



Top Stories

US places man with TB under quarantine, launches search for contactees

A man infected with extensively drug resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) has been placed in isolation at Grady Memorial Hospital, the first US government quarantine of a person in over 40 years. The CDC is seeking 80 airline passengers who may have been exposed.

New Zealander on oxygen machine dies after power cut

New Zealander Folole Muliaga died Tuesday morning after Mercury Energy cut off the power in her household due to an unknown amount of unpaid bills.

Featured story

Exclusive video interview with New Zealand Opposition leader, John Key

John Key, New Zealand's Leader of the Opposition, and leader of the National Party, shared with Wikinews the details of his video blogging activities and future plans to make use of so-called 'new media'.

Wikipedia Current Events

- A CH-47 Chinook helicopter on a NATO mission in Helmand Province, southern Afghanistan, is shot down killing all seven US service personnel aboard. Taliban fighters claim responsibility for the attack.
- The United Nations Security

Wikipedia Current Events

Council establishes an international tribunal to try suspects in the killings of Lebanese political figures including the former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

•Thailand's Constitutional Court clears the Democrat Party of electoral fraud, but finds former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai party guilty of bribery and rules it must be disbanded.

•The army is deployed in the Indian state of Rajasthan after 14 people are killed in violent clashes over the government's affirmative action plans.

•A fire at a Magnox nuclear power station in South Gloucestershire, United Kingdom forces its indefinite closure. British Nuclear Group announces that the fire has not damaged the reactor and was in a "non-nuclear" area.

US places man with TB under quarantine, launches search for contactees

A man infected with extensively drug resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) has been placed in isolation at Grady Memorial Hospital with an armed guard at the door in Atlanta, Georgia. This marks the first time the United States government has quarantined a person in over 40 years.

The US agency for protecting public health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), says that this form of

tuberculosis, while rare, is "resistant to almost all drugs." "CDC learned that a patient with XDR TB traveled to Europe via commercial airline (Air France # 385) departing Atlanta on May 12 and arriving in Paris on May 13, 2007, and returned to the United States after taking a commercial flight on May 24 from Prague, Czech Republic to Montreal, Canada (Czech Air # 0104). The patient re-entered the U.S. on May 24 via automobile. Since May 25, the patient has been hospitalized in respiratory isolation and is undergoing additional medical evaluation." — CDC Press Release, May 29, 2007

CDC officials said at a press conference that they are currently seeking to contact 80 fellow passengers on the transatlantic flights. They are concentrating on them because they were exposed for a longer amount of time.

The man, who is from Fulton County, Georgia, told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution in a phone interview, that both he and the CDC knew of his case. Further, he had been asked not to travel, but not specifically prohibited. He wanted to go to Greece for his wedding. He was then contacted by the CDC, while on his honeymoon in Rome, Italy, and asked to turn himself over to Italian health officials.

However, he decided to make his own way back to the US. "I didn't want to put anybody at risk," he said. "We just wanted to come

home and get treatment."

Lordi to star in horror movie

Finnish hard rock band Lordi are to star in in a horror movie.

The film, called *Dark Floors*, is written in English, began filming earlier this month and will premier in Finland late this year. The film has a budget of 3-4 million euros.

Lordi are famed for their monster costumes and lyrical themes. The band, who won the Eurovision Song Contest 2006 with *Hard Rock Hallelujah*, stated at the time they would like to star in a horror movie. They were one of a number of people promoting their films at the Cannes Film Festival this weekend. A "Finland Bar" was set up near the area at a price which might normally have bought a complete script for a film in Finland.

Mr Lordi, lead vocalist of the band, said at the time "In a way it is traditional horror film, but a traditional modern horror film. It has monsters obviously in it... It has some twists in the plot, of course, it has some horrific scenes and a horrific mood, it is more like a psychological thing... Lordi goes to the twilight zone, that is pretty much (what) you can say,". Lordi also performed at the festival.

F-15 fighter jet crashes near Vincennes, Indiana, USA

In the United States this morning, an F-15 Eagle fighter jet from the Missouri Air National Guard crashed near Vincennes, Indiana. Reports say that the pilot successfully ejected prior to the crash and walked to first responders under his own power. The crash occurred in a sparsely populated area and there are no reports of injuries on the ground.

The pilot was taken to Vincennes

Hospital to be checked for injuries.

The fighter jet was performing maneuvers with three other aircraft, none of which were involved in the incident. All four aircraft are part of the 131st Fighter Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard, flying out of Lambert Field in St. Louis, Missouri. The training maneuvers were taking place at Military Operating Area Red Hills in southern Illinois and Indiana.

Resources from the Indiana Air National Guard 181st Fighter Wing from Terre Haute, Indiana, are securing the area surrounding the crash site. They will be joined by UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter support from the 38th Aviation Brigade of the Indiana National Guard from Shelbyville, Indiana.

Thai Rak Thai dissolved, ex-premier Thaksin banned from politics

Thailand's former ruling party, Thai Rak Thai, was found guilty of election fraud by a Constitutional Tribunal, and ordered to be dissolved. Its former leader, ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra and 110 party leaders are banned from politics for five years, the court also ruled.

Thaksin, responding to the ruling from London, told the BBC: "We have to respect the rules of the game. That is, the rule of the law. If the rules of the law are observed, we have to respect it."

But Thaksin's lawyer and spokesman in Bangkok, Noppadon Pattama, called the verdict "unexpected", and told Reuters, "It's too harsh on Thai Rak Thai."

Earlier, the nation's main opposition party, the Democrat Party, was acquitted of six charges

of election fraud, and allowed to remain intact.

The tribunal was reviewing violations that took place during the April 2, 2006 general elections, which were declared invalid due to widespread charges of corruption and vote buying. Another election was scheduled for October 2006, but after a military-led coup on September 19, that election was never held.

Thai Rak Thai (literally "Thais love Thais"), was formerly headed by Thaksin, a telecommunications tycoon and ex-prime minister who was ousted in last year's coup.

The tribunal said two party leaders, former deputy leader Thamarak Isarangura and former deputy secretary-general Pongsak Ruktapongpisal, hired two smaller parties to contest the April election on behalf of Thai Rak Thai. The two were Cabinet members at the time. The Tribunal also dissolved the two implicated smaller parties, Pattana Chart Thai and Pandin Thai, and banned their executives from politics for five years.

Thai Rak Thai lawyers countered that the party's top leadership could not have known about Thamarak and Pongsak's plans, but the judges dismissed that assertion.

"The Thai Rak Thai party did not respect the rule of law despite the fact that they won elections twice," said one of the judges in his ruling. "Thai Rak Thai cannot exist as a political party, therefore the court orders to dissolve Thai Rak Thai party."

Thai Rak Thai acting leader Chaturon Chaisang said that the ban was "totally unexpected", but he urged supporters to not fight

the decision. "Even if we don't agree with the ruling, I ask all Thai Rak Thai members not to protest or oppose the ruling," he said.

The final verdict was read at 11:36 p.m. local time (1636 GMT), and came after a long, suspenseful afternoon and evening of proceedings that began at 2 p.m. The proceedings were broadcast on all of Thailand's television channels, and local newspapers updated their coverage in real time on their websites.

In the run-up to what was called "Judgement Day" in the local media, tensions were high. Interim Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont warned that he would impose a state of emergency if there was any violence. Thousands of security officers were stationed at checkpoints across the capital, with a 15,000-strong security force at the ready in their barracks. The junta also ordered that some political websites be blocked. King Bhumibol Adulyadej made a rare televised address when he granted an audience to the court's judges, and urged them to use care in their deliberations.

Some schools were closed out of security concerns, but there were no signs of large protests. Fewer than 200 people gathered quietly behind police barricades across the road from the court, and parties kept their supporters away from the site.

The Democrat Party faced six charges, among them accusations that it had paid off members of two smaller parties, the Progressive Democrat Party and the Better Life Party, to frame Thai Rak Thai of trying to buy their votes. But the Democrats were acquitted on all charges.

"The facts cannot prove that the Democrats did any wrongdoing so there is no reason to dissolve the Democrats," said Thanit Kesawapitak, one of nine tribunal judges.

However, the Progressive Democratic Party was found guilty of rigging its membership records, and ordered dissolved. Furthermore, the party's leaders are banned from politics for five years. The party was found guilty of falsifying its membership records to enable its candidates to run in three constituencies in Trang.

Democrat Party members sitting in the court room appeared to be relieved as they heard the verdict read.

At the Democrats' headquarters, the mood was celebratory. Crowds lined the streets to the offices, and leaders were greeted with cheers and applause and given bouquets of flowers.

"Today's victory is for people and the country," Democrat leader Abhisit Vejjajiva told supporters. "Today is the end of pressure on the party and the people. What I wish from is that the Council of National Security and the government holds the national election as promised and as scheduled," he said.

The Council of National Security, the junta's ruling body, has promised a national referendum on a new constitution, with elections by December.

The Democrat Party is Thailand's oldest political party, founded in 1945, and has mainly been an opposition party. With Chuan Leekpai as prime minister, the Democrats led coalition

governments from 1992 to 1995 and again from 1997 to 2001, when Thaksin and Thai Rak Thai were swept to power on a tide of populist sentiment. Since being ousted in last year's coup, Thaksin has lived in self-imposed exile outside Thailand, mainly in London.

Now, with Thai Rak Thai removed from the scene, the Democrats are likely to return to power if the promised elections are held, said Michael Montesano, who teaches Thai politics at the National University of Singapore.

New Zealander on oxygen machine dies after power disconnection

New Zealander Folole Muliaga died Tuesday morning after Mercury Energy cut off the power in her household due to \$168.40 of unpaid bills. Mrs Folole Muliaga was seriously ill and dependent on an oxygen life support machine that required electricity to run.

The 44-year-old died two hours after the power was cut by a contractor, working for State Owned Enterprise, Mercury Energy. A spokesperson for Mercury Energy has said that they are devastated and deeply sympathetic by the news, but state they did not know that the power was needed to run the oxygen machine. Relatives claim that the contractor was told that the power was needed, but showed "no compassion."

Paramedics were called after two hours, but she was pronounced dead in the early afternoon after being unable to revive her. That same evening remaining family members claim they had to grieve in the dark, power was only reconnected after the outstanding amount of \$168.40 was paid to

Mercury Energy. Evidence has been provided by family members to show that they had made two payments to Mercury Energy in the same month of May trying to clear their outstanding bill.

Trevor Mallard, minister of State Owned Enterprises, said, "I do think it is important that the facts are established before people rush to judgement."

Brendan Sheehan, spokesperson for the family, said that after the power was cut, Mrs Muliaga suffered from breathing difficulties.

Both the New Zealand Police and Mercury Energy, the retail operating division of Mighty River Power, are conducting investigations into the events.

The mother-of-four school teacher lived in Mangere, North Auckland and had been suffering from a heart and lung condition, according to relatives of Mrs Muliaga, since February.

Iran typifies Islamic justice, says chief judicial official

Ayatollah Hashemi Shahroudi said during a conference in Tehran that Iran is the only country with a judiciary based entirely on Islamic principles—from prosecution to punishment. He also paid tribute to the martyred Ayatollah Mohammad Beheshti whom Shahroudi credited as the founder of Islamic judiciary in Iran.

The two-day conference included representatives from 56 Islamic states to discuss Islamic laws in the judicial system of the participating nations. He urged the guests to use Iran as a model to become familiar with the Islamic judiciary rules.

Ayatollah Shahroudi is an Iraqi-

born naturalized citizen of Iran and has been the head of the judicial system of Iran since 1999 after his appointment by Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Ayatollah Shahroudi received the attention of the press as a reformer in 2002 after declaring a moratorium on stoning albeit it remains on law books and can still be applied. In fact, the moratorium reportedly ended according to the 2007 State Department report and people have been stoned for crimes like adultery in accordance with Islamic laws.

Chinese stock markets plunge after tax increase

In trading Wednesday, the Chinese stock markets plunged after the government tripled a tax on securities transactions. The so-called stamp tax was raised from 0.1% to 0.3% in an effort to cool the rapidly rising market.

The Shanghai Composite Index of A-shares fell 6.5%. The CSI 300 fell 6.8%, with over half of the listed companies falling the single day limit of 10%.

The market has already doubled in value this year, after rising 130% in 2006. It is estimated that some 300,000 new brokerage accounts are opened on an average day. Novice investors are reportedly sinking their life savings into the market.

Meanwhile, the World Bank raised its forecast for GDP growth for China in 2007, from 9.6% to 10.4%.

"The stamp tax is the latest gesture by the Chinese government to warn investors," Phil Chen of Grand Cathay Securities Investment Trust Co. told Bloomberg. "The trouble is,

Chinese investors probably won't care if a few breadcrumbs are dropped in the transaction as they have such extraordinary returns on their investments."

Nightwish announce Anette Olzon as new lead vocalist

Finnish symphonic metal band Nightwish have announced the signing of Anette Olzon, also known as Anette Blyckert, a 35-year-old Swede, as their new lead vocalist.

The announcement comes 19 months after original vocalist Tarja Turunen was sacked.

Olzen had previously been in the band Alyson Avenue, and was selected from over 2,000 separate applicants for the place in Nightwish. Part of an official statement by the band said "She's already so much more than we were ever expecting to get. ... The new album will be a monster!!!" The band first met with Olzen earlier this year during Olzen's first visit to Finland.

Olzon said she had not previously heard much of Nightwish until shortly before Turunen was sacked. One week after sending Nightwish a demo, she received a personal reply from Nightwish keyboardist Tuomas Holopainen. She was informed at one point, however, that she could not take the part as she was a mother and Nightwish were worried that could impact on their touring schedule, but Olzon forwarded a DVD of a live concert with her previous band that apparently changed Nightwish's mind. She was not told of the band's decision, however, until January 30th this year.

Olzon's Former bandmates posted a message to the official MySpace account of their own band, wishing

her "all the best" and stated that they "Know That You Will Kick Ass!!" in her new position.

Olzen is on the recently released single, "Eva", and has recorded her vocals for Nightwish's sixth studio album, due out in September. The rest of the band is currently in studio finishing the album.

Today in History

1669 - Citing poor eyesight, Samuel Pepys recorded the last entry in his diary, one of the most important primary sources for the English Restoration period.

1678 - The Godiva Procession, a commemoration held in honour of Lady Godiva's naked ride on horseback through the streets of Coventry, England in protest against her husband's treatment of the citizens, began.

1889 - The South Fork Dam on Lake Conemaugh in Pennsylvania, USA failed, killing over 2,200 people in the Johnstown Flood.

1916 - The German Kaiserliche Marine and British Royal Navy clashed in the Battle of Jutland, the largest naval battle during World War I.

1974 - Syria and Israel signed a disengagement agreement to resolve the 20 day Yom Kippur War, after Israel retained the Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights.

May 31 is Vesak in Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam (2007); World No Tobacco Day.

Quote of the Day

Who makes much of a miracle?
As to me I know of nothing else
but miracles ...

To me every hour of the light and
dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a
miracle...

~ Walt Whitman in Leaves of Grass

~

Word of the Day

ne'er-do-well; n

1. A person who is up to no good or generally thought of as worthless.

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