



### *Top Stories*

#### **Chinese quake death toll nears 32,500, as a major aftershock occurs and mourning begins**

China has raised the death toll from the initial 7.9 magnitude earthquake six days ago to 32,500, as an aftershock killed three and injured 1,000. Three days of mourning will begin on Monday at exactly a week after the quake, with flags at half mast, three minutes of silence, and a suspension of public entertainment.

#### **Asbestos victims file 6.6 billion yen class action lawsuit in Tokyo**

Construction workers and next of kin of deceased workers filed a lawsuit in Tokyo Friday seeking damages of approximately 6.6 billion yen (about US\$64 million) from the government and manufacturers related to illnesses stemming from exposure to asbestos. 178 plaintiffs; including construction workers and family members filed the suit in Tokyo District Court against 46 building manufacturers and the Government of Japan.

#### **United States Senator Ted Kennedy rushed to the hospital**

The Democratic senator from Massachusetts was rushed to a local hospital, and later flown to another, after reportedly suffering stroke-like symptoms, doctors later concluding he had two seizures.

### *Featured story*

#### **HIV-positive man receives 35 years for spitting on Dallas police officer**

An HIV-positive man was sentenced to 35 years in prison Wednesday, one day after being convicted of harassment of a public servant for spitting into the eye and open mouth of a Dallas, Texas police officer in May 2006. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that no one has ever contracted HIV from saliva, and a gay-rights and AIDS advocacy group called the sentence excessive.

### *Wikipedia Current Events*

A senior Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia commander known as "Karina" surrenders to Colombian authorities.

•Russia wins the 2008 IIHF World Championship defeating Canada 5-4 in overtime.

•Ahmed Ali Ahmed, one of the leaders of al-Qaeda in Iraq, is sentenced to death for killing Archbishop Paulos Faraj Rahho.

•General Than Shwe, the Burmese leader, visits victims of Cyclone Nargis.

•Approximately 16,000 people are evacuated in Chofu, Japan while a World War II era bomb is defused.

•Gordon Brown, the UK Prime Minister, says that people should support a bill permitting the use of human-animal embryos.

### *Wikipedia Current Events*

•The death toll from the Sichuan earthquake reaches 32,477, with 14,000 still missing and 205,000 people evacuated.

•The People's Republic of China declares three days of national mourning for victims of the earthquake and suspends the 2008 Summer Olympics torch relay.

#### **At least 728 rescued from burning Indonesian ferry**

At least 706 passengers and 22 crew have been rescued after fire broke out on the top deck of an Indonesian passenger ferry. According to ABC News citing Sampit Police Chief Jihartono talking to EIShinta, at least 712 passengers and 57 crew were rescued.

The boat was sailing from Surabaya, East Java to the port of Sampit, which is inland on the Mentaya river in Borneo. The ferry had reached the river and was near the town of Samuda when fire broke out.

A number of boats were nearby at the time and were able to assist with rescue operations, as were residents on the river bank. It is believed that all on board were safely rescued, with four hospitalised and the rest in shelters at the riverside, but it is difficult to be sure because ferries often carry more passengers than manifestos suggest in Indonesia, where they are a major form of transport between the many

islands that comprise the nation. Most of the passengers worked at local palm oil plantations.

Harbour official Abdul Kadir told the press "The boat had no adequate fire-fighting equipment, so efforts were dedicated to rescuing the people on board," and said that transport officials and police have arrived at the scene. It took five hours to extinguish the blaze, and an investigation will be conducted.

### **1,000 arrested in Iraq in crackdoWN: against al-Qaeda**

Almost 1,000 people have been arrested in Iraq as part of a crackdoWN: against al-Qaeda in Mosul, the nation's third-largest city.

Troops have gone out into the surrounding countryside seeking many more who have fled into the countryside. It is hoped that Mosul, one of al-Qaeda's most prominent strongholds, will now be rid of the group but it is feared that unless the remaining suspects are caught they will simply regroup elsewhere, as they have been knoWN: to do before.

Yassin Majid, an adviser to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, said most of the leaders had fled, some to an unnamed neighbouring country. About 60 miles from Mosul are borders with Syria and Turkey. "Operations will continue and the Iraqi army will not leave Mosul until security and stability have been accomplished," he said.

Mark P. Hertling, head of US operations in North Iraq, who has troops involved in the operation, said he didn't believe large numbers were still at large since the Thursday launch of the operation, but added that many of the leaders may have fled before it

began to avoid arrest. "It's been very successful. I think the combination of the arrests plus the uncovering of a number of weapons caches will reduce the number of attacks in Mosul," he said. The city is now surrounded by barriers and checkpoints and is being searched by troops, but no fighting has been reported yet.

1,068 arrests were reported by Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani, who added that 94 have been cleared and released. Hertling said several of these were in high and mid-level positions in the command structure of al-Qaeda. Some of these are said to be suicide bomb cell leaders and people who arranged for foreign fighters to enter Iraq.

The Prime Minister has promised an amnesty to fighters who surrender their weapons provided they have not killed civilians.

### **Airliner hijacker found working for British Airways**

A man who hijacked a domestic flight over Afghanistan has been found to be working for British Airways. 34-year-old Nazamuddin Mohammidy was one of nine men who forced the Ariana Airlines airliner to divert to the United Kingdom's Stansted Airport in 2000. A standoff followed for the next 70 hours with the men, who had guns and hand grenades, threatening to kill all 160 on board unless asylum was granted to them. The men ultimately gave themselves up to police and SAS.

Mohammidy was jailed for 30 months but he and the other eight had their convictions overturned by the Court of Appeal, claiming the Taliban was subjecting them to "medieval and brutal tyranny" forcing them to flee. They went on to win a High Court case to

prevent their deportation.

It has since emerged that British Airways have employed Mohammidy to clean their offices, including a training center one mile from Terminal 4 at Heathrow Airport. It came to light when police officers stopped him near Terminal 5 believing he may be an unlicensed taxi driver, but he was able to supply a worker's pass. He is now facing unrelated charges concerning an alleged assault on his landlord.

"It would be an outrageous and potentially devastating breach of security if a former hijacker had access to British Airways property near the airport and a pass allowing him access to secure areas." —David Davis

The Conservatives have used this as an opportunity to attack the current Labour government. Shadow home secretary David Davis said "It would be an outrageous and potentially devastating breach of security if a former hijacker had access to British Airways property near the airport and a pass allowing him access to secure areas. Days after it was revealed that foreign airside workers at our airports do not have to pass proper security checks it is clear the Government do not have a grip on airport security."

British Airways say he did not have a pass to allow him onto the tarmac at Heathrow and did not work inside the airport, but he could get into some secure company areas.

### **Chinese quake death toll nears 32,500, as a major aftershock occurs and mourning begins**

The government of China announced it would begin three

days of mourning on Monday, as the death toll from the 7.9 magnitude earthquake centered in the Sichuan province has been raised to nearly 32,500, with 220,000 injured. At 2:28 p.m local time, flags will be moved to half mast for three days, there will be three minutes of silence, and entertainment in public will be suspended for the mourning period.

Authorities have continued to pull victims out of the rubble resulting from the quake, 65 since the original quake, with two pulled out alive more than six days after the earthquake. Rescuers are also trying to pull out two still alive. More than 9,500 people are still trapped under rubble throughout the province.

Chinese authorities are worried as aftershocks continue to affect the region devastated by the initial earthquake, while water builds up in clogged rivers. An 5.8 magnitude aftershock shook buildings and caused people to evacuate in Chengdu, 200 km (125 miles) south of the aftershock's epicenter. The aftershock killed three people and injured 1,000 others. A buildup of water is occurring 3 km (2 miles) upstream of Beichuan, where a man was freed from under a hospital's remains.

Chinese President Hu Jintao said to families of victims in Yinghua that "We will make every effort to save our people even if there is only the slightest hope and possibility." They are preventing people from going into the affected region for fear of these conditions. Families of possible victims who tried to enter the affected region were not allowed into the area by police, due to fears of aftershocks and the clogged rivers.

60 aid organizations from 13 countries have assisted so far with the earthquake, including Japan, Russia, Taiwan, South Korea, the United States and Singapore, and in addition to aid from inside China there has been 6 billion yuan (858 million United States dollars) of aid.

### **13,000 people participate in Bristol running event**

Approximately 13,000 people in the British city of Bristol participated in either the Race for Life or the Run for Moore this weekend as part of one of the largest running events in the south west of England.

The first of the day, the woman only Race for Life, started at 11:00 local time (10:00 UTC. This continues on from yesterday, where other woman competed in the Race for Life.

The quickest finishing time for the event was around 20 minutes for the five kilometer race, with the slowest time being over an hour.

Later in the day, at approximately 14:00 local time, the warm up for the mens event started. It was lead by people on the temporary stage (pictured).

At 14:30, the mens event started. The finishing times for this event varied from about 20 minutes to approximately 50 minutes.

Before the warm up participants were shown: a video showing the effects of cancer. The run is in aid of Cancer Research UK.

### **2008 Taiwan Tourism Exposition to encourage tourism industry after Sichuan earthquake**

The 2nd-annual Taiwan Tourism

Exposition 2008, organized by the Taipei Association of Travel Agents, started yesterday (May 16) at the Taipei World Trade Center Exhibition Hall 3. 350 different agencies from local and foreign countries participated in the show. Governments and travel agencies in Taiwan hoped this exhibition could inspire the tourism industry in the light of the recent earthquake in Sichuan Province in China.

Before opening day, Peter Ting, Vice Chairman of the Taipei Association of Travel Agents, spoke to Wikinews Journalist Rico Shen about the recent earthquake.

"It [the earthquake] wouldn't make a great strike for the [tourism] industry, but it apparently effected us [the industry] in consequence. In fact, we hoped this [Sichuan] earthquake never happened even though it is partial for us. Currently, not only [did] our delegates visit there to gain [perspective of the] current conditions [after the earthquake], but also the Tourism Bureau [of the Republic of China] also did the "Travel Warning" announcement for Sichuan as "No Visiting Place". Besides of this, I think the other places [or nations] would be effected less than Sichuan. Therefore, I hope visitors can choose suitable travel packages after several views for safety issue.," stated Ting.

Vincent Siew, the pre-elected Vice President of the Republic of China, was invited to join in the Opening Ceremony yesterday, and commented.

"The tourism industry is a potential industry in Taiwan, I hope this industry can be properly promoted with some modifications from our

laws after this earthquake to encourage more foreign visitors visit Taiwan," said Siew

Because of the "Travel Warning" by the Tourism Bureau, the Straits Exchange Foundation dispatched several travel guide books during the show hours to strengthen traveling risks and conceptions for visitors when choosing any travel package.

### **2008 YODEX: The first-ever "Wow! Taiwan Design Competition" announced**

On the opening day of the 2008 Young Designers' Exhibition (May 15), the Council for Cultural Affairs of Executive Yuan announced the first-ever "Wow! Taiwan Design Competition" at the Taipei World Trade Center. It will take place in conjunction with the main show (2008 YODEX). The winners from the Professional and Student classes were announced and awarded in an ceremony yesterday.

According to official information from the Taiwan Design Center (TDC), this first-ever design competition was designed for local participants to construct creative products with internationalizations and traditional cultures, and market them worldwide.

"EasTea / WesTea" and "Window & Box" also won the championship in the professional and student groups in this competition.

### **HIV-positive man receives 35 years for spitting on Dallas police officer**

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The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that no one has ever contracted HIV from saliva, and a gay-rights and AIDS advocacy group called the sentence excessive.

A Dallas County jury concluded that Willie Campbell's act of spitting on policeman Dan Waller in 2006 constituted the use of his saliva as a deadly weapon. The incident occurred while Campbell, 42, was resisting arrest while being taken into custody for public intoxication.

"He turns and spits. He hits me in the eye and mouth. Then he told me he has AIDS. I immediately began looking for something to flush my eyes with," said Waller to The Dallas Morning News.

Officer Waller responded after a bystander reported seeing an unconscious male lying outside a building. Dallas County prosecutors stated that Campbell attempted to fight paramedics and kicked the police officer who arrested him for public intoxication.

"It's been 25 years since the virus was identified, but there are still lots of fears."

—Bebe Anderson, Lambda Legal

Prosecutors said that Campbell yelled that he was innocent during the trial, and claimed a police officer was lying. Campbell's lawyer Russell Heinrichs said that because he had a history of convictions including similarly attacking two other police officers, biting inmates, and other offenses, he was indicted under a habitual offender statute. The statute increased his minimum sentence to 25 years in prison. Because the jury ruled that Campbell's saliva

was used as a deadly weapon, he will not be eligible for parole until completing at least half his sentence....

If you look at the facts of this case, it was clear that the defendant intended to cause serious bodily injury. ...

—Craig Watkins, Dallas County DA

The organization Lambda Legal (Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund), which advocates for individuals living with HIV, says that saliva should not be considered a deadly weapon. Bebe Anderson, the HIV projects director at Lambda Legal, spoke with The Dallas Morning News about the sentence. "It's been 25 years since the virus was identified, but there are still lots of fears," said Anderson.

The Dallas County prosecutor who handled the trial, Jenni Morse, said that the deadly weapon finding was justified. "No matter how minuscule, there is some risk. That means there is the possibility of causing serious bodily injury or death," said Morse. Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins stated: "If you look at the facts of this case, it was clear that the defendant intended to cause serious bodily injury."

"Contact with saliva, tears, or sweat has never been shown: to result in transmission of HIV"  
—CDC, *HIV and Its Transmission*

A page at the CDC's website, *HIV and Its Transmission*, states: "HIV has been found in saliva and tears in very low quantities from some AIDS patients." The subsection "Saliva, Tears, and Sweat" concludes that: "Contact with saliva, tears, or sweat has never

been shown: to result in transmission of HIV." On Friday the Dallas County Health Department released a statement explaining that HIV is most commonly spread through sexual contact, sharing needles, or transfusion from an infected blood product.

### **Q and A with New Zealand Prime Minister hopeful**

John Key is the leader of the New Zealand National Party and with the New Zealand General Election this year, Wikinews' Gabriel Pollard spoke to John Key via email.

#### *Interview*

Wikinews: Are you taking much notice over the polls that currently show National leading by a big margin?

John Key: No. National remains focussed on putting together a series of policies that will lift living standards, raise after-tax incomes and deliver better social services alongside First World infrastructure. The polling in election year is always likely to bounce around a bit, and we take nothing for granted. Helen Clark is desperate for a fourth term, so I fully expect they will be spending taxpayer money with little regard for the longer term consequences. National will remain focussed on delivering on the real issues affecting New Zealanders, like after-tax incomes which are drifting further and further behind Australia, a health system which has delivered thousands of bureaucrats, and fewer operations on a per capita basis, and an education system that doesn't fail thousands of our children.

WN: Do you take any signs of possible outcomes in New Zealand based on the election result in Australia last year?

J.K.: No. I don't think you can take

the Australian result and superimpose that on New Zealand. For starters, we are working in an MMP environment, and we are working under a very different set of Government-designed election laws that were set up to sow confusion, deny free-speech, and curb Labour's critics in election year. Nevertheless, as I travel around the country I do get the sense that people are tired of the Labour-led Government, and hungry for some new ideas and fresh thinking. National is under no illusion as to the challenges that lie ahead, not just in terms of the election but more importantly, for the future direction of this country.

WN: If elected, what is the first major reform you would like to undertake?

J.K.: My top priority is to start restoring the faith of New Zealanders in New Zealand. This is a great country with huge potential and a bright future. I want more Kiwis to believe that their future, and their children's future, lies here in New Zealand, not Australia or elsewhere. In terms of policy – I want to share more of the gains from economic growth with hardworking New Zealanders through a programme of ongoing tax cuts. In National's view, the Government should spend taxpayer money with the same discipline that households do, and return the taxes that it does not need to the people who paid them.

WN: You've said that you will repeal the EFA, will you draft up a replacement Bill? If so, will you take a bipartisan approach when drafting up a possible replacement?

J.K.: That is our intention. The laws that govern our democratic process are owned by the people,

not the group of politicians that happen to occupy the Treasury benches at any one point in time. The self serving laws that the current Government put in place are an absolute mess. Anyone who wants to take part in the democratic process is being forced to consult a lawyer, and the confusion has paralysed political and third parties for the first part of the year. Labour's intention was to curb its critics, and in this respect, the Electoral Finance Act has done exactly what Helen Clark hoped. National will repeal this legislation and consult other parties on a set of rules which are fair, transparent and promote free speech and open participation in our democracy.

WN: You're relatively politically inexperienced compared to your opponent, Helen Clark. Do you think the voters will take this into consideration at the voting booth? How does your former career in finance help you in a political setting? How about your childhood growing up in a state-house, among other things?

J.K.: I am proud of my achievements since I have been the leader of the National Party. It is true I have not been a career politician, but I believe I bring a fresh approach to politics in this country. I am not interested in revisiting the arguments of the 80's and 90's or subscribing to some arcane ideology. I believe I am a pragmatist. I am interested in what works – not where it has come from or who is promoting it. I don't trust anyone who believes they have all the answers on everything. They are setting themselves up for a rather large fall.

My career in business taught me a lot about managing people, reaching consensus and taking people with me as we work

together for a common purpose. In my view, good business leaders listen to the people they serve and fight fiercely to protect those interests. In that regard, if I am privileged enough to be elected Prime Minister, I plan to be an unashamed cheerleader for this country on both the national and world stage.

In reference to my upbringing, I believe I was tremendously lucky. I had a mother who set extremely high standards, who pushed us as children and never once tried to limit our ambition. Mum taught us that life is what you make it, that there is no dress rehearsal, and unless you make the most of your opportunities you may live to regret that. I try to give my kids the same sort of freedom and share with them the same sort of values that my mum gave to me. That is, if you work hard and don't give up when you hit the hurdles - almost anything is possible. Believe in yourself.

WN: What parties would you consider as possible coalition partners? Specifically the Maori Party, the Greens and NZ First?

J.K.: National remains focussed on its oWN: policies to lift after-tax incomes and provide the social safety nets that we have all come to expect and deserve. MMP means that we may have to speak with other parties after the election, and we will do that. But it would be an insult to the people of New Zealand to start talking about those things before they've even had their say. Frankly, National will work with the cards we are dealt by the public, that is what MMP is all about. I have not ruled 'out' any party, nor have I ruled 'in' any party. These are matters that the public must have a say in.

WN: What kind of tax-cuts package are looking at

implementing if you win the election?

J.K.: National will be announcing an ongoing programme of personal tax cuts closer to the election. We have been consistent with our view that reducing personal taxation should be a routine part of Government business in a growing economy. At its heart taxation is an argument about trust. National thinks New Zealanders should be trusted with more of their oWN: money, Labour does not. National understands that taxpayers are the generators of the income that provides the social safety nets we deserve and expect. We will recognise that with a programme that gives people more incentive to work hard and get ahead under their oWN: steam.

WN: Will it require any cuts to any public services?

J.K.: No, in fact the fallacy of that argument is being laid in front of New Zealanders by the current Finance Minister, who, faced with embarrassingly large surpluses and growing resentment among those paying his bills, now says he accepts he was wrong and that National was right. Frankly, I do not think he can be trusted to do as he says on taxation. The only personal tax cut he has ever offered to New Zealanders was cancelled to pay for his other spending promises - but only after he'd been re-elected.

WN: How are you looking at closing the gap between Australia and New Zealand in terms of the economy?

J.K.: Starting to close the gap between Australian and New Zealand after-tax incomes is something I take very seriously because I want New Zealand and New Zealanders to be optimistic about their futures. I don't want them forced to move to Australia

to make ends meet. The wage gap that has been allowed to widen in recent years will not be closed overnight - but we must start trying. Michael Cullen once said New Zealand was 'probably better off' without those who left New Zealand to live in Australia, but I strongly disagree.

National has a 5-point plan for boosting New Zealand's economic performance. We will bring discipline to government spending, boost investment in infrastructure, cut bureaucracy and red tape, create an environment to reduce pressure on interest rates and introduce an ongoing programme of personal tax cuts.

WN: What kind of improvements are you looking at making to the health sector, such as hospitals and ambulances?

J.K.: Our health system is currently in a mess. For all of Labour's extra spending on health, the public still don't think the services are that much better. Despite the thousands of extra bureaucrats, the sector continues to lurch from one crisis to the next. National is committed to delivering better, sooner and more convenient healthcare for all New Zealanders. To do this we will put patients first, move to integrated care, put greater trust in health professionals and encourage innovation and sharing of resources in the health sector. It is a very complex sector, with complex demands. We have a discussion document currently out for consultation, it sets out our ideas for health in greater detail.

WN: Your party opposed interest free student loans at the 2005 elections. Should students looking to study in 2009 have anything to fear when considering voting National in 2008?

J.K.: National knows that

education and training is the gateway to opportunity and independence. We will be releasing our full education policies closer to the election but we have already announced our intention to lift educational standards and a youth guarantee that promises funding for education or training for all students up to the age of 18 to gain school level qualifications. National will also keep interest-free student loans for tertiary students. As an incentive to encourage faster payment of loans and help borrowers get out of debt sooner, we will also offer a 10% bonus on a loan balance for voluntary lump-sum payments of \$500 or more.

WN: Do you feel the country should not be concerned at your mistakes you made on live television?

J.K.: In public life it is often difficult to please all of the people all of the time, often you have to make calls that some people won't like. But unlike many of my opponents, I have not been a politician for decades. I am comfortable with my style of leadership, which is very future focussed. No one in National is under any illusion about the task that lies ahead. I am the first to admit that we're all human and make mistakes from time to time. I think most Kiwis appreciate that. The important thing is to learn from your mistakes and I've certainly done that.

WN: Why do you feel the country keeps backlashing when you announce policies? Why did you take so long to start putting out policies?

J.K.: I disagree with the assertions in both of these questions. National has released many very popular policies. In fact, some have been so popular that Labour

has taken them on board. I can cite tax cuts, changes to charities' rules, NGO funding, and Emissions Trading to name a few. More recently there's evidence of a government shift in health policy, and moves on housing affordability – all after National had tackled these ideas publicly. Our law and order policies have been welcomed by victims and the public alike. We are only four months into the election year and National has released many policies. We have a lot more to come, we are only getting started. We have a strong focus on creating opportunity and growing our standards of living, so there will be a lot more to come this year.

We understand the public are eager to see more of our policies and we will have a solid programme of exciting announcements in the lead up to the election.

### Today in History

1536 – Anne Boleyn, the second wife and queen consort of Henry VIII of England, was beheaded at the Tower of London for adultery, incest, and high treason.

1643 – Thirty Years' War: The French led by Louis II de Bourbon, Prince de Condé scored a decisive victory against the Spanish in Rocroi, France.

1649 – The Rump Parliament passed an act to formally establish the Commonwealth of England.

1802 – Napoléon Bonaparte, First Consul of the French Republic, established the Légion d'honneur order as a reward to commend civilians and soldiers.

1919 – Mustafa Kemal Atatürk traveled to Samsun to establish the Turkish National Movement to resist the partitioning of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, marking the start of the Turkish War of Independence.

1922 – The Young Pioneer

Organization of the Soviet Union, a mass pioneer movement for children of age 10–15, was founded.

May 19 is Pesach Sheni (Judaism, 2008); Victoria Day in Canada (2008); Youth and Sports Day in Turkey

### Quote of the Day

Mankind is a single body and each nation a part of that body. We must never say "What does it matter to me if some part of the world is ailing?" If there is such an illness, we must concern ourselves with it as though we were having that illness.

~ Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

### Word of the Day

deluge n

1. A great flood or rain.
2. An overwhelming amount of something.

### About Wikinews

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