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Dear Reader,

This is a special issue of LIM News. We are celebrating the 20th anniversary of LIM's founding in January 1986. Anniversaries provide us with an opportunity to look back where we have been, and as we did so this time we thought of the major events that have occurred in these twenty years. There have been many that have shaped the world we are living in today -- events in the political, environmental, technological, economical, and social fields.

And because events are connected to human behavior, some of these events gave rise to management and organization theories that accompanied the transformation of our world, trying to explain, to make meaning, to inspire and to shape in new directions. We thought that the best way to celebrate our 20th Anniversary with you was to share with you just a selection of those events.

This is a considerably longer issue, but it is not easy to do a short summary of twenty years. To review the happenings standing side to side as it were, makes, we believe, for an interesting collage, where you might find new meanings and connections. Thanks for coming along in this journey!

Enjoy the journey back in time!

Isabel Rimanoczy
Editor

Quote of the Month

"With power must come wisdom"

Ancient Chinese Proverb



Issue 65

The LIM Newsletter

January 2006

1986 – 2006

TWENTY YEARS OF EVENTS

Special Anniversary Issue

1986

January 1 - Aruba became independent of Curaçao, though it remains in free association with the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Spain and Portugal are admitted into the European Community.

January 28. The space shuttle Challenger, was the first mission to put a civilian in space, a teacher in space. Seventy-four seconds into the launch the O-rings in the solid rocket boosters gave way in the cold weather and caused a horrible explosion. Today there are 42 Challenger Learning Centers in 26 states, the UK and Canada. Challenger Center is an international, not-for-profit education organization that was founded by the families of the astronauts from Challenger Space Shuttle mission 51-L. The Challenger Center for Space Science Education uses students' natural enthusiasm for space to create innovative learning experiences for imaginative young minds. By transforming the way teachers teach and students learn, Challenger Center is creating a new generation of explorers.

The Internet's Domain Name System had just been created.

February 19 - After waiting 37 years, the United States Senate approves a treaty outlawing genocide.

February 27 - The United States Senate allows its debates to be televised on a trial basis.

April 13 - Pope John Paul II officially visits the Synagogue of Rome — the first time a modern Pope had visited a synagogue.

April 17 - Treaty signed, ending Three Hundred and Thirty Five Years' War between the Netherlands and the Isles of Scilly.

April 26 - In Ukraine, one of the reactors at the Chornobyl (Chernobyl) nuclear plant explodes creating the world's worst nuclear disaster. 31 are killed directly by the incident, many thousands more were exposed to significant amounts of radioactive material, vast territories in Ukraine and Belarus rendered uninhabitable.

August 31 - Cargo ship Khian Sea departs from the docks of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, carrying 14,000 tons of toxic waste. It will wander the seas for the next 16 months trying to find a place to dump its cargo. In January 1988 the crew finally dumped 4000 tons of the waste near Gonaives in Haiti. The rest of the ash disappeared en route from Singapore to Sri Lanka in November 1988. The case contributed to the creation of the Basel Convention about disposal of hazardous waste.

Michael Porter publishes in HBR 1987 an article about a study of the diversification records of 33 large U.S. companies from 1950 to 1986, that shows that diversification--whether through acquisition, joint venture, or start-up--generally has not brought the competitive advantages or profitability expected. Companies have the best chance of being successful at diversification if they capitalize on the existing relationships between business units by having them transfer skills and

share activities.

Masaaki Imai was born in Tokyo. In 1986, Masaaki Imai established the Kaizen Institute to help Western companies introduce kaizen concepts, systems and tools. That same year, he published his book on Japanese management, *Kaizen: The Key to Japan's Competitive Success*. This best-selling book has since been translated into 14 languages. The "zen" in Kaizen emphasizes the learn-by-doing aspect of improving production. This philosophy is focused in a different direction from the "command-and-control" improvement programs of the mid-20th century.

W. Edwards Deming's success in Japan led to the introduction of the Total Quality principles in the US.

1987

April 13 - Portugal and China sign an agreement in which Macau would be returned to China in 1999.

May 11 - The first heart-lung transplant takes place (Baltimore, Maryland)

October 19 - Black Monday: stock market falls sharply around the world.

December 8 - First Intifada begins.

1988

May 15 - Soviet war in Afghanistan: After more than eight years of fighting, the Red Army begins its withdraw from Afghanistan.

August 20 - Iran-Iraq war finished, ends costing an estimated 1 million lives.

November 15 - Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: An independent State of Palestine is proclaimed by the Palestinian National Council meeting in Algiers, by a vote of 253 to 46.

November 17 - The Netherlands becomes the second country to get connected to the Internet.

December 2 - Benazir Bhutto is sworn in as Prime Minister of Pakistan, becoming the first woman to head the government of an Islamic-dominated state.

December 2 - Cyclone in Bangladesh leaves 5 million homeless - thousands dead.

1989

February 10 - Ron Brown is elected chairman of the Democratic National Committee becoming the first African American to lead a major American political party.

February 14 - The first of the 24 satellites of the Global Positioning System is placed into orbit.

February 16 - Pan Am flight 103 crashes over Scotland: Investigators announce that the cause of the crash was a bomb hidden inside a radio-cassette player.

March 2 - 12 European Community nations agree to ban the production of all chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by the end century.

March 18 - In Egypt, a 4,400-year-old mummy is found in the Great Pyramid of Giza.

March 24 - Exxon Valdez oil spill: In Alaska's Prince William Sound the *Exxon Valdez* spills 240,000 barrels (11 million gallons) of oil after running aground.

March 27 - The first free elections for the Soviet parliament go against the Communist Party.

April 21 - Tiananmen Square protests of 1989: Students in Beijing, Shanghai, Xian, Nanjing started to strike.

May 2 - Hungary dismantles 150 miles of barbed wire fencing, opening its border to Western Europe.

May 30 - Tiananmen Square protests of 1989: The 10 m (33 ft) high "Goddess of Democracy" statue is unveiled in Tiananmen Square by student demonstrators.

June 3 - The Ayatollah Khomeini dies.

June 4 - The Tiananmen Square massacre takes place in Beijing and is covered live on television.

June 4 - Solidarity's victory in the first partly free parliamentary elections in post-war Poland spark off a succession of peaceful anti-communist revolutions in Eastern Europe.

August 23 - Baltic Way, an uninterrupted 600 kilometers human chain, in which two million indigenous people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, then still occupied by the Soviet Union, joined hands to demand freedom and independence.

November 7 - Douglas Wilder wins the governor's seat in Virginia and becomes the first elected African American governor in the United States.

November 9 - Cold War: East Germany opens checkpoints in the Berlin Wall, allowing its citizens to freely travel to West Germany for the first time in decades (the next day celebrating Germans began to tear the wall down).

November 16 - South African President FW de Klerk announces scrapping of Separate Amenities Act.

November 17 - Cold War: Velvet Revolution begins - In Czechoslovakia a peaceful student demonstration in Prague is severely beaten back by riot police. This sparks a revolution aimed at overthrowing the Communist government (it succeeded on December 29).

December 3 - Cold War: In a meeting off the coast of Malta, US President George Herbert Walker Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev release statements indicating that the Cold War between their nations may be coming to an end.

December 14 - Chile holds its first free election in 16 years.

December 17 - Brazil holds its first free election in 29 years. Fernando Collor de Mello wins the election.

December 20 - United States invades Panama (Operation Just Cause) to overthrow Manuel Noriega - he takes refuge in the Vatican mission until January 3, 1990.

December 25 - Nicolae Ceaucescu, Romanian former President and communist dictator and his wife Elena are executed.

America Online (AOL.com) is launched, although the internet provider was founded in 1985 as Quantum Computer Services.

1990

January 31 - The first McDonald's opens in Moscow, USSR.

February 2 - Apartheid: In South Africa President F.W. de Klerk allows the African National Congress to legally function again and promises to set Nelson Mandela free.

February 7 - Collapse of the Soviet Union: The Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party agrees to give up its monopoly of power.

March 21 - After 75 years of South African rule Namibia becomes independent.

April 24 - West and East Germany agree to merge currency and economies on July 1.

June 1 - U.S. President George H. W. Bush and Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev sign a treaty to end chemical weapon production and to start destroying each of their nation's stockpiles.

August 2 - Gulf War: Iraq invades Kuwait, eventually leading to the Gulf War.

August : Peter Senge publishes "The Fifth Discipline" in the US

October 15 - Soviet Union leader Mikhail Gorbachev is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts at lessening the Cold War tensions and reforming his nation.

November 13 - The first known web page is written.

November 29 - Gulf War: The United Nations Security Council passes UN Security Council Resolution 678, authorizing military intervention in Iraq if that nation did not withdraw its forces from Kuwait and free all foreign hostages by Tuesday, January 15, 1991.

December 16 - Jean-Bertrand Aristide is elected president of Haiti, ending three decades of military rule.

1991

January 4 - The United Nations Security Council votes unanimously to condemn Israel's treatment of Palestinians.

January 17 - Operation Desert Storm begins.

April 18 - Iraq disarmament crisis: Iraq declares some of its chemical weapons and materials to the UN, as required by Resolution 687, and claims that it does not have biological weapons program.

April 29 - A tropical cyclone hits Bangladesh killing an estimated 138,000 people.

August 25 - Student Linus Torvalds posts a messages to Usenet newsgroup comp.os.minix about the new operating system kernel he has been developing.

September 6 - The name "Saint Petersburg" is restored to Russia's second-largest city, which had been renamed "Leningrad" in 1924.

September 21 - Armenia declares independence from the Soviet Union.

November 23 - Freddie Mercury, lead singer of the band Queen, issues a public statement confirming that he is stricken with AIDS. He would die of complications the next day.

November 27 - The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopts UN Security Council Resolution 721, opening the way to the establishment of peacekeeping operations in Yugoslavia.

December 4 - Pan American World Airways ends operations.

December 31 - Soviet Union officially ceases to exist

1992

January 15 - The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia ceases to exist. Slovenia and Croatia gain independence.

January 16 - El Salvador officials and rebel leaders sign a pact in Mexico City that ends a 12 year civil war that claimed at least 75,000.

January 26 - Boris Yeltsin announces that Russia is going to stop targeting United States cities with nuclear weapons.

February 7 - Signing of the Maastricht treaty, which founded the European Union.

February 18 - Iraq disarmament crisis: The Executive Chairman of UNSCOM details Iraq's refusal to abide by UN Security Council disarmament resolutions.

April 6 - Serbian troops begin to bombard Sarajevo.

April 27 - Betty Boothroyd elected the first woman to be Speaker of the British House of Commons.

July 10 - In Miami, Florida, former Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega is sentenced to 40 years in prison for drug and racketeering violations.

1993

January 5 - Washington State executes Westley Allan Dodd by hanging (the first legal hanging in America since 1965).

April 23 - WHO declares tuberculosis a Global Emergency.

June 6 - Mongolia holds its first direct presidential elections.

June 25 - Kim Campbell becomes Canada's nineteenth, and first female, Prime Minister.

July 31 - Windows NT 3.1 is released.

September 13 - PLO leader Yasir Arafat and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin shake hands in Washington D.C., after signing a peace accord.

Michael Hammer & James Champy publish their book "Reengineering the Corporation".

1994

April 6 - Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana and president of Burundi Cyprien Ntaryamira died when a missile shoots down their jet near Kigali, Rwanda. This is taken as a pretext to begin the Rwandan Genocide.

April 26 - South Africa holds its first fully multiracial elections.

May 1 - Formula One driver Ayrton Sena of Brazil, age 34, is killed in a high-speed, single-car accident during the San Marino Grand Prix in Imola, Italy

May 6 - The Channel Tunnel, which took 15,000 workers over seven years to complete, opens between England and France. Passengers can now travel between the two countries in 35 minutes.

May 9 - Nelson Mandela is inaugurated as South Africa's first black president .

July 25 - Israel and Jordan sign the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace which formally ends the state of war that has existed between the nations since 1948.

August 31 - The Irish Republican Army announces a "complete cessation of military operations" from midnight.

September 3 - Cold War: Russia and the People's Republic of China agree to de-target their nuclear weapons against each other.

December 19 - A planned exchange rate correction of the Mexican Peso to the US Dollar, becomes causes a massive financial meltdown in Mexico, unleashing the 'Tequila' effect on global financial

markets. This will prompt a US\$ 50,000 million 'bailout' by the Clinton administration.

December 19 - Civil unions between homosexuals are made legal in Sweden.

1995

June 13 - French president Jacques Chirac announces the resumption of nuclear tests in French Polynesia.

July 28 - Network Solutions announces a new policy to help companies protect their trademarks on the Internet.

September - DVD, optical disc storage media format, is announced.

November 4 - After attending a peace rally in Tel Aviv's Kings of Israel Square, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin is mortally wounded by a right-wing Israeli gunman. (He later died on the operating table at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv)

Amazon.com is launched as the first online bookstore.

Daniel Goleman first publishes "Emotional Intelligence" in the US.

eBay is founded.

General Electric adopts the Six Sigma model created by Motorola in the 80s.

1996

January 29 - President Jacques Chirac announces a "definitive end" to French nuclear testing.

February 9 - IRA ceasefire ends with a one-ton bomb in London's Canary Wharf District - 2 dead.

February 17 - In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, world chess champion Garry Kasparov beats the IBM "Deep Blue" supercomputer in a chess match.

July 5 - Dolly the sheep, the first mammal to be successfully cloned from an adult cell, is born. It will prematurely die prematurely in February 2003.

The *Detroit of India* and port city, Madras, is renamed Chennai.

General Motors EV1 launched. The EV1 is the first electric car to go into mass production.

1997

January 19 - Yasser Arafat returns to Hebron after more than 30 years and joins celebrations over the handover of the last Israeli-controlled West Bank city.

April 22 - France supports new transitional government for Zaire, withdrawing its support of Mobutu Sese Seko.

April 22 - In Lima, Peru, after four-month standoff, government troops storm the Japanese ambassador's residence - they release 71 hostages and kill one hostage and 14 captors.

July 1 - The United Kingdom hands sovereignty of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China.

August 31 - Diana, Princess of Wales is taken to a hospital after a car crash in the Pont de l'Alma road tunnel in Paris. She is pronounced dead at 4:00 the next morning.

September 5 Death of Mother Teresa.

October 27 - Stock markets around the world crash because of a global economic crisis scare.

December 3 - In Ottawa, Canada, representatives from 121 countries sign a treaty prohibiting manufacture and deployment of anti-personnel landmines. The United States, People's Republic of China, and Russia do not sign the treaty, however.

December 29 - Hong Kong begins to kill all the chickens within its territory (1.25 million) to stop the spread of a potentially deadly influenza strain.

The term "weblog" was coined by Jorn Barger in December 1997.

The Toyota Prius comes to showrooms, only in Japan. The Prius was the first hybrid vehicle to go into full production. The Prius would come to US showrooms in 2000.

1998

January 1 - Smoking is banned in all California bars and restaurants.

January 12 - 19 European nations agree to forbid human cloning.

January 28 - Ford Motor Company announces the buyout of Volvo Cars for \$6.45 billion.

March 2 - Data sent from the Galileo probe indicates that Jupiter's moon Europa has a liquid ocean under a thick crust of ice.

May 7 - Apple Computer unveils the iMac.

August 17 - Russian financial crisis: Devaluation of the ruble. The ruble lost 70% of its value against US dollar in 6 months following August 1998. Several largest Russian banks collapsed, and millions of people lost their savings.

September 7 - Google, Inc. is founded.

September 29 - Iraq disarmament crisis: The U.S. Congress passes the "Iraq Liberation Act", which states that the United States wants to remove Saddam Hussein from power and replace the government with a democratic institution.

October 29 - Apartheid: In South Africa, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission presents its report, which condemns both sides for committing atrocities.

November 12 - Daimler-Benz completes a merger with Chrysler to form Daimler-Chrysler.

November 30 - Deutsche Bank announces a US\$10 billion deal to buy Bankers Trust, thus creating the largest financial institution in the world.

December 1 - Exxon announces a US\$73.7 billion deal to buy Mobil, thus creating Exxon-Mobil, the largest company on the planet.

Ibrahim Hanna, the last native speaker of Mlahsö, dies in Qamishli, Syria, making the language effectively extinct. In that same year, the last native speaker of related Bijil Neo-Aramaic dies in Jerusalem.

1999

Kosovo War.

Y2K preparation was a major event in 1999 both in actual events and in media over-reporting.

January 1 - Euro currency introduced.

March 24 - NATO launches air strikes in Federal Republic of Yugoslavia which was refusing to sign a peace treaty. This marks the first time NATO attacked a sovereign country.

May 20 - Bluetooth announced.

June 8 - The government of Colombia announces it will include the estimated value of the country's illegal drug crops, exceeding half a billion US dollars, in its gross national product.

July 16 - Off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, a plane piloted by John F. Kennedy Jr. crashes with his wife Carolyn Bessette Kennedy and her sister Lauren Bessette on board. All three are killed in the crash.

July 25 - Lance Armstrong wins his first Tour de France.

August 17 - A 7.4-magnitude earthquake strikes Istanbul and northwestern Turkey, killing more than 17,000 and injuring 44,000. This earthquake was the first of a long series of unrelated but frequent earthquakes throughout the world during the years 1999 and 2000.

October 12 - The human population of the world surpassed six billion.

October 31 - Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran Church leaders sign the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, ending a centuries-old doctrinal dispute over the nature of faith and salvation.

November 30 - In Seattle, Washington, the first major mobilization of the anti-globalization

movement catches police unprepared and forces the cancellation of the opening ceremonies of the WTO Meeting of 1999 (protests end on December 3).

December 20 - Macau is handed over to the People's Republic of China by Portugal.

December 31 - The Panama Canal is transferred to Panamanian control.

Honda Insight is the first hybrid-fuel automobile imported into the United States.

2000

January 1 - Millennium celebrations take place throughout the world. Y2K passes without the serious, widespread computer failures and malfunctions that had been predicted.

February 6 - Tarja Halonen is elected the first Finnish female president.

April 25 - The State of Vermont passes Bill HB847, legalizing Civil Unions for same-sex couples.

October 5 - President Slobodan Milošević leaves office after widespread demonstrations throughout Serbia and the withdrawal of Russian support.

October 11 - 250 million gallons of coal sludge spill in Martin County, Kentucky. Considered a greater environmental disaster than the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

2001

February 20 - 2001 UK foot and mouth crisis begins.

August 6 - : George W. Bush is informed in his President's Daily Brief that Osama bin Laden is determined to strike targets within the United States and that the FBI believed activity consistent with preparations for hijacking US airplanes was underway.

September 11 - Almost 3,000 killed in the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attack on the World Trade Center in New York City, The Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and rural Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

October 2 - Bankruptcy of Swissair.

October 23 - Apple Computer releases the now famous iPod.

October 25 - Microsoft releases Windows XP.

November 10 - China is admitted to the World Trade Organization after 15 years of negotiations.

November 30 - Beatle George Harrison dies after a long battle with cancer.

Jim Collins publishes the book "Good to Great."

2002

January 9 - The United States Department of Justice announces it is going to pursue a criminal investigation of Enron.

January 17 - Eruption of Mount Nyiragongo in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, displacing an estimated 400,000 people.

March 19 - US Attack on Afghanistan: Operation Anaconda ends (started on March 1) after killing 500 Taliban and al Qaeda fighters with 11 allied troop fatalities.

May 12 - Former President Jimmy Carter arrives in Cuba for a five-day visit with Fidel Castro becoming the first President of the United States, in or out of office, to visit the island since Castro's 1959 revolution.

May 22 - American civil rights movement: 16th Street Baptist Church bombing: A jury in Birmingham, Alabama convicts former Ku Klux Klan member Bobby Frank Cherry of the 1963 murders of four girls.

June 4 - Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh ride in the gold state coach from Buckingham Palace to St. Paul's Cathedral for a special service marking the Queen's 50 years on the throne. In New York, the Empire State Building is lit in purple for her honor.

September 2 - The opening of the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development, successor of the 1972 Conference on the Human Environment, 1983 World Commission on Environment and Development, and the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development.

November 13 - The oil tanker Prestige sinks off the Galician coast and causes a huge oil spill.

2003

January 1 - Luíz Inácio Lula Da Silva becomes the 37th President of Brazil.

January 30 - Iraq disarmament crisis: The leaders of Britain, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Hungary, Poland, Denmark, and the Czech Republic release a statement, the letter of the eight, demonstrating support for the United States' plans for an invasion of Iraq.

February 1 - The Space Shuttle Columbia disintegrates over Texas upon reentry, killing all seven astronauts onboard.

March 12 - Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić assassinated in Belgrade.

March 12 - WHO issues a global alert on SARS.

March 20 - 2003 Iraq war: Land troops from United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Poland invade Iraq.

April 14 - Human Genome Project successfully completed with 99% of the human genome sequenced to 99.99% accuracy.

May 4-10 - A major severe weather outbreak spawned more tornadoes than any week in U.S. history. 393 tornadoes were reported in 19 states.

June 1 - The People's Republic of China begins filling the reservoir behind the massive Three Gorges Dam, raising the water level near the dam over 100 meters.

August 10 - The highest temperature ever recorded in the UK - 38.1°C (100.6°F) at Gravesend in Kent and Kew Botanic Gardens, London. It is the first time the UK has recorded a temperature over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

August 14 - Widespread power outage affects northeast United States and Canada.

September 10 - Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh is stabbed in a Stockholm department store and dies the next day.

September 28 - A power failure affected all of Italy except Sardinia, cutting service to more than 56 million people.

October 24 - Concorde makes its last commercial flight, bringing the era of airliner supersonic travel to a close, at least for the time being.

October 25 - Cedar Fire begins in San Diego County burning 280,000 acres (1,100 km²), 2,232 homes and killing 14.

December 13 - Saddam Hussein, former President of Iraq, is captured in Tikrit by the U.S. 4th Infantry Division.

December 26 - A massive earthquake devastates southeastern Iran. Over 40,000 people are reported to have been killed in the city of Bam.

2004

February 3 - The CIA admits that there was no imminent threat from weapons of mass destruction before the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

February 13 - Scientists in South Korea announce the cloning of 30 human embryos.

March 11 - Simultaneous explosions on rush hour trains in Madrid kill 190 people.

March 19 - The UN launches a corruption investigation due to the scandal over its Iraqi Oil for Food program.

March 28 - The first ever South Atlantic Hurricane makes landfall in South Brazil on the state of Santa Catarina, the Hurricane is dubbed Hurricane Catarina.

April 22 - The last coal mine in France closes, ending nearly 300 years of coal mining.

April 28 - Abuse of prisoners at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq is revealed on the television show 60

Minutes II.

July 25 - Over 100,000 opponents to Israel's unilateral disengagement plan of 2004 participate in a human chain from Gush Katif, to the Western Wall, Jerusalem (90 kilometers).

Four hurricanes and one tropical storm kill 3200 people total in Haiti, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, Venezuela, Dominican Republic and US.

October 20 - Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono becomes the first directly-elected President of Indonesia.

October 31 - Leftist candidate Tabaré Vázquez is elected President of Uruguay.

December 8 - The biggest Chinese PC producer Lenovo announces its plan to purchase IBM's global PC business, making it the third largest world PC maker after Dell and Hewlett-Packard.

December 26 - The strongest earthquake in 40 years originates from the Indian Ocean off the west coast of Sumatra island in Indonesia, measuring 9.3 on the Richter Scale and creating tsunami waves that sweep across much of the coastlines of Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, the Maldives, Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. At least 290,000 people from South Asia to as far as Somalia in Africa are confirmed to be dead. TSUNAMI.

December 31 - The official opening of Taipei 101, the current tallest skyscraper in the world, standing at a height of 508 meters or 1,676 feet.

2005

Chevron launches www.willyoujoinus.com, a website to discuss and inform about current energy challenges, that calls upon scientists and educators, politicians and policymakers, environmentalists, leaders of industry and individuals to be part of reshaping the next era of energy.

January 20 - George W. Bush is inaugurated in Washington, D.C. for his second term as 43rd President of the United States.

January 20 - Ireland completes metrification. Today only the United States, Liberia, and Myanmar have not officially switched to the metric system (although Liberia and Myanmar use it in practice) and the United Kingdom is currently in the process of conversion.

February 10 - Saudi Arabia holds its first ever elections for municipal authorities, in which only men are allowed to vote.

February 16 - The Kyoto Protocol comes into effect, without the support of the United States and Australia.

March 1 - The U.S. Supreme Court rules the death penalty unconstitutional for juveniles who committed their crimes under age 18.

April 2 - Pope John Paul II dies.

April 27 - The Superjumbo jet aircraft Airbus A380 made its first flight from Toulouse.

May 17 - Kuwaiti women granted right to vote.

June 5 - Switzerland votes to join the Schengen area and to allow same-sex partnerships.

June 30 - Spain joins Belgium and the Netherlands in permitting same-sex marriage.

July 20 - Canada's Civil Marriage Act, legalizing same-sex marriage, receives Royal Assent.

August 17 - The first forced evacuation of settlers, as part of Israel's unilateral disengagement plan, starts.

August 29 - At least 1,300 are killed, and severe damage is caused along the U.S. Gulf Coast, as Hurricane Katrina strikes the Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama coastal areas. Within hours, levees give way and New Orleans is flooded.

September 19 - North Korea agrees to stop building nuclear weapons in exchange for aid and cooperation.

September 27 - Michaëlle Jean, born in Haiti, becomes the 27th Governor General of Canada, and the first black person to hold that position.

September 30 - The Parliament of Catalonia passes with 120 plus votes and 15 against, the Project of New Catalan Statute of Autonomy, proclaiming in its article 1, "Catalonia is a nation".

October 8 - An earthquake in Kashmir kills about 80,000 people.

October 22 - Tropical Storm Alpha forms making the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season the most active on record.

November 8 - French President Jacques Chirac declares a state of emergency on the 12th day of the French civil unrest.

November 13 - Andrew Stimpson, a 25-year old British man is reported as the first person proven to have been 'cured' of HIV.


November 21 - The Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon announces his resignation from Likud and his intention to form a new party devoted to peace in the region, Kadima, and asks the President of Israel to call a general election.

November 22 - Angela Dorothea Merkel is elected as Chancellor of Germany, becoming the first woman to lead Germany since it became a modern nation state in 1871.

November 23 - Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf will be the next the President of Liberia. She is the first elected female President of an African country.

December 1 - South Africa becomes the fifth country in the world where same-sex marriages are recognized.

December 2 - Kenneth Boyd becomes the 1000th person to be executed in the USA since the re-

introduction of capital punishment in 1976. 



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