



### Top Stories

#### White House refuses to release climate policy documents

The United States House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing today on the accusation that the Bush Administration had interfered on data regarding climate change in order "to mislead the public by injecting doubt into the science of global warming."

#### Iran to expand military and economic ties with Iraq; will reconstruct nation

Iran has announced that the country plans to expand their military and economic ties further into Iraq and has plans to build a branch of the Iranian Nation Bank in downtown Baghdad.

### Featured story

#### Wikinews exclusive: 'speed not behind New Zealand's road toll'

Accredited Wikinews reporter, Gabriel Pollard (Nzgabriel) has been contacted by Rachael Ford, co-ordinator for New Zealand's Candor Trust about what they assert is the hidden cause of deaths on New Zealand's roads.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- With the first launch events in Auckland, New Zealand, at 1101 UTC (12:01am NZDT, January 30), the global launch of Microsoft Windows Vista commences.
- Japan's oldest person, Yone

### Wikipedia Current Events

Minagawa, 114, has become the world's oldest living person.

•2006 Kentucky Derby-winning thoroughbred racehorse Barbaro is euthanized after losing an eight-month battle with injuries sustained in the 2006 Preakness Stakes.

•Azim Isabekov becomes Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, replacing Felix Kulov.

•War in Somalia (ICU insurgency): At least two people have been killed, including a Somali police officer, during an hour-long gunbattle in the capital, Mogadishu.

•Three civilians are killed in a suicide bombing in the southern Israeli city of Eilat.

#### Canada's Conservatives launch new ad campaign

The Conservative Party of Canada have taken a new approach by launching a new ad campaign. It is aimed at the Liberal Party of Canada leader Stéphane Dion.

The ads, which will frequently be aired during next weekend's Canadian broadcast of the Super Bowl, criticizes Dion as a leader and also criticizes his past in the government, as Canada's environment minister. They also feature clips from the Liberal leadership debate last fall. The ads are in English but another set of ads will air in French speaking Quebec, Dion's home province.

Dion, who was elected Liberal leader in December, responded to CBC News saying that it will "backfire" on Stephen Harper.

"[Harper] wants to spend all this money to try to attack me in a very negative way, and it'll backfire," Dion said. "Canadians will not be impressed by that." "Mr. Harper has nothing positive to say about his own record."

One ad says that air quality deteriorated when Dion was environment minister. The second ad says that he will act like the previous Liberal government.

The ad is entitled "Stéphane Dion Is Not A Leader".

#### Locals claim to have seen a UFO in Honolulu, Hawaii

Locals said they saw UFOs in the sky over Honolulu, Hawaii at 6:20 p.m. The KHON 2 television station was able to catch the objects in the sky using their SkyCam. The National Weather Service said that no objects appeared on their radar at the time the objects were witnessed. The Federal Aviation Administration said that they also did not pick up anything unusual on their radars.

The U.S. military had conducted a missile defense test off of Kauai on the same day, but the event did not start until 7:20 p.m.

According to KHON 2 news, Peter Hollingworth, a resident of Honolulu, described the objects as two circling lights about 45 degrees

above the horizon. Hollingworth, who was surfing with his son when the objects appeared, said that, "These two little fireballs with a stream behind it. Looked kind of like a shooting star but it just kept going. They changed directions a few times, at first it was coming in then it turned, then it went out then it came back in again. I was a little concerned. I told him come over and sit with me - this might be the last surf session we ever have together because this thing's coming straight for Honolulu. It looked deadly to me it was kind of spooky."

Astronomy professor Gareth Wynn-Williams, from the University of Hawaii, told KHON 2 news, "It's probably a contrail of some kind. The air is very cold so the water condenses and forms like drops very quickly and then these drops stay behind the plane until eventually they warm up and they evaporate."

### **American racehorse Barbaro euthanized, co-owner reports**

Barbaro, winner of the 2006 Kentucky Derby, was euthanized on the morning of January 29, according to co-owner Roy Jackson. Barbaro suffered a major injury to his right hind leg shortly after the start of the 2006 Preakness Stakes.

According to Jackson, "We just reached a point where it was going to be difficult for him to go on without pain. It was the right decision, it was the right thing to do. We said all along if there was a situation where it would become more difficult for him then it would be time."

Barbaro's right hind leg was shattered in the opening lengths of the Preakness race. Three bones in the leg were broken - the cannon bone, the sesamoid bone, and the

pastern bone. Laminitis took hold in the left hind leg as a result of the extra weight borne on the leg by the horse. It appeared for a while that Barbaro would recover; however, earlier this month, the horse suffered two significant setbacks that greatly reduced his ultimate chances for survival.

The three-year-old colt underwent emergency surgery on May 20 to fuse two joints in the damaged right leg. Further surgery was required on January 27 to insert two steel pins into one of the healed bones. The latest procedure was especially risky because it because it transferred more weight on to the leg, with the foot resting on the ground not bearing any weight. The right rear hoof was already deteriorating, having developed a painful abscess earlier in the week.

### **Sinn Fein votes to accept policing**

Sinn Féin, the Irish political party widely regarded as the political wing of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, has voted to accept the Police Service of Northern Ireland at an ard fheis (party conference) held in Dublin. 982 party members voted on the motion at the conference, where over 2,500 people were in attendance.

Surprisingly, over 90% voted in support of the motion after leadership forced a vote to cut short a six hour debate. Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams called the decision was truly historic, saying, "Today you have created the potential to change the political landscape on this island forever."

The vote is historic due to the fact that Irish republicans viewed the police and the legal system in Northern Ireland as a unit of British

rule since the partition of Ireland in 1921. In fact, from the start of the troubles to the ceasefire in the late 1990s, the Provisional IRA had fought the PSNI's predecessor, the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Last Monday, a report released by Nuala O'Loan, the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland confirmed collusion between the RUC and the loyalist paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force.

He also he was also willing to meet with dissident Irish republicans such as the Continuity IRA and it's political wing, Republican Sinn Féin; and also the Real IRA, who was responsible for the 1998 Omagh bombing, saying " However, Adams also claimed at a rally on Friday, he felt, "In my opinion, there is only one IRA, and that's the one which fought the British for a very long time."

However, the Continuity IRA and Republican Sinn Féin rejected Adams' offer. Ruairi O'Bradaigh, the Republican Sinn Féin president said, "Ultimately, it is the British government which will recruit, it is the British government which will train, motivate, and above all who will pay and give the orders to such a police force."

A statement from Downing Street said that British Prime Minister Tony Blair welcomed the "historic decision and recognised the leadership it has taken to get to this point". Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern called the vote a "landmark decision," and that it "has opened the way to Northern Ireland power-sharing."

Blair and Ahern will meet at Downing Street tomorrow.

Sinn Féin's support of policing was one of the obstacles to the

devolution process, the other is Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party commitment to power-sharing. The acceptance of the police is what Blair and Ahern believe is crucial to persuade the DUP into setting up a new government.

Ian Paisley said his stand "forced Sinn Féin to recognize support for the police and the rule of law as an issue of paramount importance for which there can be no other way" and that "Sinn Féin must now walk this road, the time for true, visible and open support for the police and law enforcement has arrived."

Some Democratic Unionists believe that Sinn Féin had only made a commitment in words only and that people in Sinn Féin power bases would not report crimes.

Peter Hain, Northern Ireland secretary said the vote was a breakthrough. PSNI Chief Constable Sir Hugh Orde welcomed the decision also. Professor Sir Desmond Rea, the chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board hoped to see Sinn Féin join the board.

Sir Reg Empey, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party said it was "a massive step change in the republican psyche."

Social Democratic and Labour Party leader, Mark Durkan said "They now need to sign with no ifs or buts. As Gerry Adams now accepts, nationalist areas need policing."

The transitional assembly at Stormont is due to be dissolved tomorrow in preparation for elections on March 7. However, if the process goes astray and no election occurs, the assembly will be dissolved and remain dissolved indefinitely.

Finally, the Independent Monitoring commission is due to release a report on the IRA's commitment to the peace process according to the British and Irish governments.

### **YouTube to reward users for posting creative videos**

YouTube has announced it will share the revenue, yielded due to video clips placed at the site, with their copyright owners. At present day YouTube represents the most popular site sharing on-line video. In 2006 it was acquired by Google Inc. As it was mentioned by Chad Hurley, YouTube's co-founder, at the World Economic Forum, held in Davos, Switzerland, the idea of paying amateur videographers was suggested by the desire to motivate and reward creativity.

The revenue-sharing naturally implies the site's administrators will have to prescreen the video clips before presenting them at the site to guarantee their authenticity. The task is a complicated one, as about 100 million videos are submitted by 70 million users to YouTube every day. It also implies the clips taken by the users from movies, music videos and TV shows will not be accepted as they used to be up to the current time.

It is quite a turn for the company as its initial success was built upon placing all the clips without prescreening them. However, it enables YouTube to avoid confrontation with videos' copyright holders. To fulfill the task of video prescreening, YouTube will have to apply the image-identifying technology elaborated by Google's best specialists.

It is difficult to forecast whether the overall plan will bring further success to YouTube. To take into consideration, the competing site Revver that still has considerably

less users is found among the first who shared its ads revenue, and GUBA, the site provided with image-recognition screening technology, also does not reach the popularity enjoyed by YouTube.

### **Bulusan Volcano releases some ash**

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said that on Friday at 10:18 a.m., Volcano Bulusan erupted for about 6-minutes, releasing ash one kilometer into the air. The institute has issued an Alert Level 1, advising people from entering the permanent danger zone extending for four-kilometers around the volcano.

The Institute said that for a period of 24 hours before the volcano exploded, their seismic instruments had acquired 38 high frequency and 2 low frequency earthquakes at the volcano. Due to a thick cloud cover, direct visual observation of the volcano was not possible.

### **Series of earthquakes hit Indonesia, Turkey, and Norway**

- On Friday at 10:20 a.m, a 4.7-magnitude earthquake struck the province of Elazig, Turkey.
- On Sunday at 11:30 a.m. (1030GMT), a 3.8-magnitude earthquake hit southern Norway. There were no reports of injuries, but there were report of some minor building damage.
- On Monday a 5.2-magnitude earthquake hit eastern Indonesia. There were no reports of injuries.

### **Filipino activist leader survives assassination attempt**

An officer of the regional chapter of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Tacloban City, Leyte

survived an assassination attempt last Saturday January 27 at around 8 o'clock in the evening.

Flor Acbo, 54, was believed to be the primary target of unidentified motorcycle-riding men who fired shots right in front of the Bayan's regional office in Eastern Visayas and wounded the leg of a man nearby.

Acbo said in an interview that the incident failed to douse his conviction, and condemned the "cowardly attempt on his life".

"It just shows how effective my work in exposing anomalies in government as well the abuses being perpetrated by the military. Instead of being cowed, this would strengthen my conviction to fight for the rights of the oppressed," he proudly voiced out.

The police have yet to complete their investigation.

Acbo, 54, is Bayan regional information officer for two years now.

He said he and his friend Bobby Bongcaras had just alighted from a passenger jeepney, a few meters from his house when one of two men riding a motorcycle fired at them.

According to a report, Acbo and Bongcaras ran towards their respective houses, while the two assailants fled towards the downtown area of this city.

The bystander who was hit was identified as Eric de Guzman, 27, also a resident of the same area. De Guzman, who hit on his left foot, was brought to the Eastern Visayas Regional Medical Center for treatment, report said.

Police Superintendent Anaclito Limbo, Tacloban City police chief, said the gunman used a .45 caliber pistol. The police were investigating the shooting as of press time, Limbo was quoted saying.

Limbo said they had yet to determine whether the attempt to kill Acbo could be due to his involvement with Bayan.

Acbo ran and lost as mayor of Pinabacdao town in Samar during the 1988 elections under the banner Partido ng Bayan.

He also worked as the town's sanitary inspector and was once connected with the Commission on Population regional office.

### **Beckham woos US as Disney Prince**

David Beckham has been portrayed as a fairytale prince as part of a new promotion for Disney.

The footballer took on the role of Prince Philip from Disney's Sleeping Beauty in photographs for a new advertising campaign for the company. In the specially commissioned shots, Beckham is shown in battle with a fire-breathing dragon.

The pictures were taken by America's foremost celebrity photographer Annie Leibovitz, in the former England captain's current home of Spain, where he plays for football club Real Madrid.

Beckham described the experience as unique, saying: "I am the Prince and I am sort of slaying a dragon which is something I've never done before, obviously, and it's a very exciting project.

"When I was called about it and asked to do it, I was very honoured and really looking forward to it

especially with Annie doing the pictures. I think that she always takes great pictures of everybody and she's always taken great pictures of me."

The portrait was taken months before Beckham signed his multi-million deal with football club LA Galaxy. It is part of an advertising campaign that will be seen across America. The publicity has added further frenzy to Beckham's high-profile arrival to the country, which is already being compared to that of the Beatles.

Leibovitz believes the 31-year-old footballer will grace Hollywood with more than just sporting skills.

"I think he would like to act and it was sort of a stepping-stone to that and I think he would actually make a great actor. He took it very seriously and when he wielded the sword on the horse, he really was very very serious about it and I love that."

Although it is not clear what else may be in the Hollywood pipeline for David and Victoria Beckham, Los Angeles and the United States seem to have already embraced the celebrity pair. Waxworks of the couple have been unveiled at Madame Tussaud's in New York, the Beckham's have launched their own perfume and they recently acquired newly-wed Hollywood stars Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes as very close friends.

### **Suspended letterbox for sale on New Zealand auction site**

Kerry "maxduck" is trying to sell his letterbox on the popular New Zealand auction site, TradeMe, after his street was suspended from post being delivered to by New Zealand Post.

Earlier last week New Zealand Post

announced that it would temporarily stop delivering mail to three streets in Hamilton due to gang violence. The three streets includes 120 houses on Tennyson Road, Dryden Road, and Emerson Place, all the streets are located in Fairfield. Fiona Mayo, spokeswoman for New Zealand Post, said that if they had allowed posties to continue with services then they wouldn't be acting responsibly as an employer.

Ms Mayo said that most residents living within the banned streets have understood why the ban was put in place. She adds that Kerry "has a good sense of humour."

New Zealand Post have said that they will review the ban tomorrow.

Kerry said: "This letterbox is still in good condition, has survived a couple of tags, ash from Ruapehu volcanic eruption and more recently the well publicised 'GUN BATTLE' of Hamilton."

As of writing the current bid is at NZ\$25.00, made by Kelley "superwiner".

### **Environmentalists: "Turn everything off!" on February 1st**

"L'Alliance pour la Planète", a collective of French environmental organizations (such as WWF France), has launched a campaign to promote awareness on climate change. Under the theme Turn everything off!, they're asking people to turn off their electricity for five minutes on February 1st, between 7:55pm and 8:00pm CET. With the initiative, they hope to remind others, the media and politicians (such as the candidates for the upcoming French Presidential elections) of the ongoing waste of energy. Everyone should turn off the light, as well as

all electrical appliances -maybe a good moment for a candlelight dinner, they suggest.

The "five minutes of silence" are believed to put pressure on world governments to discuss the topic more seriously on an international scale. Since the first call various similar international groups have stated their support and currently promote the idea on their websites and newsletters.

The date was originally chosen to match the release of the United Nations fourth climate change report, in which 2,500 scientists from more than 130 countries present their latest findings. The report however has been delayed and will now be released on February 2nd.

In Belgium, non-profit organizations such as Oxfam support the action. The consortium is working with the power distribution company to prevent any negative impact a sudden drop of energy demand might have on the electricity network.

### **Today in History**

1649 - King Charles I was beheaded for high treason in front of the Banqueting House in London during the English Civil War.

1826 - The Menai Suspension Bridge, considered the world's first modern suspension bridge, was opened, connecting the island of Anglesey and the mainland of Wales.

1930 - The world's first radiosonde, a device attached to weather balloons to measure various atmospheric parameters, was launched by meteorologist Pavel Molchanov in Pavlovsk, USSR.

1948 - Nathuram Godse shot Mahatma Gandhi to death with a Beretta pistol at Birla House in Delhi.

1968 - Vietnam War: Viet Cong forces launched the Tết Offensive on Vietnamese New Year's Day.

### **Quote of the Day**

If the fires of freedom and civil liberties burn low in other lands they must be made brighter in our own. If in other lands the press and books and literature of all kinds are censored, we must redouble our efforts here to keep them free. If in other lands the eternal truths of the past are threatened by intolerance we must provide a safe place for their perpetuation.

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

### **Word of the Day**

circuitous; adj

Not direct or to the point.

1. Of a long and winding route.

### **About Wikinews**

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