling. The person behind me collapsed and looked unconscious," another said.

"Air turbulence is believed to be the cause. The turbulence occurred 25 to 30 minutes before landing, when the seat belt light was on," said a spokesman for Northwest Airlines, Masashi Takahashi. "During the flight, we received a message from the pilot saying two or three people were injured. But [the pilot] probably assessed that an emergency landing was not necessary," he said to Agence France-Presse.

Northwest Airlines has insisted that the seat belt sign was turned on during the incident.

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There are reports of several injuries in Bagh, Kashmir, but the extent of those injuries are not known. No deaths have yet been reported. An earthquake with a magnitude of 7.7 devastated the same town and area in 2005, killing nearly 80,000 people.

Authorities in Neelum Valley say a school was damaged in a local town. As a result, authorities closed all schools and sent children

home for the day.

The quake struck at 3:48 UTC, with the epicenter being in Baramula in Northern Kashmir, which is currently occupied by Indian military forces. The quake was measured at just over 26 miles beneath the Earth. It was felt in places such as Peshawar and Lahore.

### **European Court of Human Rights orders UK to compensate Islamist**

The European Court of Human Rights has awarded €2500 to Abu Qatada, an Islamic militant and cleric, in a lawsuit he filed against the United Kingdom which detained him without trial in 2002.

Qatada, who is facing extradition to Jordan to serve a life sentence for terrorism charges, and 10 others were detained under Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. This act allowed foreign nationals suspected of terrorism to be detained, before being repealed in 2004 due to its discriminatory nature. The ECHR's ruling determined the decision to detain Qatada under this law breached the 'right to liberty and security' secured in the European Convention of Human Rights.

The British government claimed they believed the people detained were "a threat to our national security."

Some British politicians also objected to paying compensation to people believed to be terrorists.

Matthew Elliot, a lobbyist for the Taxpayers' Alliance, argued: "This man hates everything Britain stands for, so it is disgusting that ordinary taxpayers are now forced to pay him thousands of pounds."

Chris Grayling, the shadow home secretary commented: "This decision will horrify most reasonable people in the UK ... it makes a mockery of the concept of human rights if we can't protect ourselves against people who are out to destroy our society."

### **AIM activist, Leonard Peltier defender Robert Robideau dies**

Robert E. "Bob" Robideau, an Ashinaabe activist who was acquitted of killing two FBI agents and who was involved in the Leonard Peltier case, died on Tuesday February 16 after suffering seizures at his home in Barcelona, Spain, Robideau's family and Spanish authorities say. He was 61-years-old. Robideau had shrapnel in his head, UPI reports, from a 1975 incident in which ammunition in his car exploded.

Robideau had been living and working in Barcelona as director of the American Indian Movement museum, after two stints as National-International Director for the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee. Robideau, Leonard Peltier, and Darelle "Dino" Butler were charged together for the shooting deaths of FBI Special Agents Jack R. Coler and Ronald A. Williams in South Dakota; the jury trying Robideau and Butler ruled that the killings had been in self-defense, but Peltier, who had fled the country, was tried separately and sentenced to two consecutive life sentences.

Robert Robideau was born on November 11, 1946, a member of the Turtle Mountain and White Earth Ojibwa tribes and descendant of the chiefs Obe-quod and Ke-che-ha-kuk-kung-ay-we-ne-nee.

The Colorado American Indian

Movement released a statement on Robideau's passing, saying, "Bob was a great role model for AIM members everywhere. He epitomized what it was to be a member of AIM, not through posturing, not through rhetoric, but in action. He put his life on the line, and he was relentless in his defense of Indian people everywhere. He will be very deeply missed, and will always be remembered".

After joining the American Indian Movement in 1973, Robideau, along with Ward Churchill and Russell Means, split from Vernon Bellecourt's movement in 1993 and established the Autonomous American Indian Movement. Following his 1976 acquittal and Peltier's 1977 conviction for the FBI agent murders, Robideau became involved in work to free Peltier, but split from Peltier's defense team in 2004 over differences of opinion in the Anna Mae Aquash case. Robideau also appeared in the documentary Incident at Oglala, discussing the shootings.

Robideau had degrees in anthropology from Portland State University and arts from the Institute of Native American Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is survived by his wife Pilar and his two sons, Michael and Bobby.

### **Sheffield pub is CAMRA's Pub of the Year**

A Yorkshire pub affected by flooding in 2007 has been named CAMRA's National Pub of the Year for 2008.

The Kelham Island Tavern in Sheffield's Kelham Island Quarter was in a "semi derelict" state when it was purchased in 2001. After it was re-opened in 2002 by licensee Trevor Wraith and manager Lewis

Gonda, business quickly picked up and the pub has been awarded Sheffield CAMRA's local Pub of the Year award for the past four years. The pub won the award despite six weeks of closure a year and a half ago when the pub's cellar and floor were affected by the flooding of the River Don and the nearby Kelham goit. The pub also received Yorkshire CAMRA's Pub of the Year award in 2004 and 2007.

CAMRA's Pub of the Year award is judged in several stages, with local CAMRA branches evaluating the pubs in their area and passing on recommendations for regional championships. The list of regional champions is then whittled down to four finalists, with CAMRA judges visiting each of these anonymously before making a final decision.

The pub regularly serves ten and often up to thirteen Real Ales, and variety and quality of beers served are of particular interest to CAMRA, which was founded in 1971 in order to preserve and promote traditional British beer and pubs, which the group see as threatened.

However, other considerations beyond range and variety of beers are also important. Julian Hough, CAMRA's Pubs Director, made particular note of the Tavern's "attention to detail". Mr Wraith also pointed out the pub's "sub-tropical" beer garden, which he calls his "pride and joy"; the pub was awarded Silver Gilt in the Yorkshire In Bloom competition every year since 2003 and has received the Gold Award in the local Sheffield In Bloom competition every year since 2005. The pub also regularly hosts evenings of folk music.

Mr Gonda credited the pub's

success to the "excellent brewers we deal with, our faithful and supportive pub regulars, and our invaluable staff members." It was this community support which helped the pub recover so quickly after the 2007 flooding, with Mr Wraith describing the day the waters entered the pub. "The funny thing was that it was difficult to get the customers to evacuate. They just wanted to keep on drinking, but we did have to get them out eventually and some of them did get wet." Flood defences were erected after the customers left, but to no avail; Mr Wraith stayed in the pub overnight, despite the flooding and the lack of electricity.

The pub will be presented with the award in a ceremony later today at 1pm GMT.

### **New South Wales, Queensland to have electorates redrawn: Australian Electoral Commission**

The Australian Electoral Commission has announced that electorates for the federal election will be redrawn in the states of New South Wales and Queensland. The Australian House of Representatives has 150 members elected from single representative electorates.

New South Wales will lose an electorate while Queensland gains one.

"The figures show the population for Queensland has increased sufficiently to result in that State increasing its entitlement from 29 to 30 seats," said Electoral Commissioner Ed Killesteyn. "At the same time, the entitlement for New South Wales will reduce from 49 to 48 seats."

A similar occurrence occurred

before the 2007 election, with the electorate of Gwydir in New South Wales being abolished and the electorate of Flynn being created in central Queensland.

### **Israel seizes West Bank land**

Israel has seized 425 acres of Palestinian land in the West Bank in order to build 2,500 new settlement homes according to Israeli officials. This comes after United States ambassador George Mitchell asked for a freeze on settlement expansion which is deemed illegal under international law.

The seized land will be integrated into the Israeli city of Efrat, a city which is to house 30,000 people according to the mayor of Efrat.

Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni has stated that in order to make peace, settlement expansion must stop and furthermore Israeli settlers should leave lands already settled in. Livni's party, Kadima, beat the right wing Likud party in elections last week by one parliament seat, not enough to form the required majority. Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that he firmly supports settlement expansion and has said that peace talks with Palestinians are a waste of time.

Mahmoud Abbas, Palestinian president in the West Bank, has previously stated that there will be no negotiations as long as settlement expansion continues.

"We oppose settlement activity in principle, and if the settlement activity doesn't stop, any meetings (with the Israelis) will be worthless," Abbas said Monday.

Israeli human rights group Yesh Din has stated that these settlements are a violation of international law, saying that the

occupying power is supposed to work for the benefit of the people being occupied. The United Nations agrees saying that the settlements are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and international law.

### **Jury acquits three in Politkovskaya murder trial**

On Thursday three individuals accused of involvement in the October 2006 killing of journalist and human rights activist Anna Politkovskaya were acquitted by a 12-person Russian jury. Not present for the trial nor among the defendants was Rustam Makhmudov, the accused trigger man, suspected to be hiding out abroad.

Makhmudov's two brothers, Dzhabrail and Ibragim Makhmudov, were accused of acting as accomplices in the murder. Former police officer with the Moscow Directorate for Combating Organized Crime Sergei Khadzhikurbanov was the final defendant in the trial, charged with engaging the Makhmudov brothers for the contract-style killing and providing the pistol with silencer used.

Pavel Ryaguzov, a former FSB agent, was a suspect in a separate and unrelated case who was tried concomitantly to the other three due to a previous association with Khadzhikurbanov. Ryaguzov was also acquitted in his case.

In what has been described in many reports as an assassination, Politkovskaya was shot five times in the elevator of her apartment building in central Moscow while returning from a trip to the supermarket on 7 October 2006. She was 48 years old at the time of her death and a mother of two. The date of the event coincided

with then-prime-minister Vladimir Putin's birthday.

Politkovskaya was a harsh and prominent critic of the Kremlin, many aspects and institutions of contemporary Russian society such as the secret services and high-level corruption, and the Moscow-backed government of Ramzan Kadyrov in Chechnya. Domestic and international sources have claimed government involvement in her death. With or without government complicity the murder may along with other recent killings indicate that journalists can be slain with impunity, a situation that seriously hampers the rule of law in Russia.

Family of the defendants cheered upon the jury forewoman's recitation of the verdict. As the judge declared them free to go the three burst from the metal courtroom cage to join their supporters.

Defense attorney Murad Musayev hailed the acquittal as a rare triumph of justice within the Russian court system. Prosecutor Vera Pashkovskaya announced an intent to appeal the ruling.

### **Dow Jones Industrial Average closes at lowest level in six years**

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at its lowest level in over six years on Thursday, having lost 1.16%, or 89.68 points, bringing it to a level of 7,465.95. It had, at one point, set an intraday bear market low of 7,447.55. It was the lowest ending for the index since October 9, 2002. The Dow has fallen almost fifteen percent since the start of this year.

Two other US indexes also fell today: the Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P) fell by 9.48 points, or 1.20

percent, to 778.94 points. The Nasdaq Composite lost 1.71% or 25.15 points, closing at 1,442.82.

The S&P had seen its fourth consecutive loss on Thursday, its longest losing streak since last October. It has lost almost fourteen percent since the start of 2009.

Dan Cook, the senior market analyst at IG Markets, said that the Dow's descent is worrisome since without that level of support, investors may worry that the markets can fall even further. "It's kind of like if we're walking across a frozen pond. If that ice starts to crack a bit we're going to be very wary," he said.

Other analysts, however, point out that despite the bad news, the stock market had not descended as quickly as it had been in October and November, and volume was low, suggesting a lack of conviction.

"There's not that panic that there was in November," said Paul Nolte, the director of investments at Hinsdale Associates.

Among some of the losers at the stock market today were Citigroup, which fell 13.8% to US\$2.51 a share, and Bank of America, which dropped 14% to \$3.93.

In other markets, the British FTSE index increased by 0.3%, and Germany's DAX was up by a fifth of a percent.

### **Today in History**

1613 – Mikhail I was elected unanimously by the Zemsky Sobor to become Tsar, beginning the Romanov dynasty in Imperial Russia.

1804 – Built by Cornish inventor Richard Trevithick, the first self-

propelled steam engine or locomotive first ran in Wales.  
1848 – The Communist Manifesto by communist theorists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels was first published, becoming one of the world's most influential political tracts.

1952 – Protesters in Dhaka, East Pakistan walked into military crossfire demanding the establishment of the Bengali language as an official language.

1958 – British artist Gerald Holtom designed a logo for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament that became more commonly known as the peace symbol.

1965 – Black nationalist Malcolm X was assassinated while giving a speech in New York City's Audubon Ballroom.

February 21 is International Mother Language Day; Language Movement Day in Bangladesh

### **Quote of the Day**

Without Art, we should have no notion of the sacred; without Science, we should always worship false gods. ~ W. H. Auden

### **Word of the Day**

perfunctory adj

1. Performed out of routine and with little care.

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