



Top Stories

New Zealand National Party leader, Don Brash, resigns

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Harper to recognize Quebec as nation within Canada

Stephen Harper announced at 3:00 p.m. Wednesday that he will recognize Quebec as a nation within Canada, despite the Bloc Quebecois' motion to separate Quebec completely from Canada.

Featured story

Judging the Courts: Wikinews interviews Prof. Lawrence Douglas

Wikinews interviews Lawrence Douglas, Professor of Law, Jurisprudence and Social Thought at Amherst College about the trial of Saddam Hussein and the purpose, conduct and impact of courts trying crimes such as genocide.

Wikipedia Current Events

•A series of car bombs and mortar attacks in the predominantly Shi'a populated Sadr City area of Baghdad, Iraq, kills at least 161 people and wounds another 257. The incidents comprise the deadliest coordinated attack since the Iraq War started.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Lech Kaczyński, the President of Poland, announces three days of national mourning for the twenty-three victims of the mining disaster at the Halemba mine in Ruda Śląska, Poland.

•Somali Civil War: Ethiopia has made preparations for a conflict with the Islamists who control much of southern Somalia, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has told MPs.

•Hammas claims responsibility for a suicide bombing attack in which a 57 year old grandmother killed herself. She also admits to the use of women as human shields in order to save militant gunmen,

•Alexander Litvinenko, the Russian spy poisoned in London last weekend has died. He had previously been put on a ventilator after suffering a heart failure, while objects discovered in his body when he was x-rayed are not a "major concern", doctors say.

•Dick Cheney, Vice-President of the United States, was reported to have arrived in Iraq to spend Thanksgiving with US forces, though this was denied by his spokesperson.

•Don Brash resigns as leader of the opposition New Zealand National Party, saying ongoing speculation about his leadership is damaging to the party.

UK radio broadcaster Nick Clarke dies

Nick Clarke, the UK radio

broadcaster, died today from cancer at the age of 58.

He had worked for the BBC for over 20 years, and won the Broadcasting Press Guild broadcaster of the year award in 2001, but was best known for presenting the Radio 4 news show, The World at One.

He is survived by his wife and five children.

New Zealand National Party leader, Don Brash, resigns

New Zealand National Party leader, Dr. Don Brash has resigned as the leader of opposition. Dr Brash made the announcement at press conference held in parliament, stating that ongoing media speculation about his leadership was damaging the party's reputation. Brash will officially step down on Monday, where the party will vote for a new leader and deputy-leader.

"For some weeks now I've been giving consideration to the right time and the right way to announce this decision. I've held off because I've been keen to have two untidy matters dealt with before my departure," Dr Brash said.

The decision came after a Goods and Service Tax error in last years election made by the party, "Although this had nothing to do with me personally it was a source of embarrassment and I was very keen indeed to get the matter resolved before my resignation."

And recent news of Brash's emails making their way into "outsiders' hands" was also a factor in his decision to leave. The emails were the subject of a book published by Nicky Hager, which is expected to be released to the public tomorrow morning. Dr Brash said: "The announcement of Mr Hager's book almost caused me to defer my resignation as leader. I deeply resent the lies and distortions which seem to have been included in his book and I intend to vigorously contest those allegations." Dr. Brash denied media questioning regarding Nicky Hager's book's influence on his decision to resign from leadership.

It seems that John Key will be the next leader, with a recent Auckland poll showing Key only 1.4 points behind Brash. Nicky Hager has claimed the information in his book may be damaging to John Key as well. Brash's decision came with the Nationals ahead in the poll. Dr. Brash mentioned that he would remain in politics for the National Party if the new leader would provide him with a senior position following the Monday when he steps down from the post. The decision has left the party in crisis, set for their fifth leader in 9 years. Prime Minister Helen Clark said the National Party are having an identity crisis and is unstable.

Dr Brash regrets that he will not be able to lead National into the next election which will take place in 2008.

Michael Cullen, deputy Prime Minister, said: "Brash's resignation was inevitable. This continued instability in the National Party is a sign of a party still nowhere near ready to govern. Dr Brash's resignation was inevitable. But it solves little. By all accounts Mr Key, the likely successor, was

deeply involved in all the events that have eventually led to Dr Brash's downfall."

Auckland City Council supports waterfront stadium in New Zealand

The Auckland City Council in New Zealand has approved the proposed NZ\$700 million+ waterfront stadium in 12-8 (yes-no) vote in a marathon session lasting nearly 5 hours on Thursday night instead of an upgrade of Eden Park costing around \$400 million. However they have called for the stadium to be location "substantially east" of the central government's preferred Marsden Wharf/Captain Cook site. The proposed stadium has been dubbed "Stadium New Zealand" by the media.

Two weeks ago Trevor Mallard, sports minister, said that the two councils had two weeks to come up with a decision on whether or not to support a waterfront stadium or Eden Park.

It is now falls on the Auckland Regional Council to approve the stadium plans or propose something else, which is supposed to happen tomorrow, Friday. Based on both these decisions, the central government will then make a decision on whether to construct the new Stadium New Zealand or upgrade the current Eden Park, located also in Auckland, which site will also be chosen. It is intended that this stadium will be used for the 2011 Rugby World Cup final.

Dick Hubbard, Mayor of Auckland, said: "In the past Auckland had missed too many opportunities. We can't get it wrong, we cannot bypass this opportunity. Controversy is a good sign, a healthy sign – all the major

projects around the world have had controversy. Today it's not about rugby, it is about boldness and vision against caution."

As long as the waterfront stadium is moved then they have a "strong and absolute preference" towards the stadium. Neil Abel, councillor, had tried to remove the "strong and absolute" remark because he believes that Aucklanders did not get an opportunity to indicate that the decision is absolute.

Christine Caughey, councillor, said that the pressure that was put upon them for their decision by Mr Mallard was like "putting a gun to your head."

Other councillors also said that there wasn't enough time given for Aucklanders to have their say and to make their decision. They also said that some of their questions about the costs and transport, etc were left unanswered.

Despite those setbacks the majority did agree that the design of the stadium should be "bold, iconic and reflect our first city of the Pacific aspirations".

If the government cant make a deal with the Ports of Auckland, which owns the land the waterfront stadium is to be located, the regional council, other stakeholders, to move the stadium then the ACC will withdraw their support and support their second favoured, an upgrade of Eden Park.

3 out of 4 UMP voters prefer Sarkozy for President of France

On Tuesday, BVA published a telephone poll conducted for French magazine Le Figaro and news channel LCI to gauge support for right-wing presidential candidates. 73% of Union pour un

Mouvement Populaire (Union for a Popular Movement or UMP) party supporters identified Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy as their preferred candidate for May's presidential election.

The UMP is one of the two major parties in France, and represents conservative politics. It was formed in 2002 as a union of several right-wing parties, and currently controls the legislature (the National Assembly) and the executive. Current president Jacques Chirac is aligned with the UMP.

Sarkozy's rivals trail far behind him, with Defense Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie at 5%, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin at 4% and President Jacques Chirac with 1%. Sarkozy's support among the entire group polled is significantly lower, at only 34%. Alliot-Marie has 4%, de Villepin and Chirac have 3% each, and the remaining 43% did not express a preference.

On Monday, de Villepin told *Le Figaro* that the right was united "around the one with the best chance of winning."

Bangladesh election chief stands down

The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of Bangladesh, Justice MA Aziz has agreed to step aside for three months, the country's president and chief advisor to caretaker government, Iajuddin Ahmed announced in a television address to the nation late last night.

The Awami League-led alliance accused Aziz of bias towards the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), led by former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who ended her five-year term in October 2006.

President Ahmed said that Justice Aziz has agreed to go on leave for three months in order to untangle himself from the present crises over the 2007 parliamentary elections. The President has decided to appoint two more election commissioners under article 118(1) of the Bangladeshi constitution.

The alliance parties resumed their agitation against Justice Aziz for the third time on Monday and said that they would continue the indefinite stir until he quits the office.

Michigan coaching icon Bo Schembechler dies

Renowned University of Michigan college football coach Bo Schembechler, died Friday at the age of 77.

Schembechler collapsed at the studios of WXYZ-TV after taping a TV show on the eve of the Wolverines' No. 1 vs. No. 2 showdown with perennial rival Ohio State. He was taken by ambulance to the hospital where he died at 11:42 a.m. "The electrical part of the heart was working fine but the mechanical part was not working," said Dr. Shukri David, the head of cardiology at Providence Hospital. "The heart was sending signals to the heart muscle to contract. The muscle was not responding."

Schembechler had a heart attack on the eve of his first Rose Bowl in 1970 and another one in 1987. He had two quadruple heart-bypass operations, and doctors implanted a pacemaker to regulate his heartbeat after he became ill during a taping at WXYZ on Oct. 20.

"This is a tremendous shock and an irreplaceable loss," University of

Michigan president Mary Sue Coleman said at a news conference at Providence Hospital in Southfield, where the coach died.

The seven-time Big Ten coach of the year compiled a 194-48-5 record at Michigan from 1969-89. Schembechler's record in 26 years of coaching was 234-65-8.

Injunction fails to stop decision on waterfront stadium in New Zealand

Today an injunction that was filed in the High Court yesterday to stop the Auckland City Council and Auckland Regional Council from telling the Government which stadium they prefer has failed. The decision is over a new stadium located on the waterfront of Auckland, New Zealand or an upgrade of the already existing, Eden Park, Auckland. The stadium is for the final of the Rugby World Cup 2011, which New Zealand is hosting.

The injunction was filed by a group of five Aucklanders who believe that the decision is being rushed. The injunction was filed in the name of a private citizen to represent a group of five Aucklanders. Rodney Hide, leader of the ACT party and Member of Parliament (MP) and MP for the Green party, Keith Locke, are helping the fight for the injunction as they believe the Aucklanders have a strong case.

Justice John Priestley said that the group did not need this injunction because they could fight the stadium decision in the future by different means. A second injunction has already been filed for two days, starting December 11.

Mayor of Auckland, Dick Hubbard, said: "The council's advisors have

informed that processes have been proper and appropriate."

Rodney Harrison, Queens Counsel (QC), said: "The group that lodged the injunction were Auckland ratepayers, residents and concerned citizens but none of whom could be called high profile. I have no idea what those decisions might be. Exactly how the defendants (local government) react to central Government requests or pressure is a matter for them."

ARC chairman, Mike Lee attacked his own counsel Brian Latimore for failing to follow instructions at today's High Court injunction hearing. The instruction were "not to oppose any injunction, merely to assist the court by explaining what was going on and leave the argument to the judge and the other parties."

Mr Lee said: "We were there as peacekeepers not combatants and it seems this guy has gone in and opened fire."

Patrick McGuire, one of the five Aucklanders who had sought the injunction, said that Mr Hide had introduced all of them to each other after they each wrote a letter to him with their concerns. Mr McGuire said it requires "public input".

Mr Hide said that he "had acted as a middle-man, arranging for the members of the group to meet with lawyers." Mr Locke and Mr Hide are working together because they are concerned the legal processes of the decision over which stadium will be chosen and how the decision will be made. Mr Hide said he did not like the waterfront stadium, "I'm not a lawyer but the legal advice we have had is that the injunction has

a high chance of succeeding."

The two councils, Auckland City and Auckland Regional, have been consulting the affected groups to see which decision they should go with. The Auckland City Council is currently in a meeting discussing the stadium decision and the Regional Council will do it tomorrow.

If the waterfront stadium was chosen then the stadium will be located on Ports of Auckland land and they want a guarantee that their running of the ports will not be affected. Denis Carlisle, president of the local Maritime union, said: "The Ports of Auckland are asking for guarantees that they will not suffer any financial loss from the stadium project, and likewise the Maritime Union will be seeking compensation for our members for any loss of work. The issue was about safeguarding Port of Auckland's role as a major working port."

"[The Ports of Auckland] is one of the key gateways between New Zealand and the global economy."

Family sues CNN's Nancy Grace after 'heated debate'

The family of a woman who committed suicide recently after appearing on CNN Headline News Nancy Grace's self titled show said Tuesday that they will be taking her to court.

Melinda Duckett, the mother of an infant son, Trenton Duckett, reported him missing on August 27, and fatally shot herself in her grandparents' retirement home on September 8. Shortly before her death, she had appeared on Grace's show, where she engaged in debate with the former Georgia prosecutor regarding her perceived lack of transparency regarding the

disappearance. A suicide note was later found at the scene. The case made national headlines after her appearance.

"Nancy Grace and the others, they just bashed her to the end," said Duckett's grandfather, Bill Eubanks, during an interview with The Orlando Sentinel. "She wasn't one anyone ever would have thought of to do something like this. She and that baby just loved each other, couldn't get away from each other. She wouldn't hurt a bug."

Grace's spokeswoman called the suicide "a sad development," and Grace herself issued a statement saying, "I do not feel that our show is to blame for what happened to Melinda Duckett."

"The truth," said Grace, "is not always nice or polite or easy to go down. Sometimes it's harsh, and it hurts."

However, thesmokinggun.com, a true crime website run by Court TV (where Grace also hosts a show), revealed pending litigation by the family on the behalf of Melinda Duckett's estate. Duckett's family is issuing a wrongful death claim against both CNN and Nancy Grace.

After the murder of Grace's fiancée in 1979, she became a prosecutor in her native Georgia and later hosted her own show on Court TV, followed later by her CNN tenure. Grace, however, has been criticized for her sense of ethics and allegedly playing fast and loose with the facts, both in the courtroom and on the air.

Grace's heated interview, however, was not without proper motive. The police had long suspected Melinda Duckett of involvement in

her son's disappearance, due to her behavior and contradictory statements. After Duckett's suicide, police named her as a prime suspect in her son's disappearance. Recently, they have announced that they have reason to believe that Trenton Duckett is still alive.

Harper to recognize Quebec as nation within Canada

The Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper, announced at 3:00 p.m. Wednesday that he will recognize Quebec as a nation within Canada, despite the Bloc Quebecois' motion to separate Quebec completely from Canada.

The separatist Bloc Quebecois (BQ) opposition party originally introduced the motion to recognize Quebec as a separate nation. But Harper said that he will only recognize Quebec as a nation within Canada.

Quebeckers know who they are, they know they've participated in the foundation, in the founding of Canada and its development and in its greatness. They know that they've protected their language and unique culture but they also promoted their values and interests within Canada.

The real question is straightforward: Do Quebeckers form a nation within a united Canada? The answer is yes.

Do Quebeckers form an independent nation from Canada? The answer is no and it will always be no!

I say to my federalist colleagues and I also say to the separatist side that we here will do what we must, what our forefathers have always done to preserve this country, Canada, strong, united independent and free.

— Stephen Harper, Prime Minister

The Bloc, lead by Gilles Duceppe is, by tradition, dedicated to separating Quebec completely from Canada. This has never passed.

"I would say we're devoted to this country with its boundless potential and dedicated to building Canada which includes Quebec while the Bloc is dedicated to destroying Canada," interim Liberal leader Bill Graham in response to Harper's speech. "We are fundamentally opposed to breaking up of Canada ... On this point we must clearly and fundamentally disagree and fundamentally fight for the rights of Canada and the whole of Canada."

Mr. Duceppe opposed the prime minister's position on Quebec.

"It isn't up to the prime minister to decide what Quebeckers will choose as an option," Bloc leader Gilles Duceppe said. "It's up to Quebeckers ... to decide what their future will be ... not as long as they remain within Canada that is supposedly united. They are not a nation as long as they are a country ... Never will I accept the only condition to be a nation is to recognize the right to remain in Canada. We are what we are, full stop."

The Conservatives have ten elected MPs in the province.

Nepal civil war ended by peace deal

Nepal's 10-year civil war has come to a peaceful conclusion with the signing of a historic accord between Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and Prachanda, leader of the Maoist rebel faction that had been fighting for political

change. The deal was signed in Kathmandu on Tuesday.

The deal would allow the Maoists into the Nepalese government, and place both Maoist and government weapons under UN scrutiny. The Maoists had been observing a ceasefire since its declaration more than six months previously.

Prachanda said that the peace agreement would end the 238-year old feudal system. He added that his party would work with new responsibility and make new strong Nepal.

Meanwhile, Koirala said that the deal ended the politics of terror and violence and started the politics of co-operation. He thanked Prachanda to find out a peaceful solution in the country.

The government and the Maoist rebels were accused of human rights abuses in fighting that killed more than 13,000 people.

Nepalese king Gyanendra Singh has welcomed Tuesday's peace deal between the government and the Maoist rebels.

by ensuring sustainable peace, a prosperous Nepal can now be built with the collective efforts of all Nepalese people through multi-party democracy

— Gyanendra Singh, King of Nepal

Polish mine explosion kills 8

Methane gas was blamed for the explosion deaths of 8 miners in southern Polish's Halemba coal mine Tuesday, November 21. Officials say at least 15 are missing.

Rescue efforts were halted because dangerously high levels of methane gas returned, according to Zbigniew Madej, spokesman for

state-owned Coal Co., which operates the mine.

The missing miners' locator devices were not emitting signals, increasing rescuers' concerns for their well-being. Grzegorz Pawlaszek, head of Coal Co., said the 15 missing miners' fate is "not known," but added that "there is a chance to find someone still alive."

"This is a tragedy. People have died here," Polish Prime Minister Jaroslaw Kaczynski said when he came to Ruda Slaska to see the blast.

Earlier Wednesday, a reconnaissance rescue team descended 3000 feet toward the blast scene, only to retreat because of safety concerns related to high methane gas levels. Rescue digging efforts were also halted because of explosion concerns.

The missing men were aged 21-59. One of the miner's family members, Andrzej Pytlik, 30, remained on scene with his sister, hoping and waiting for news of her husband, Krystian Gaszka.

Pytlik, also a miner, said through teary eyes that, "I work in the mines and I know that hope is scant because that's the truth."

The explosion occurred in a closed portion of the mine where the now-missing miners were working to retrieve abandoned equipment. According to Pawlaszek, the value of the equipment was \$23 million, adding that "It was new equipment and that is why we decided to retrieve it."

He indicated that the recovery work was performed under the supervision of gas detection specialists, and that the bodies of

the recovered miners were difficult to identify because of the severity of burns and because their ID tags were blown away in the explosion.

The Halemba mine, located in Ruda Slaska, has produced coal for nearly 50 years, has been fraught with safety concerns and has a track record of serious accidents. One of the oldest mines in Poland, it is centrally located in the industrial Silesia region.

Earlier this year, a miner was trapped underground in the Halemba mine five days after a cave-in. In 1990, 19 miners were killed and 20 hurt in a gas explosion, and five were killed in collapse in 1991.

Inside, priests and mining officials were comforting and counseling with distraught relatives. Outside, eight white candles flickered on a main gate wall.

Today in History

1190 - Conrad of Montferrat became de jure King of Jerusalem after marrying Queen Isabella.

1642 - Dutch explorer Abel Tasman reached Tasmania. He named the island Anthoonij van Diemenslandt.

1859 - The Origin of Species by British naturalist Charles Darwin was first published, and sold out its initial print run on the first day.

1965 - Mobutu seized power from Congo President Joseph Kasa-Vubu after a bloodless coup d'état.

1971 - After collecting a ransom payout of US\$200,000, "D. B. Cooper" leaped out of the rear stairway of the airplane he had hijacked over the Pacific Northwest and disappeared.

November 24 is Teachers' Day in Turkey

Quote of the Day

Only the brave know how to

forgive... A coward never forgave; it is not in his nature. ~ Laurence Sterne

Word of the Day

kowtow; v

- To kneel and bow low enough to touch one's forehead to the ground.
- To act in a very submissive manner.

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