



Top Stories



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A British Airways flight from Beijing to London with 152 people on board has landed short of the runway at Heathrow airport near London. One hundred and thirty six passengers and sixteen crew have been evacuated from the plane and eighteen people are reported to have sustained minor injuries.

Reports suggest that the cause of the incident was a "total loss of power and avionics" in the plane, meaning that the pilot had to glide the plane towards the runway area.

Flight BA038 from Beijing to Heathrow, a twin-engined Boeing 777-236ER, carried out an emergency landing at Heathrow Airport 12.42 p.m. local time, according to a Heathrow airport statement.

Featured story

'No treaty withdrawal', says Lakota elder

The Lakota Freedom Delegation, which in December declared that the Lakota people were withdrawing from their treaties with the United States and reasserting their sovereignty as an independent state, is acting without the support of the Treaty Council, the traditional government of the Lakota, Wikinews has learned.

Wikipedia Current Events

A tanker crash, explosion and fire in Port Harcourt, Nigeria leaves at least 30 dead.

- A collision near Bathurst, New Brunswick results in the deaths of 7 Bathurst High School basketball team members.

- Republic of China legislative election, 2008: The Kuomintang (KMT) and its coalition allies win a landslide victory over the Democratic Progressive Party, garnering 86 of 113 seats in the Legislative Yuan.

Cricket: Australia vs India 3rd test - Day 2

Thursday was the second day of play in the third test between Australia and India at the WACA, Perth, Australia.

India resumed their first innings at 6/297. Australia took the remaining four wickets before the

lunch break. Mahendra Singh Dhoni (19) and Irfan Pathan (28) both fell lbw in successive overs. India reached 330 all out with the loss of Anil Kumble for one run and R. P. Singh for a duck.

Australia struggled early on as Irfan Pathan dismissed both Australian openers for less than ten runs each and Michael Hussey was caught behind without scoring. At lunch, Australia were 3/22. The next session, Australia played well, despite losing Ricky Ponting (20) and Michael Clarke (23), coming to the tea break with a score of 5/148. However, in the last session of the day India took five wickets, sending Australia all out with a score of 212 after fifty overs. Andrew Symonds was Australia's top scorer with 66 runs, while Adam Gilchrist made 55. R. P. Singh took four wickets for India.

In reply, India are 1/52 at stumps having lost Wasim Jaffer for 11 runs just before the close of play.

Four paparazzi members arrested after chasing Britney Spears' car

Four male members of the paparazzi were arrested and charged on Wednesday with reckless driving in Mission Hills, California after following Britney Spears back to her mansion. At least four others were also stopped by police, but were not arrested.

According to reports, police

witnessed the entire incident saying that a fleet of paparazzi were following Spears at a high rate of speed around 11:20 p.m. PST (UTC-8). They also say they followed her too closely and made unsafe lane changes in order to follow her. Police also say that at least one of cars following Spears, who was driving her car, tried to run her off the road, but she was not able to identify the vehicle or the occupants.

Spears was also stopped by police. They are reported to have verified her identity, and released her. TMZ.com reports that police were checking to see if her license was valid, and was surprised that it was. Spears was not charged with anything and despite the paparazzis' recklessness, Spears did not want the men arrested.

"Britney Spears was part of the group, but was not driving recklessly," said spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Police Department, Sara Faden.

UN appeals for US\$42 million to assist victims of Kenya violence

The United Nations has launched an appeal for US\$42 million to assist victims of post-election violence in Kenya.

U.N. Chief of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief, John Holmes, says the funds are urgently needed to provide humanitarian and early-recovery assistance over the next six months to approximately 500,000 people who have been affected by the violence that erupted in late December. The United Nations estimates that about half those affected have been internally displaced.

About two dozen donor countries from Europe and elsewhere have been asked to help. The money will go to support 63 U.N. and non-governmental organizations who intend to deliver food aid, protection, shelter, water and sanitation and disease outbreak prevention. The largest amount of the appeal - ten million dollars - is intended to be allocated to food aid.

The European Union has said it may temporarily stop giving aid to Kenya unless the issues surrounding the election are resolved.

Holmes says the U.N. hopes the situation in Kenya normalizes soon.

"What we want is a return to normality, a political solution as soon as possible, and also as I said last week, every effort to be made by all the leaders concerned - political, religious, whoever they may be - to prevent violence, to extend protection to civilians of all kinds, and to stop any kind of downward spiral of ethnic or other violence which may be very difficult to reverse once its stopped," said John Holmes.

Many parts of Kenya have seen violence following the announcement of the December 27 presidential election results. More than 600 people are believed to have been killed in post-election violence, a quarter of a million have been driven from their homes and another 6,000 have fled to neighboring Uganda.

Dam removal proposal for Klamath River

A proposal was made to remove four hydroelectric power generating dams across the Klamath River in Southern Oregon and Northern California. Intended to improve the habitat and range of salmon, the project requires agreements with the dams' owner PacifiCorp and several federal government agencies. A group comprised of Native American tribal leaders, fishermen, farmers, various governmental agencies, and environmental groups developed the proposal after two-years of negotiations.

The project would cost an estimated \$1 billion to complete, and would be the largest project of its kind in U.S. history. The earliest dam removal would begin is 2015.

WaterWatch, Oregon Wild, the Hoopa Valley Tribe, and some farmers oppose the proposed agreement for a variety of reasons.

If implemented the removal would allow for 300 more miles of river habitat for spawning salmon. It would also include a new tribal reservation covering 90,000 acres for the Klamath Tribe. Funding has yet to be allocated for the entire project that includes habitat restoration in addition to the removal of the dams.

Additionally, it has yet to be determined who would pay for the actual demolition of the dams owned by PacifiCorp. Discussions that led to this proposal began in 2004 after PacifiCorp applied to renew its power generating licenses for its dams on the river.

Cricket: Australia vs India 3rd test - Day 1

The third Test between Australia

and India commenced on Wednesday at the WACA in Perth.

India won the toss, and Indian captain Anil Kumble elected to bat. India quickly made a half century in nine overs. Shortly after, the first wicket fell with Virender Sehwag caught behind by Adam Gilchrist for 29 runs. About half an hour before lunch with three more overs, the next wicket fell when Gilchrist also caught Wasim Jaffer.

India were 2/74 at lunch, and played well during the afternoon, losing no wickets. Rahul Dravid was dropped on 11 runs by Michael Clarke, and went on to share a partnership of 139 runs with Sachin Tendulkar as India reached 2/177 at tea.

In the last session India put on 120 runs, losing four wickets, including two just before stumps. Brett Lee trapped lbw Tendulkar (71), while Sourav Ganguly fell for just nine runs soon afterwards. Dravid reached 93 runs before being caught by Ricky Ponting, and V. V. S. Laxman was dismissed for 27 runs shortly before the close of play. India finished the day on 6/297.

Brett Lee was the leading wicket taker, tallying 3 wickets.

Australia lead the four match Test series 2-0, after a controversial second Test prompting India to threaten to pull out of the tour.

Tom Cruise Scientology promotional video leaked to the Internet

Two days before Tom Cruise: An Unauthorized Biography, a biography of actor Tom Cruise written by journalist Andrew Morton, was released in the United

States, a video showing Cruise promoting Scientology was leaked to the Internet. The promotional video appeared on video-sharing sites including YouTube, Gawker.com and radar online.com, and clips from the video were also shown on Wednesday morning talk shows in the United States.

In the 9-minute video produced by the Church of Scientology, Cruise is seen discussing his beliefs while the theme from his Mission: Impossible films plays as background music. Cruise appears wearing a black turtleneck sweater, speaking about his dedication to changing people's lives. The format of the video appears to be an interview with Cruise, and it is edited with questions cut out. Some of Cruise's responses end abruptly.

Throughout the video, Cruise uses Scientology jargon terms such as "KSW": "For me, it's all about KSW." The term stands for Keeping Scientology Working, which refers to a 10-point letter written by Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard in 1965 to ensure the organization's survival. Cruise also discusses "SPs", or Suppressive Persons, "PTSPs", a "potential trouble source" influenced by a Suppressive Person, and the need to "confront and shatter suppression".

Cruise makes assertions about programs which use Hubbard's teachings such as Criminon and Narconon "We're the authorities on getting people off drugs. We're the authorities on the mind. We're the authorities on improving conditions. We can rehabilitate criminals. Way to happiness. We can bring peace and unite cultures." Of the manner in which he wishes to spread Scientology's

message, he says "You're in the playing field or out of the arena." Cruise also expresses his disdain for psychiatrists, "Crush these guys [psychiatrists]! I've had it! Psychiatry doesn't work. No mercy! None! Go to guns!"

The video concludes with Cruise laughing, and then a voiceover says: "Scientology can be defined by a single question: would you want others to develop the knowledge you have? In answering that question, Tom Cruise has introduced LRH [L. Ron Hubbard] technology to more than 1 billion people on earth. And that is only the first wave he has unleashed. That is why the story of Tom Cruise, Scientologist, has only just begun."

According to Reuters, the Church of Scientology stated that the video was shown at a 2004 meeting of the International Association of Scientologists. In a statement, the Church of Scientology said that the video was Cruise's acceptance speech after he had been given the organization's "Freedom Medal", and was shown "before an audience of 5,000 church parishioners and their guests." The statement also called the video that appeared on the Internet a "pirated and edited version." A representative for Cruise confirmed the Church of Scientology statement: "The video is of Mr. Cruise making an acceptance speech to fellow parishioners at a private church event in 2004." David Miscavige, head of the Church of Scientology, had presented Cruise with the "Freedom Medal of Valor" at the 2004 ceremony. Eighty Scientologists have received the "Freedom Medal" since the award's establishment in 1985, but Cruise

is the only recipient of the Freedom Medal of Valor. Andrew Morton's *Tom Cruise: An Unauthorized Biography* characterizes Cruise as the second most powerful individual within the organization.

The video first appeared on the Internet on Sunday, and disappeared after the footage was linked to from Gawker.com and The Huffington Post. Gawker.com posted a copy of the video Tuesday morning, and said that the video had "been passed around privately by reporters and writers investigating Cruise's ties to Scientology." Gawker.com noted that a smaller video clip which had previously been available on YouTube "is no longer available, most likely after the Church of Scientology sent in a copyright infringement notice." Gawker.com has stated that the video will stay up on its site, and has reprinted correspondence with Ava Paquette, an attorney with Moxon & Kobrin, a law firm representing the Church of Scientology. Nick Denton of Gawker.com commented on the posting of the video "It's newsworthy, and we will not be removing it."

Mark Ebner is helping to post more than two hours of additional footage related to the Cruise video, and called it "the most unintentionally hilarious footage you've ever seen," and characterized it as "better than" when Cruise jumped on Oprah's couch during a May 23, 2005 appearance on The Oprah Winfrey Show, and the South Park parody of Cruise in the controversial episode "Trapped in the Closet". Ebner appeared on The Today Show on Wednesday, and discussed the video's appearance on the Internet. In response, the

Church of Scientology called Ebner a "fraud". Ebner told the New York Daily News that "These tapes were made for purposes of recruitment."

Attempts by the Church of Scientology to stop distribution of the video via the Internet "seem to have backfired spectacularly," according to The Press Association, and by Thursday the video was viewable on websites other than Gawker.com, including the New York Post, Independent Television News and the BBC. For websites based in Britain usage of the video is protected under copyright laws, specifically for reporting news and current affairs. Still other reports on the video linked to locations where it could be watched, including a report in The Times. Copies of the video were not available on Google Video on Thursday, but were still available on YouTube.

Attorney Mark Stephens of London-based firm Finers Stephens Innocent commented on the Church of Scientology's attempts to remove the video from the Internet: "The Scientologists, by taking action to enforce their copyrights, have made it a news story. The mistake was not to foresee that a news story has special protection in copyright law in reporting news and current events."

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