

Changes across the Globe

The world is continuously changing, be it the weather, fashion, food or gas prices. The thing that brings about the most life altering changes is those in government. 20 years from now, 2011 will go down in the history books as the "Year of Surprising Change."

What is News?

Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, recently made a comment about how well the Al-Jazeera, an Arabic News Group, covers important news in the Middle East. She then related how in the United States, American journalists focus more on celebrity melt downs like Charlie Sheen. Do people really want to watch over paid celebrities lives go up in flames over real crisis? It is a shame when people know more about Chris Browns new hairdo than life changing events throughout the world.

Ireland Political Parties Working together

After being bailed out by the European Union (along with the Bank of Europe and other resources) for 92 billion dollars, Ireland's two largest political parties have decided to cooperate and establish a new government. The Labor Party and the Fine Gael party are working together to try to cut the deficit and create jobs. Similar to the situation here in the U.S., with the exception that they are talking about a complete government overhaul.

Qadhafi in Libya

Colonel Muammar Qadhafi, ruler of Libya, is being asked to step down by several nations. Libya has been in a state of civil unrest since mid-January. The protests were influenced by those in Egypt, Tunisia and Yemen. The people are protesting against his 41 year reign as a dictator, high poverty rates and for basic human rights. The protests started peacefully, but soon escalated. Qadhafi is reported to have called for snipers to shut down protests and even hired African mercenaries. The mercenaries were described by the Libyan people as French speaking Africans, who "shoot to kill and nothing else."

France is worried about the influx of refugees that may be seeking to move there, because of the violence against protestors in Libya. Qadhafi has reportedly used air strikes and other such war tactics to keep the "peace" since the protests began. However, Qadhafi states that he only used them to bomb military bases. Recently, Qadhafi has reportedly started bombing oil fields captured by the rebels. As the largest producer of oil in North Africa, this means trouble for other nations. The price of crude

oil is going up rapidly.

Nations like Great Britain, US and now the Arab League, have called for a "No Fly Zone" over Libya. Libyan rebel forces have been calling for a no fly zone, in order to weaken Qadhafi's military power and would give them a better chance at fighting back.

Qadhafi has done several interviews with the U.S. and British press, in which he states that "His people love him and are willing to die for him." Among other things he blames the West for not backing him up, even though he states he has served with them in the War against terrorism. Qadhafi relates how other nations have no proof of the said violence, and that they have not killed that many people. While the protestors estimate that at least 1000 people have lost their lives in their fight for change.

The U.S. has publically taken a stand against Libyan ruler Qadhafi. The Obama administration has begun to put in place several plans to handle the situation, including setting military forces around Libya and going to North Atlantic Trade Organization (NATO). President Obama has repeatedly called for Qadhafi to step down and is looking for ways to help the Libyan people. Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, is scheduled to meet with Libyan opposition forces in Paris on Monday. Nations involved in the NATO pact are furiously working to come up with a game plan to

Qadhafi overwhelmed opposition forces and is recapturing territory previously taken by rebel forces. Last week, opposition forces captured two cities that held large oil fields. These areas are now back under the control of the existing Lybian government. Qadhafi's troops have begun firing heavy artillery and rocket fire over large tracts of land and then sending in ground troops to take care of the surviving rebels. The opposition forces are very much under armed and do not have the supplies needed to fight back.

Allied forces are nervous about setting up a no fly zone, for fear of being dragged into a difficult conflict. The U.S. fears that it will be left with the responsibility of monitoring the warring nation. France, the UK and Arab League were scheduled to meet on Mon. March 14 to discuss measures on how to handle Libya.

Pirates

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Captain Jack Sparrow, Barbosa and Davy Jones, even they wouldn't last long with the new breed of pirates who are constantly making headlines across the globe. They are attacking oil ships from Iran, taking hostages and hijacking ships from private family yachts to oil tankers and terrorizing the coasts of India. Nearly a dozen Americans have died in 2011 at the hands of pirates. The most recent headline was when a pirate ship attacked and took hostage a family of five from Denmark. Authorities are trying

to locate and negotiate with the pirates for the family's safe return; however, even if they are located officials were forewarned about attempting to board the hijacked boats of pirates. All recent documented cases have ended in death for the hostages. The pirates all fol-

low a similar pattern in their attack methods, first hijacking a ship and either killing those on board and taking the ships contents or taking hostages and holding them for ransom. The average ransom demand for being released is at 5 million dollars. Governmental authorities ask citizens to stay away from certain areas such as the Aegean Sea and Indian Ocean, the two most commonly hit areas.

Guy-Greenbrier Earthquake Swarm

800 earthquakes since September, Arkansas has definitely seen better months. Most were not felt and caused no serious damage. Yet, the state has had several that reached over 3.4 on the Richter scale. They were no small tremors. The biggest earthquake to date happened on Sunday, Feb. 27 at 11 pm which registered at 4.7. This is the largest earthquake to hit Arkansas in 35 years. Scientists believe that the cause for this rare occurrence could be because of local injection wells. Seismologist based in Arkansas expect that this is not the end of the tremors and that citizens could be in store for a quake that will measure at least 5.0 to 5.5.

Disaster in Japan

The biggest earthquake ever to hit the island nation of Japan, struck and devastated its citizens on March 11. The quake registered in at 8.9 on the Richter scale. It makes this the fifth largest documented earthquake in the world. It exerted almost 8,000 times as much force as the recent

quake that hit New Zealand. The death toll is currently estimated into hundreds, yet they expect it to quickly rise into the thousands. Public transportation shut down in all the major cities like Tokyo, leaving many people stranded. Services were reestablished last Saturday. Damages from the quake consist of houses being shaken off of their foundations and buildings being severely damaged. In the wake of the tragedy Japan is now left to deal with what may be considered as an even more devastating aftermath. Workers and government officials are now focused on Nuclear plants scattered across the Northeastern coast of Japan. They are fighting to prevent nuclear reactor melt downs and maintain the integrity of the containment. One of the plants has been reported to have suffered a hydrogen explosion on Saturday. Japanese officials are working to prevent further explosions. Already over 170,000 people have been evacuated from their homes. Evacuations will continue throughout the week until officials stop detecting radiation outside of the plant and in the surrounding areas. People who have evacuated were taken to shelters where they can be scanned for radiation and to see if they are infected. Because of the nuclear plants, it was reported that as of Sunday, a state of emergency was filed with the United Nations Nuclear Agency. Labeled as a Level 4 nuclear incident, it is projected that the consequences and aftermath of this event is greater than the initial quake. Because of the location of the earthquake, Japan's industrial cities were not devastated. Thanks to the nations infrastructure the damage was not as extensive as it could have been.

Disaster in the Pacific

Tsunamis hit the coast of Northeastern Japan after an 8.9 major earthquake on Friday. The quake hit at 2:46 p.m. Japan time. Waves were reported to have measured at 30 feet. They barreled in from the Pacific and crashed into the coast. In the Miyagi Prefecture (state). Water came as far as six miles inland. Houses and people were found more than 60 miles off the coast. With most of the coast still under muddy water, officials were unable to accurately document the death toll. Witnesses say there are hundreds of bodies scattered across the area. The tsunamis sent minor waves towards Hawaii, Hawaii still evacuated citizens as a precaution. Waves also reached Southern California, were one man reportedly was swept into the sea and believed to be died. The destruction effects of the earthquake and tsunamis left thousands of homes devastated and entire cities were wiped out, leaving only foundations.

