

Typhoon Haiyan devastates millions in the Philippines

by Madison Prestine

News Editor

On Nov. 8, 14 million lives were directly affected by Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. At least 1.8 million children have been separated from their parents according to the Huffington Post. As of Nov. 28, officials reported 5,560 deaths and 1,757 missing. So far, three mass graveyards have been constructed to dispose of the bodies. However, thousands of corpses still line the streets and desperate family members search for their loved ones amongst the ruins and wreckage.

In the past month, countries around the world have rallied together to provide medical relief and services for the struggling population. Britain immediately pledged its assistance after the severity of the storm was determined, and the United Kingdom Disaster Coordination Team (UNDAC) arrived shortly after the storm. Russia and the United States were also among the first countries to promise aid. According to the New York Times, the European Commission pledged 4 million dollars.

Many countries rushed to the Philippines aid. In addition to Britain and the United Nations, the United States pledged an initial 20 million dollars in aid to the country. Australia supplied 30 million dollars, the



TYPHOON HAIYAN: The destruction in the town of Tacloban covers the streets

United Kingdom 16 million dollars, and 10 million dollars each from Japan and United Arab Emirates.

China, the closest geographically to the Philippines among the countries offering aid, supplied a mere 1.6 million, less than the Swedish furniture store, Ikea, promised according to UNICEF. China bumped up its original offer of 100,000 dollars after harsh criticism from the rest of the world.

Professor Jesse Anttila-Hughes, a development economics professor at the University of San Francisco, warns, "When the funding dries up, the rebuilding effort still needs to be taken care of." Immediate help and aid is abundant, as seen in instances such as Haiti in 2010, what fails is "what you actually need...a more comprehensive view, from the very beginning" according to Jake Johnston, a research associate at the Centre for Economic and Policy Research. There must be a plan for after the chaos has ended and the media has departed; it will take years for the country to recover completely.

To donate to the typhoon survivors visit sites such as UNICEF, Mercy Corps, and the Samaritan's Purse.

(Sources: Huffington Post, New York Times, PBS, Inter Press Service, USA Today)

Country of the month: Canada

by Rachel Salisbury

Opinion Editor

As a result of recent events concerning Toronto's mayor Rob Ford, who threatened to kill an employee and admitted to smoking crack cocaine, Canada has recently been the subject of many jokes. The country is often referred to as "America's Hat" and known by many for its apparently massive supply of maple syrup and ice. These jokes do mostly come from true oddities in Canada's culture, but many of them lead to misconceptions about the country and mask Canada's true, more interesting history.

First of all, Canada is huge. Comprised of 9.98 million square kilometers and possessing the world's longest coast of 202 thousand kilometers, Canada is the second largest country in the world in terms of landmass, second only to Russia. Despite the country's vastness, the population of Canada is smaller than that of California. In comparison to California's nearly 40 million people, Canada only surpassed 35 million people in 2013.



TORONTO: A view of Toronto's skyline with the tallest building in Toronto, the CN tower.

Contrary to popular belief, Canada's biggest exports are not the things it is most famous for, such as hockey players or meese. Instead, some of Canada's biggest exports include crude oil, cars parts, gold, liquefied petroleum gases, coal, helicopters, chemical fertilizers, wheat, and lumber.

Famous Canadians include Avril Lavigne, Shania Twain, Neil Young, Jim Carrey, Keanu Reeves, and, most famously, Justin Bieber. Canadians also take pride in their hockey teams, for half of the NHL's players were born in Canada according to Bleacher Report. Wayne Gretzky and the San Jose Sharks' Joe Thornton are only two of many hockey legends from Canada.

Canada is also home to many tourist locations, both natural and man-made. The longest street in the world is Yonge Street, a section of which goes through Toronto. Not far from that is the CN Tower, the world's fifth tallest free-standing structure. A much stranger attraction is The Hotel de Glace in Quebec, which is constructed each year from 400 tons of ice and 12,000 tons of snow each winter, only to melt away again each summer. Some of Canada's beautiful natural landmarks include the Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick and Lake Louise in Alberta.

(Sources: 1st Contact, National Geographic, World Bank, hikebiketavel, toronto.ca, Bleacher Report)



CANADIAN FLAG: The famous red and white maple leaf flag of Canada.

The most populated Canadian city, with 5 million people, is Toronto, Ontario. Toronto is the fifth largest city in North America. Even though one-seventh of Canada's population lives in Toronto, Canada's capital is its sixth most populated city, Ottawa. Still, Toronto is the world's second most business-competitive city and is home to PATH, the world's largest underground pedestrian system.

N. Korea kills 80

by Violet Wallerstein

World Editor

On Nov. 3, North Korea allegedly executed eighty people. Supposedly, ten thousand citizens watched as authorities covered eight of the victim's faces, tied them to poles, and opened fire with machine guns until "the bodies were hard to recognize." Their reported crimes were watching smuggled South Korean programs, having pornography, prostitution, or owning a Bible. The families of those who were executed were reportedly taken to prison camps. Authorities gathered the large crowd in a sports stadium in Wonsan, one of the cities North Korea is trying to refurbish in order to attract foreign investment and boost their economy.

North Korean defectors, as well as the South Korean paper JoongAng Ilbo, reported that the killings occurred in seven cities throughout the country, including the eight in Wonsan. None of the executions were carried out in the capital city of Pyongyang, which has the largest following of loyal citizens.

Another defector-run website, North Korea Intellectual Solidarity, had sources claiming there were plans a few months ago for waves of executions. The website also said, "the regime is obviously afraid of potential changes in people's mindsets and is pre-emptively trying to scare people off." This is the harshest act Kim Jong Un has committed.

There was another reported execution in August. Allegedly, Un sentenced the Unhasu Orchestra and the Wangjaesan Light Music Band, including Un's girlfriend, to death for making and selling pornographic videos.

The charges worthy of capital punishment in North Korea include conspiring against the government, treason, and terrorism; however, executions like these are reported to occur regularly in order to keep citizens in line especially with cell phone use and religious activism. Watching foreign movies or television is still a serious offense, especially those coming from South Korea, but with advancing technology, more DVDs and flash drives are being smuggled into the country.

(Sources: Huffington Post, La Times, Sky News, NY Daily)

Wulff is on trial

by Lauren Fredericks

Web Editor

For the first time in German history, a former German president is being put on trial. Accused of illegally accepting favors while he was the governor of Lower Saxony, Christian Wulff's case began on Nov 14. He stepped down from his position as Germany's president in February of 2012 when prosecutors worked to remove his immunity from prosecution. However, Wulff denies the charges against him.

The issue began in October of 2008 when Wulff and his friend David Groenewold, a film producer, attended the Munich Oktoberfest. During their trip, Wulff allowed Groenewold to pay for his expenses totaling nearly 1,000 dollars. In exchange, Wulff agreed to sway the head of a major electronics company to finance a project Groenewold was working on.

When the news of this bribe got out, Wulff phoned the editor of the German newspaper, Bild, who was planning on publishing an article on the issue, and threatened him. Neither the prosecution nor the defense wanted a large-scale trial, but Wulff, who was given the chance to pay 27,000 dollars to settle the case, refused, insisting he was innocent.

Since the incident, the prosecution has gathered over forty witnesses, including the former president's employees and bodyguards. Anyone who gave or purchased items or trips for Wulff has been questioned, no matter how small the item. The prosecution has also gathered more than 1,000 documents in preparation for the trial.

Although the president's position in Germany is rather symbolic, as it is the chancellor with the majority of the power, Wulff's trial is a major event in Germany and is expected to last well into 2014. Upon entering the H courthouse, Wulff insisted that he had, "always behaved correctly," and he was certain the case would end in his favor.

(Sources: New York Times, Spiegel Online, DW.com)

Women's rights take a hit in Egypt

by Setareh Raygani

Web Editor

A current survey by the Thomson Reuters Foundation ranks Egypt as the lowest of 22 Arab states in the area of women's rights, while the Comoros Islands placed top in the survey. The study found sexual harassment, high rates of female genital mutilation, and a growth in conservative Islamist groups contributed to the low ranking.

The poll surveyed more than 330 gender experts in 21 Arab League states as well as Syria. It is the foundation's third annual study focusing on women's rights since the Arab Uprisings in 2011.

Iraq ranked second-worst after Egypt, followed by Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. The Comoros, where women hold 20 percent of the ministerial positions, is followed at the top of the rankings by Oman, Kuwait, Jordan and Qatar. The poll asked experts to assess factors such as violence against women, reproductive rights, treatment of women within the family and women's role in politics and the economy. Egypt's discriminatory laws and a spike in sex trafficking contributed to its place at the bottom of the ranking of 22 Arab states.

"There are whole villages on the outskirts of Cairo and elsewhere where the bulk of economic activity is based on trafficking in women and forced marriages," said Zahra Radwan of the US-based rights group Global Fund for Women. However, sexual harassment was cited as the main factor in the survey.

A UN report in April said 99.3 percent of women and girls in Egypt had been subjected to sexual harassment. "The social acceptability of everyday sexual harassment affects every woman in Egypt regardless of age, professional or socio-economic background, marriage status, dress or behaviour," said Noora Flinkman of Egyptian campaign group HarassMap.

Meanwhile, the survey also said Iraq is now more dangerous for women than it was under Saddam Hussein's regime, with women disproportionately affected by the violence of the past decade. On

the other hand, Saudi Arabia ranked poorly on women's involvement in politics, workplace discrimination, freedom of movement and property rights. But the conservative country scored better than many other Arab states when it came to access to education, health care, reproductive rights, and gender violence



all photos courtesy wikicommons

VOTERS: Egyptian women are waiting to vote on referendum the after the 2011 revolution.

Egyptian women played a central role in the country's revolution but activists say the rising influence of religious parties, culminating in the election of Muslim Brotherhood leader Mohamed Morsi as president, was a major setback for women's rights. In the end, Morsi was toppled in a military takeover in July after mass protests against his rule, but hopes for greater freedoms have been tempered by the daily dangers facing women on the streets.

(Sources: Al Jazeera, BBC, VOA)