

News For Thought

China, the world's leading motorcycle producer, has begun banning motorcycles in urban areas. Currently, nearly 100 large and medium-size cities, including Beijing, Guangzhou



and Xi'an, ban or limit the use of motorcycles to curb increasing air pollution, accident rates and crime. Analysts estimate that China will not have an urban market for motorcycles by 2010 if more cities continue to ban their use. Since 1994, cities like Shanghai, Tianjin and Nantong have stopped issuing licenses to new motorcycles. In Shanghai, many motorcycle shops have been shut down recently.

In 2002, the city of Guangzhou (formerly Canton), shortened the service life of motorcycles to 8 or 10 years from the previous 13 years, and is offering cash rewards to owners who discard their bikes before their "end of life" expires. Within 3 months, the city will begin phasing out motorcycles, leading up to a total ban by 2007. The Chinese government is following a "no encouragement and no support" policy towards the motorcycle industry, despite the fact that for the seventh year in a row China has produced more motorcycles than any other country, 13 million annually, with more than 3 million exported to foreign markets every year. (China Business Weekly)

WEIRD NEWS OF THE MONTH: SADDAM'S MOTORCYCLE LOOTED

The man who swung the first blow when Saddam Hussein's infamous statue was toppled from the middle of Firdos Square in Baghdad has been arrested for looting the tyrant's motorcycle from a museum. Armed with a sledgehammer, Khadom Sharif Hassan -- Iraq's weightlifting champion -- started pounding away at the statue last April, to cheers from the jubilant crowd and praise from President George W. Bush, who watched the action unfold on the White House television. "They got it down," the president said approvingly. But today the beefy hero is languishing in jail, accused of looting Baghdad's National Army Museum of one of the former dictator's most treasured exhibits: the 50-year-old black Norton motorcycle on which the young Saddam claimed he fled to Syria in 1959 after a botched American-sponsored assassination attempt on Iraq's then prime minister, Gen Abd al-Karim Qasim, who a year earlier had overthrown the British-backed monarchy to seize power. Though the plan failed, it sparked the Ba'ath party's rise to power.

Mr. Hassan explained that he felt he had a legitimate claim to the bike, which until the looting frenzy had stood on a pedestal in the museum, but was later found in his workshop during a raid by Iraq's special crimes squad. As the chief motorbike mechanic for Saddam's elder son Uday, Hassan had spent countless hours lavishing care on the Norton. What's more, he said, Uday used to cherry-pick the best motorcycles that he imported into Iraq, paying him just a fraction of their value. Hassan, 50, who is married with three children, said he had looked after more than 100 motorbikes belonging to Uday for 16 years, working on them round the clock. "I would be ordered to tune a bike at 3 a.m. if Uday decided after a night out that he wanted to ride the next day," he said. "His favorite was a red Honda 750cc bike which he used for jumping because he was tall and strong enough to drive a big bike."

Uday preferred Japanese models to American Harley-Davidsons, Hassan said, but also liked a BMW that was a present from King Abdullah of Jordan. When Uday was hospitalized from an accident, he ordered scores of his motorbikes to be lined up outside his window so that he could admire them.

Officials from the serious crimes squad have described the case against Hassan as "open and shut," but from the special police headquarters in Baghdad, he denies stealing the bike. "I bought the Norton from a looter," he said. "I knew he had stolen it, but I had a duty to take it and look after it. I love that bike. Of course, I hate Saddam, but what he did wasn't the bike's fault. It is a special thing in Iraq's history." www.aimncom.com

Although 'Justice for All' came out of motorcyclists' reaction to a case in South Dakota, it's important to remember that inadequate sentencing is an issue nationwide," said Edward Moreland, Vice President of AMA Government Relations. "That's why we're going to Sturgis -- to bring this message to thousands of motorcyclists, who can then take action in their home states." Sturgis rallygoers can visit the AMA's Justice for All information center at the Sturgis Music Festival grounds, located one block off Main Street at the corner of 2nd and Lazelle, from Tuesday, August 10 through Friday, August 13. Card-carrying AMA members will have access to special parking (as space is available), as well as a 10% discount at the Sturgis Music Festival's food court and access to the Sturgis Music Festival VIP area. For more information about Justice for All, or to order a Justice for All kit, visit www.AMADirectlink.com/justice, e-mail justice@amadirectlink.com, or call 800-AMA-JOIN

**Blackwater
Tattoo & Piercing**

5608 Bus. Hwy. 51 S.
Schofield, WI 54476
715-241-7999

Hours:
T-F SAT
Noon-8 Noon-6

www.blackwatertattoo.com

justice, e-mail justice@amadirectlink.com, or call 800-AMA-JOIN

Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney signed House Bill 206, an act allowing adult motorcyclists the "freedom of choice" to not wear a helmet while riding in a parade. HB 206, sponsored by Representative Demetrius Atsalis, provides an exception to the state's mandatory helmet law that "No protective head gear be required if a motorcyclist is participating in a properly permitted public parade and is 18 years or older, explained Paul Cote, Legislative Director for the Massachusetts Motorcycle Association (MMA), adding that "This is the fifth motorcyclists' bill passed in the last four years!" The new law is scheduled to take effect in 90 days, which lands right before the MMA's "STORM the State House" lobbying day on Thursday, May 20th. MMA leaders have already begun securing "parade permits" from the cities of Somerville and Boston, so the "STORM" could be one of the first helmet "choice" permitted parades; riding to the State House to thank legislators and lobby for other bills still pending, including Senate Bill 1363 -- the full "helmet choice" for all adult riders.

www.aimncom.com

THUNDER VALLEY CYCLES--PARTS & ACCESSORIES--EXIT 124 ON HWY 41

FATHERS DAY SPECIAL

\$1,000.00 OFF IN STOCK MASTIFFS

\$10.00 OFF TIRES

\$5.00 OFF OIL CHANGES

ALL INDIAN MERCHANDISE AND APPAREL ON CLEARANCE

Big Dog MOTORCYCLES

THUNDER VALLEY CYCLE
FORMERLY KNOWN AS
INDIAN MOTORCYCLE OF OSHKOSH
6156 Jackson St., Oshkosh WI
920/236-8793

PERFORMANCE • POWER • BIG DOG MOTORCYCLES •

HARDTAILS
American Motorcycle
Parts & Repair
Specializing in Harley Davidson

Sales • Service • Parts
American Made Motorcycles
(320) 251-0545

7285 Cty. Rd. 75
St. Cloud, MN 56301

JOHANN'S
We Sell Harley-Davidson
Items & A Full Line
Of Leather Goods

BAR & GRILL
715-228-2500 Steve & Pete Johannes

COLOMA
WALTONIA
39 N B
County "B" • Richland
Wisconsin 54930

RAY'S HANDY WIPES

- Shop Toweling • Dairy Wipes •
- Body Shop Toweling • Industrial Toweling •
- Restaurant Uses • Dispensers •

(in Convenient Rolls or Sheets)

Rubber carpeted mat 3' x 5' colors available
Rubber anti-fatigue mats 2' x 3' also by the foot

Hwy 151 Calumetville, WI
920-579-9978