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Several large explosions reported in Xinjiang, China

According to the Xinhua News Agency, the official press agency for the People's Republic of China, "several explosions" have been reported in the Xinjiang province of the country. At least nine people are reported to have been killed.



Olympic highlights: August 9, 2008

August 9, 2008 is the first major day of the 2008 Olympic games, Wikinews' article list some of the highlights. Visit the article to see the results of the Men's 10m air pistol, the Women's 10m Air Rifle, the Women's 48kg Weightlifting, the Men's Road Race, Women's archery, the Men's 400m Individual Medley, the Men's 100m Breaststroke and the medal table.



American tourist killed in Beijing

Two relatives of a coach for the American Volleyball team, and their tour-guide, were attacked by a Chinese man Saturday. The couple were



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touring the Drum Tower in central Beijing when the attack occurred. The male tourist was killed, his female companion and their tour-guide were injured and are undergoing treatment.

American actor and comedian Bernie Mac dies at age 50

Comedic actor Bernie Mac has died at the age of 50. According to his publicist, Danica Smith, Mac had been suffering from pneumonia brought on by sarcoidosis for about a week, although it was believed initially that he would make a full recovery. However on August 2, 2008, a day after Mac was hospitalized, a family member was quoted as saying that Mac was in "very, very critical" condition.

Wikipedia Current Events

Shooter Kateřina Emmons of the Czech Republic wins the women's 10 meter air rifle competition, the first gold medal of the 2008 Summer Olympics, setting an Olympic record for both the qualifying and final scores.

•Woman's weightlifter Chen Xiexia sets Olympic records in both the clean and jerk and snatch as well as total weight lifted, winning China's first and the second gold medal of the summer.

•Russia and Georgia continue to fight in South Ossetia and Georgia. The search for the dead and injured continues after at least 2,000 civilians were killed

Wikipedia Current Events

after two days Georgian offensive. Russia reported 12 soldiers killed and 30 wounded in the first day of the Georgian tank and missile bombardment of Tskhinvali and its retaking.

•Russian jets attack military targets in the Georgian city of Gori, outside South Ossetia, killing 60 people; two are shot down.

Several large explosions reported in Xinjiang, China

According to the Xinhua News Agency, the official press agency for the People's Republic of China, "several explosions" have been reported in the Xinjiang province of the country. Adnkronos.com is reporting at least nine people are killed, with several in critical condition at a hospital. Reuters reports that there were possibly five suspects who were injured or killed.

Monsters and Critics.com quote Deutsche Presse-Agentur as saying witnesses on scene reported a plane flying over the town of Kuqa which was followed by 20 large "flashes", but "no fire or smoke" which was then followed by "sporadic" gunfire. According to Xinhua the explosions occurred at about 3:20 local time (19:20 GMT) and 4:00 (20:00 GMT).

Explosions hit police stations, government buildings and military offices said Dilxat Raxit an activist who was quoting Uighurs who had been at the location at the time of

the bombings.

Authorities are said to have sealed off the town where the attacks have occurred. Military personnel are also reported to have been dispatched to the area. One report states that the government offices in Kuqa are unaware of any bombings.

The Xinjiang region has a strong independence movement, largely in the form of 8 million Muslim Uighurs. The East Turkestan Islamic Movement wishes to create an independent Islamic state out of part of what is currently Xinjiang. China has stated that the Uighur separatists are the biggest potential terrorist threat to the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

No one has claimed to be responsible for the blasts.

Georgia wants ceasefire in Ossetia war

On Saturday Mikheil Saakashvili, the President of Georgia, called for a ceasefire in the South Ossetian war. "I call for an immediate ceasefire," said Saakashvili, speaking in Tbilisi. "Russia has launched a full scale military invasion of Georgia."

After calling for the ceasefire Saakashvili continued by saying that "I am willing to have international mediation; I am willing to have international separation of forces; we have to establish normal regime under international supervision."

At the same time, South Ossetia's State Committee for information and press has made a press release titled "Save the little nation from the annihilation!". Statements include that "It's impossible to count up the quantity of victims, [...] the

account goes on thousand." followed by a plea for help and solidarity.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev stated his position regarding the ending of the conflict in a phone call with Federal Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel: "The only possible and reasonable way out of this situation is the withdrawal of Georgian troops to their initial positions and the immediate signing of a legally binding agreement on the non-use of force." He reiterated much the same position in telephone conversation with the President of the United States, George W. Bush, today.

Saakashvili's call for a ceasefire comes soon after his declaration that Georgia is now in a state of war. "I have signed a decree on a state of war. Georgia is under a state of total military aggression by the Russian navy, air force, large-scale ground operations," he said in a televised meeting that was broadcast on national television.

Alexandre Lomaia, the head of the Georgian security council, said that President Saakashvili's proposal states that the Georgian troops will withdraw from Tskhinvali, and will stop reacting to the Russian bombings.

The crisis broke out after days of heavy fighting in the region. On August 7, Georgian troops launched an offensive against the Ossetian town of Tskhinvali. Russia responded to these actions by sending their own troops into South Ossetia on August 8.

According to the Russian Presidents office, drinking water is no longer available in what

constitutes South Ossetia's capital, Tskhinvali, because "the water and sewage treatment plants have been destroyed". It is further stated that 30,000 people have left South Ossetia to seek refuge in Russia in the last 36 hours alone; and that preparations are underway to provide tented and permanent accomodation for these.

South Ossetia is a former province of Georgia that broke away from Georgia and declared its independence on November 28, 1991.

Olympic highlights: August 9, 2008

August 9, 2008 is the first major day of the 2008 Olympic games, the below article lists some of the highlights.

Men's 10m air pistol

The Chinese Pang Wei took the gold medal in the final of Men's 10 metre air pistol. He achieved a total score of 688.2 in the final, 1.2 below the Olympic record of 690.0 that was set in the 2004 games.

The Silver medal went to the South Korean Jin Jong Oh and the North Korean Kim Jong Su won the bronze medal.

No new records were set in this event.

Women's 10m Air Rifle

By winning four hundred points, the Czech Katerina Emmons equaled the previous world record and set a new Olympic record in the Women's 10m Air Rifle. Four hundred points is the maximum possible score in the event.

The Russian Liubov Galkina won

the silver medal with 399 points and a score of 103.1 in the final shots. Snježana Pejčić from Croatia won the bronze medal with the same number of points as Galkina but a lower score in the final shots.

Women's 48kg Weightlifting

The Chinese Xiexia Chen set a new Olympic Record with her total score of 212 in the Women's 48kg Weightlifting event. She got 117 of the points from the Clean & Jerk rounds and 95 of the points in the snatch rounds.

In second place, the Turkish Sibel Ozkan got 199 points. 111 of these points were from Clean & Jerk and 88 of them were from the Snatch rounds.

Wei-Ling Chen, from Chinese Taipei finished in third place with a total of 196 points.

Men's Road Race

It was a very close finish between 6 competitors, all crossing the line practically at the same time, with Samuel Sanchez (Spain) in the lead, closely followed by Davide Rebellin (Italy) and Fabian Cancellara (Switzerland) in 2nd and 3rd place respectively. Paolo Bettini, the favourite for the gold medal, has drilled during the race, and has reached the 16th place on the final leaderboard.

Women's archery

Sung-Hyun Park, Ok-Hee Yun and Hyun-Jung Joo (South Korean) set a new record in the Womens archery with a combined score of 2004.

Men's 400m Individual Medley

The American Michael Phelps set a new Olympic Record in Heat four

of Men's 400m Individual Medley with a time of 4:07.82. This time was approximated two and a half seconds ahead of the person who finished second in the heat, the Italian Luca Marin.

Men's 100m Breaststroke

The Norwegian Alexander Dale Oen set a new Olympic Record in Heat seven of Men's 100m Breaststroke with a time of 59.41 seconds. This time was approximately 0.4 seconds ahead of the person who finished second in the heat, the Australian Brenton Rickard.

Fear and loathing on the campaign trail, July 2008

July 2008 on the campaign trail will be remembered prominently for what people close to the campaign opined about the election. On both sides of the aisle a former presidential candidate made a statement demonized by the media. The media's coverage of the election was scrutinized by the media itself and became an issue that even the candidates discussed on the trail. The trends of the previous months were continued as another third party candidate rose and another influential election journalist (Tony Snow) died.

Democrats

- Barack Obama's shift to the political center in light of his liberal backing was documented by the media. It was noted that Obama had stated that he agreed with Republicans in backing a bill granting immunity to telecommunication businesses that participated in surveillance of terrorists and recognized that he agreed with the Supreme Court's 5-4 decision split upon ideological lines to lift the handgun ban in Washington D.C. The

move was also supported by Obama's remarks that he would "refine" his positions on the war in Iraq.

- Former Democratic presidential candidate Jesse Jackson stated in an interview during a commercial break that he believed Barack Obama was "talking down to black people" and that he would like to "cut his nuts out." The comments were in response to Barack Obama's comments that "Any fool can have a child. That doesn't make you a father." Jackson apologized to Obama and the campaign's spokesman stated that Obama "of course accepts Reverend Jackson's apology."

- New Yorker magazine set off a firestorm of controversy when it released its July 21 edition with a cover portraying Barack Obama and his wife Michelle as Islamic extremists. The publication claimed the cover was a satirical representation of rumors floating that Obama is secretly Muslim but both the Obama and McCain campaigns criticized the cover as "tasteless and offensive."

- Obama visited the Middle East and Europe later in the month on a Senatorial "fact finding" mission with fellow Senators Chuck Hagel and Jack Reed. Obama met with world leaders and discussed the American strategy in Iraq with General David Petraeus and drew large crowds including 200,000 at an event in Berlin. During the trip Obama articulated his support for an increase in the American forces in Afghanistan. The trip received an abundance of media coverage and was followed by anchors from America's top news networks.

- Virginia governor Tim Kaine emerged as the frontrunner for the Vice-presidential nomination for the Democratic Party according to sources within the

Obama campaign. The source stated that Kaine "ranks very, very high on the shortlist" along with Senator Evan Bayh of Indiana, Senator Joe Biden of Delaware and Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius.

Third Parties

- Former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney of Georgia won the nomination of the Green Party at the party's convention in Chicago. After winning the nomination McKinney proclaimed that "A vote for the Green Party is a vote for the movement that will turn this country right-side-up again." She is a vocal critic of the Bush administration suggesting that it covered up information regarding the 9/11 attacks. McKinney selected hip hop artist and Green activist Rosa Clemente as her running mate.
- Libertarian Party nominee Bob Barr reached 10% in a Zogby poll conducted in New Hampshire in July although Barr had not yet reached the number of signatures required to be included on the ballot in the state. Barr emphasized the promising results while campaigning and stated that he will continue his fight to be included on the ballot in all 50 states.
- Comments made by Bob Barr that the government "has to do something" to help Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae in light of the 2008 GSE support plan were instantly criticized by presidential candidate Charles Jay of the little known Boston Tea Party. Jay gained some media attention by claiming that Barr was wrong describing him as a "dixiecrat" and stating that the government should "let free markets flow." Jay's comments are representative of some Libertarian dissatisfaction with

Barr, which fractured the Convention in May.

Republicans

- Similar to the previous summer, John McCain reshuffled his campaign staff: the biggest move being his replacement of campaign manager Rick Davis with Karl Rove's associate Steve Schmidt as the controller of campaign operations. The moves gave indications of a possible upheaval in the campaign but these charges were denied by advisor Carly Fiorina who stated that McCain was simply "ramping up" his campaign. It was also revealed that McCain planned to release a series of advertisements aimed at voters in the midwest.
- Economic advisor for John McCain, former Senator Phil Gramm stated that America was a nation of "whiners" who are in a state of "mental recession." McCain countered that he "strongly disagree[d]" with the statements and that "Phil Gramm does not speak for me. I speak for me." After months of being touted as a possible Treasury Secretary in a McCain administration, when asked what role Gramm might play in light of his recent comments McCain remarked that he "would be in serious consideration for ambassador to Belarus, although I'm not sure the citizens of Minsk would welcome that."
- John McCain criticized Barack Obama for his position on Iraq as the Democratic candidate visited the nation. He stated that Obama was wrong for formulating a plan for the future of the nation before assessing the conditions on the ground. In an interview with Katie Couric, McCain stated that he "would much rather lose a campaign than lose a war. Senator Obama has indicated

that by his failure to acknowledge the success of the surge [in Iraq], that he would rather lose a war than lose a campaign."

- Louisiana governor Bobby Jindal announced on Fox News that he's "got the job [he] want[s]" and that he's "not going to be the vice presidential nominee" although insiders stated that Jindal would take the job if asked. This came as McCain praised Jindal and Minnesota governor Tim Pawlenty as "the future of the Republican Party." The two along with Florida governor Charlie Crist and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney are said to be the top prospects to be McCain's running mate.
- McCain released an ad late in July that gave his campaign more media exposure. The ad described Obama as "the biggest celebrity in the world" and compared the Senator to Paris Hilton and Britney Spears. It was later reported that at the end of the month McCain was a "significant or dominant factor" in 74% of campaign coverage compared to 81% for Obama, perhaps as a result of the new ad.

Orville Moody, 1969 U.S open winner dies at age 74

American golfer Orville Moody died yesterday aged 74. He was the winner of the 1969 U.S open.

A former U.S army sergeant Moody gave up the military in 1967 to play a trail run on the PGA Tour, he earned almost \$300,000 in one year. After 15 months of joining Moody was named PGA Player of the Year. Moody won the U.S open by only one stroke with a 72-hole score of 281. Deane Beman, Al Geiberger and Bob Rosburg all finished the tournament with a score of 282. In

1989, he became only the fourth man to win both the U.S. Open and the U.S. Senior Open.

No cause of death has been giving so far. Moody had a triple bypass heart surgery in 1995.

Georgian President declares country is in 'state of war'

Mikheil Saakashvili, the President of Georgia, has declared that his country is now in a state of war. "I have signed a decree on a state of war. Georgia is under a state of total military aggression by the Russian navy, air force, large-scale ground operations," he said in a televised meeting that was broadcast on national television.

At 11:38 a.m yesterday, before the country entered a state of war, the President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili announced the mobilization of reserve troops to withstand what he called "a large-scale military aggression" by Russia, and called Russia to stop the "bombardment of Georgian towns."

The decree stated that "The state of war will be valid for 15 days." The period of 15 days started today.

The crisis broke out after days of heavy fighting in the region. On August 7 Georgian troops launched an offensive against the Ossetian town of Tskhinvali, the separatists capital.

American tourist killed in Beijing

Two relatives of a coach for the American Volleyball team, and their tour-guide, were attacked by a knife wielding Chinese man Saturday.

Todd and Barbara Bachman of Farmington, Minnesota USA, in-

laws of Hugh McCutcheon- head U.S. indoor men's volleyball coach, were touring the Drum Tower in central Beijing when the attack occurred. Mr. Bachman was killed, his wife and their tour-guide were injured and are undergoing treatment at Peking Union Medical College Hospital.

Elisabeth Bachman McCutcheon, wife of Hugh McCutcheon and a member of the 2004 United States women's Olympics volleyball team, was also present for the attack on her parents, but was herself uninjured.

The attacker, identified by Chinese state sources as Tang Yongming, a 47 year old from the city of Hangzhou, leapt to his death from the tower's second story in what is being labeled a suicide.

Darryl Seibel speaking for the United States Olympic Committee stated that the victims weren't wearing anything that might have marked them as Americans or as associated with a US team. He further stated that it wasn't known whether the U.S. men's volleyball team would compete in a match scheduled for Sunday and that no extra security was planned for U.S. athletes.

U.S. President George W. Bush and his wife Laura were in the city for the Olympic games. Mr. Bush stated, "Laura and I were also saddened by the attack on an American family and their Chinese tour guide today in Beijing. The United States government has offered to provide any assistance the family needs."

Todd Bachman was the CEO of Bachman's, Inc; a regional chain of garden centers based in Minneapolis. He was sixty-two years old.

Wikipedia Current Events

Georgia's parliament approves a state of war across the country for the next 15 days. (Reuters) Delegates from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, European Union, and United States head to Georgia to broker peace.

- The Georgian-controlled section of the Kodori Gorge in Abkhazia came under fire from aircraft. Abkhazia's foreign minister Sergei Shamba, said Abkhaz forces had launched an attack aimed at driving Georgian forces out of the gorge. Georgian television claimed the attacks were by Russians.

- Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili called for a cease fire which his Security Council secretary said means that Georgian troops will withdraw from Tskhinvali and stop responding to Russian shelling.

- At least 38 Warao Indians are dead in Venezuela from a suspected outbreak of rabies from vampire bats.

- Iraqi Shia cleric Moqtada Sadr announces the formation of a cultural unarmed group of the Mehdi Army militia.

- An uprising in the Burmese town of Taunggok, about 200 km northwest of Yangon, results in arrests

Today in History

1628 – The Swedish warship Vasa, built for King Gustavus Adolphus for the Thirty Years' War, sank after sailing less than a nautical mile into her maiden voyage from Stockholm.

1675 – The foundation stone of the Royal Greenwich Observatory, today the basis of the Prime Meridian, was laid in Greenwich,

London.

1792 – French Revolution: Insurrectionists in Paris stormed the Tuileries Palace, effectively ending the French monarchy until it was restored in 1814.

1846 – The United States Congress established the Smithsonian Institution, an educational and research institute and associated museum complex.

1913 – Delegates of Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece signed the Treaty of Bucharest, ending the Second Balkan War.

August 10 is Independence Day in Ecuador; International Biodiesel Day

Quote of the Day

The principal goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers, who can be critical and verify, and not accept, everything they are offered. ~ Jean Piaget

Word of the Day

circumscribe v

1. To draw a line around; to encircle.
2. To limit narrowly; to restrict.

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