



Top Stories



Pakistan lifts house arrest of former PM Benazir Bhutto

Candidates make campaign stop at trade fairs ahead of 2008 Taiwan Presidential Election



Politicians and government officials stopped off and answered questions at two trade shows yesterday ahead of the 2008 Taiwan Presidential Election campaign.

Featured story

Dollar General chain in US recalls sunglasses, toy cars



Products delivered to the Dollar General store in the U.S. have been recalled after they were said to contain "excessive amounts of lead" in the yellow paint.

Wikipedia Current Events

The Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger declares a state of emergency to clean up an oil spill in San Francisco Bay caused

Wikipedia Current Events

by an oil tanker hitting the San Francisco Bay Bridge on Wednesday.

- At least 40 people die in Mogadishu in heavy fighting between Ethiopian forces and Somalian Islamist insurgents.
- Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army chief Joseph Kony tells peace negotiator Norbert Mao that Vincent Otti, his former deputy, is not dead as rumored, but instead under house arrest for espionage.
- Iraqi insurgency: The United States Army releases five Iranian suspects who had been arrested in Iraq.
- The Environment Agency of England and Wales issues eight severe flood warnings for eastern England with residents ordered to evacuate from 7,500 homes in Great Yarmouth.
- Benazir Bhutto is placed under house arrest hours before a proposed mass rally against the 2007 Pakistani state of emergency. Over 5000 supporters of Pakistan People's Party arrested to avert rally.
- Benazir Bhutto is released from house arrest bringing to an end a day long stand-off between the former prime minister and security forces.

Muslim hair stylist sues hairdresser over alleged discrimination

Bushra Noah is a British-born

Muslim hair stylist who is currently undertaking legal action against the owner of a hair salon for alleged religious discrimination. Noah is suing London hair salon owner Sarah Desroiser. Desroiser who runs a salon in King's Cross, has said that she would not accept Noah as a stylist if Noah's hair was covered. Noah, like many devout Muslims keeps her hair covered in public places, believing it to be immodest otherwise.

Noah claims that her headscarf is a fundamental part of her religious beliefs and that wearing the scarf would not interfere in her carrying out the job at all. Desrosiers said that it is not discrimination but rather that "the essence of my line of work is the display of hair. To me, it's absolutely basic that people should be able to see the stylist's hair. It has nothing to do with religion. It is just unfortunate that for her covering her hair symbolises religion." Desosiers added that she was not a racist and had worked with Muslims in the past.

Noah claims that the state of her own hair is irrelevant to her ability to style others hair.

The last few years have seen a string of similar cases in Britain. Last year, there was a case over whether a British Airways employee could wear a prominent cross, and another case in which a teacher argued that she had a right to wear a Jilbāb (a traditional Islamic dress that covers almost the entire body) in the classroom.

In that case, the teacher lost in the High Court.

Finland considers tougher gun laws

Finland is considering toughening gun legislation in light of this week's Jokela school shooting. Nine people, including the gunman, were killed when Pekka-Eric Auvinen, 18, went on a shooting spree at his local school.

Until now, Finland has actively resisted plans for all European Union member states to limit gun ownership to persons aged 18 and over. Currently, the law stipulates that Finns may apply for a gun permit at age 15.

However, Anne Holmlund, Finnish interior minister, told reporters today that "Finland has changed its position to the EU firearms directive." Holmlund told the press that the intention is now to raise the age for ownership to 18, and require those aged 15-18 to be under parental supervision when carrying or using a firearm.

Prime minister of Finland Matti Vanhanen had earlier commented that the shooting would likely cause a change in Finnish gun control policy, but Holmlund denied a direct connection. "There is no direct link (to the school shooting). ... It is important that our new position is clear," Holmlund said.

"We were the only EU member country that was willing to keep its regulations untouched and it was obvious we would be left alone." She added.

"As all other EU countries are ready to accept the age limit of 18 years for the acquisition of firearms ... Finland does not want to oppose the said amendment to

the directive under the circumstances."

"The cabinet is ready to agree on a proposal which says that those under 18 years old can use a gun only under parental or adult guidance," commented cabinet spokeswoman Sanna Kangasharju.

Ministry spokesman Ilkka Salmi agreed that a potential change in legislation was being considered months beforehand, but added that, "It's obvious that this kind of tragic incident has probably sped up the decision."

Auvinen had obtained a license for his .22 caliber handgun via a local shooting club just weeks prior to the attack, on October 19. He opened fire on students and staff shortly before lunch break was due to start, killing five students and two staff members with the gun, which he called 'Catherine' in internet discussions, before turning it on himself. He later died in hospital. There is also evidence he attempted to set the building on fire.

Police have commented that he had apparently acted with intent to kill as many as possible, but selected his victims at random. The day prior to the incident, he posted a video on YouTube announcing his intentions. Police have also recovered a suicide note that said that he hated society.

In related news, police are investigating after an internet posting claimed Kirkkoharju middle school in Kirkkonummi was going to be the subject of another attack. Police say they are treating the incident as a "bad joke".

Finnish gun ownership per capita is the third highest in the world, due largely to a long tradition of

hunting sports in the country, but fatal attacks are exceedingly rare. Around 13% of the 5.2 million inhabitants own a gun, with only the United States and Yemen having higher levels of gun ownership.

Former Oral Roberts University Regent member speaks out

Harry McNevin, explained in a recent interview that he quit the Board of Regents at Oral Roberts University in disgust in 1987 when he learned that Richard Roberts, Oral Roberts and other Roberts family dipped into the school's endowment fund for personal expenses.

McNevin noted that he resigned after the board practically "rubber-stamped" the "use of millions in endowment money to buy a Beverly Hills property so that Oral Roberts could have a West Coast office and house." In addition he said a country club membership was purchased for the home.

The Associated Press also cited Patti Roberts, Richard's first wife, who wrote in her 1983 memoir, "Ashes to Gold," about expensive gifts including a blue Mercedes as a Christmas gift for Richard, a Jaguar for her, Italian suits and Palm Beach vacations.

Previously the Roberts were accused of illegal political and financial wrongdoing, which forced the president to step down from his position.

A United States Senate committee is currently investigating six major ministries over their finances. Three of these ministries are headed by members of ORU's Board of Regents.

Recently Tulsa World wrote that Oral Roberts University raised \$8.8

million starting in 2001 for a new student center, but construction has begun and officials said "the school has used some of the money for scholarships and operations." Tulsa World requested documents about the ORU student center, but the "university released details but not records about money raised for the center."

Pakistan lifts house arrest of former PM Benazir Bhutto

The government of Pakistan late on Friday has withdrawn the earlier detention notice and house arrest of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Police had served her with a temporary detention notice and ordered her to serve 30 days of house arrest. Bhutto was not detained by the police.

The move came as Bhutto planned to attend a protest she organised today in Rawalpindi. She was stopped by troops who were ordered to surround and block off her home located in Islamabad. They then served her with a 30 day detention when she attempted to cross the blockade.

"I am trying to get out, as I want to go to Rawalpindi. I am in front of my house in my car. I have not been arrested and no arrest warrant has been served on me. Large numbers of policemen are present here and there are barb wire barricades and blockades in front of me," said Bhutto.

Police claimed that they are protecting Bhutto from a possible suicide bomb attack because "some suicide attackers have come to Islamabad," added Bhutto.

In Rawalpindi, protesters clashed with police who were enforcing a ban against public demonstrations.

Bhutto has publicly announced that she will head a protest against the country's president, Pervez Musharraf, in an attempt to get him to resign as head of the country's military. A protest march from Lahore to Islamabad is scheduled for early next week.

Australia completes inquest for victims of Garuda Indonesia Flight 200

Ron Cahill, a Canberra resident and chief coroner of the Australian Capital Territory, has concluded the inquest into the deaths of three Australian nationals who were amongst the 21 people killed in the crash of Garuda Indonesia Flight 200. The Boeing 737-400 aircraft overshot a runway at Yogyakarta, Indonesia on March 7.

The inquest indicated that Alison Sudrajat, Brice Steele and Mark Scott died from injuries sustained in the crash. Cahill commented that this finding would also apply to the deaths of two other Australians on the flight; the remaining fatal injuries were sustained by Indonesians. The inquest was opened at the request of families of the three victims involved in this inquest after the repatriation of their bodies.

Cahill agreed fully with a recent report issued by the Indonesian National Transportation Safety Committee, which indicated that the pilot-in-command attempted to land the aircraft at extreme speed despite fifteen automated cockpit warnings and a request from the co-pilot to perform a go-around. He went on to suggest that the pilot should be prosecuted over his mistakes.

"I recommend that CASA and Air Services Australia and all Australian airlines review the

report to consider whether any of the safety deficiencies identified have relevance to Australian aviation operations and therefore need to be addressed," he said.

He went on to describe concerns with how these deficiencies are being addressed in Indonesia: "It is of some concern that the Indonesian regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, did not provide the National Transportation Safety Committee with details of safety action to address the recommendations which were in the draft report."

Alison Sudrajat's daughter had this to say in light of the findings: "It was very informative and it was nice to know what exactly happened, because he went into quite some detail about everything."

"It was quite comforting, but it's not going to bring anyone back."

2007 Master Forum on Walking in Taiwan warms up for the Taiwan Walking Day

Before the "Taiwan Walking Day", Sports Affairs Council of Executive Yuan (SAC Taiwan) held "2007 Master forum on Walking" at Da-Hsin Campus of Chinese Culture University today. This forum invited walking experts from Japan, Belgium, and USA to share experiences on promotion of walking. Chi Cheng, spokeswoman of Taiwan Walking Day, thanked SAC Taiwan for the promotion of public sports especially walking, and she appealed forum participants integrating sports into people's life to keep in healthy.

At the keynotes, Luc Henau, former president of International Marching League Walking Association (IMLWA), focused on

the relationship between soul, spirit, society, and body. He pointed out the importance on walking, participation structure between different ages, and effective on social and neighborhood interactions by glancing the history of the IMLWA.

In the part of "Mr. Pedometer" W. Ron Sutton, he explained some successful cases of pedometer counting in their life and described some advances of walking. Finally, Japanese "10,000 steps a day" expert Yoshiro Hatano analyzed some statistics to emphasize the importance between health and sports. "Some cardiovascular diseases were originated with bad habits, nutrition problems, and doing less sports." Hatano said.

After the speech, Min-yu Wu (General Manager of Taiwan Post Co., Ltd.) and Jongher Yang (Commissioner of SAC Taiwan) announced the release of "2007 Walking Stamp", and awarded "2007 Recreation Sports Stamp" to the panelists (Henau, Sutton, and Hatano) for the end of this forum.

Dollar General chain in US recalls sunglasses, toy cars

Dollar General is the latest American company to recall unsafe Chinese-made products. All products affected by the recall contain "excessive amounts of lead" in the yellow paint.

The U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission has just recalled "pull and release" toy cars, as well as yellow children's size sunglasses.

Products affected are:

- a four pack of Super Wheels (UPC #400016576344)
- a two pack of Super Racer cars (UPC # 883788965002, 380000)
- "Time to Play Every Day" Fashion Sunglasses (UPC #400007860896,

51,000 units)

The car toys were sold at the chain's stores from April through October; the glasses were sold from March 25 through to October 2007.

Affected products should be taken from children immediately. Dollar General will provide full refunds on return.

The Goodlettsville, Tennessee-based price-point retailer chain had 8205 stores, as of June this year.

Baseball teams from Taiwan and Japan battled same day in different places

If the same fixture can be played in different countries same day, today in 2007 BWC and Konami Cup 2007 was the best example of this. Two professional teams battled in Tokyo, but two national teams battled in Taichung.

At the Konami Cup, SK Wyverns easily won by ending early the games against China Stars with 13-0 by SK's aggressive hitting firstly, but in the "Uni-President Lions vs Chunichi Dragons", they battled with a pitching game.

The key factors of errors decided the winner in this game. At the top of 5th inning, it started from Motonobu Tanishige's "hit by pitch", with errors by Uni Lions' third-base man Tilson Brito, reversing the match with 2 RBIs with base full chance by Chunichi Dragons, and Hirokazu Iбата's 1 RBI hit, Dragons finally defeated Lions at home (Japan) with 4-2.

In the same time, Chinese Taipei and Japan National Team battled in Taichung. Pre-sale tickets of this match were unavailable in site. To maintain the honor of the host

(Taiwan, as of Chinese Taipei), Chien-fu Yang battled Junichi Tazawa in the starting pitch. With a aggressive battings led by Tai-shan Chang, 5 hits scored 3 RBIs in the bottom of 6th inning, and the relief pitcher Fu-de Ni successfully closed battings from Japan, Chinese Taipei won Japan with 6-1.

By results at different places, this alternative battle drew with upholding their own home each other.

Other results from 2007 BWC

Group A

USA 2-6 Italy

South Africa 4-7 Spain

Mexico 2-3 Panama

Group B

Thailand 2-18A South Korea

Venezuela 4-7 Australia

Germany 5-15A Netherlands

Canada 3-6 Cuba

Tomorrow's fixtures

2007 BWC

Group A

South Africa vs Mexico

Chinese Taipei vs Spain

Panama vs Italy

Japan vs USA

Group B

Netherlands vs Venezuela

Germany vs Canada

South Korea vs Cuba

Australia vs Thailand

Konami Cup 2007

China Stars vs Chunichi Dragons

Uni-President Lions vs SK Wyverns

Candidates make campaign stop at trade fairs ahead of 2008 Taiwan Presidential Election

Thursday, November 8, two trade shows, namely MEDIPHAR Taipei at the Taipei World Trade Center

and Taipei Audio Video Fair at the The Grand Hotel, opened in Taipei, Taiwan. Some politicians and government officials chose these events as an opportunity to promote their parties and campaign-coalitions ahead of the 2008 Taiwan Presidential Elections.

From the incumbent Pan-Green Coalition, President of the Republic of China Chen Shui-bian, Premier of Republic of China Chang Chun-hsiung, and spokesman for the Executive Yuan Jung-tai Cho visited the two shows successively and were inundated by Taiwanese media. President Chen avoided answering questions on the hot topic of commodities prices, addressing only those about the medical industry development, overseen by Sheng-mao Hou, Minister of Health.

From the Pan-Blue Coalition, 2008 vice-presidential candidate, and former Premier, Vincent Siew participated the opening of the Taipei Audio Video Fair at The Grand Hotel. He criticized on the economy policy and remarked: "The ruling party [DPP] doesn't have a good track record, and some industries weren't be supported in timely manner so that they lost some opportunities. I sincerely hope the government can appropriately assist the audio and video industries in marketing good brands and products to the world."

Also, current Democratic Progressive Party legislator Wang Shih-chien was invited to give a violin performance and sing a Taiwanese song. The events at the Taipei World Trade Center proved to be quite a platform for the candidates running in the 2008 Taiwan Presidential Elections.

Man kills 5 relatives in family massacre in Croatia

Damir Voschion, 46, has reportedly killed five members of his family in Pula, Croatia on Thursday night around 7:00 p.m. CET (UTC+1). They were all killed by gunshots to the head. The killed include Damir's two-month-old nephew, his seven-year-old niece, his brother, sister-in-law and then his father. The massacre took place in the family's home.

Damir turned himself in to police about an hour and confessed to them "I killed them all". The bodies of the family have been transported to the morgue at the Pula General Hospital.

The motive for the massacre is not yet known, but there are theories that it might involve a property dispute between Damir and his brother. Neighbors say that Damir was a violent man and that at one time killed his brother's dog with his bare hands.

Delaware scientists create shortest ever metal to metal bond

Chemists from the University of Delaware, Newark, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, recently reported their preparation of a complex containing two chromium atoms connected by the shortest ever metal-metal bond, 1.8028 Å (0.2 nm) long. The scientists, including Prof. Klaus H. Theopold and graduate student Kevin A. Kreisel, believe the compound contains a quintuple bond, i.e., five bonds between the two chromium atoms.

In general, shorter bonds containing more electrons will be stronger. Although single, double and triple bonds occur in nature, quadruple and quintuple bonds have so far only been found in the

laboratory. The first compound with a quintuple bond was reported in 2005.

To make the complex, the scientists first reacted chromium chloride with a bis(2,6-diisopropylphenyl)diazadiene ligand, which has the structure Ar-N=C-C=N-Ar (Ar is a bulky aryl group). This intermediate dark-green compound was then reduced using KC₈ (potassium metal in graphite) to give the unusual product. The compound crystallises from ether as red/green plates. The quintuple bond between the metals is weakened by some mixing in from antibonding orbitals, reducing the overall bond order to around 4.28. The bond length is 0.026 Å shorter than the previous record, a dichromium complex reported in 1978 by F. Albert Cotton and coworkers, which featured a quadruple bond 1.828" long.

Major protests in Venezuela over proposed constitutional changes

On Wednesday, November 7, 2007, tens of thousands of Venezuelans participated in a march in Caracas to protest President Hugo Chávez's efforts to change the Constitution of Venezuela.

A group of students who had participated in the march were fired upon by masked gunmen as they returned to their university campus in Caracas. "If we do not take action now, we will be condemned to live without democracy under a communist dictator," said a flyer distributed to students.

Chávez supporters were not silent however: "If you light the fuse, be prepared to put it out, because if you don't, we will give you a

beating," said one on state television.

"We will not fall into the trap," said Eleazar Narvaez, head of Central University of Venezuela. "The weapons we use are ideas, not guns."

"Don't allow Venezuela to go down a path that nobody wants to cross," student leader Freddy Guevara told Globovisión.

Protests also occurred in six other cities, and there were violent clashes between students and throwing rocks, and police shooting plastic bullets. Demonstrations occurred in the cities of Mérida, Maracaibo, Puerto la Cruz, San Cristóbal, Barquisimeto and Valencia on Wednesday.

Clashes grew with dozens of students surrounding a building where gunmen were hiding. Armed men arrived later, and chased the students away. Government officials blamed the media for inciting disorder.

Chávez is seeking to enact a number of controversial reforms, but is seeking to submit them for a public approval via a national referendum on December 2. There are concerns that the protests could disrupt the arrangements for the referendum.

The proposed amendments would remove any limits on presidential terms, allow the president to control the Central Bank of Venezuela and enable him to create new provinces governed by his own appointees.

Meat Loaf calls off European tour

American musician Meat Loaf has canceled the remaining dates of

his 2007 European tour on Tuesday. This decision was announced less than a week after the performer prematurely ended a concert in Newcastle upon Tyne.

Earlier reports attributed Meat Loaf's medical problems at Newcastle to a sore throat. This week's announcements indicate that the rocker sustained a vocal cord cyst that requires weeks of treatment and possibly surgery.

Despite Meat Loaf's indication at the Newcastle concert that his career might have ended, a most recent statement on his fan site declared that he would be "coming back strong in 2008" with hopes of new concerts following treatment.

Today in History

1444 – The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Murad II defeated the Polish and Hungarian armies under Władysław III of Poland and John Hunyadi at the Battle of Varna near Varna, Bulgaria in the final battle of the Crusade of Varna.
1871 – "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" – Journalist and explorer Henry Morton Stanley located missing missionary and explorer David Livingstone in Ujiji, near Lake Tanganyika in present-day Tanzania.

1928 – Hirohito was crowned the 124th Emperor of Japan.

1969 – The children's television series Sesame Street debuted on the National Educational Television network in the United States.

1995 – Playwright and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others from the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People were executed by the Nigerian military government.

Quote of the Day

There's never been a true war that wasn't fought between two sets of people who were certain they were

in the right. The really dangerous people believe they are doing whatever they are doing solely and only because it is without question the right thing to do. And that is what makes them dangerous.

~ "Mr. Wednesday" in American Gods by Neil Gaiman

Word of the Day

vouchsafe; v

1. To condescendingly grant a right, benefit, outcome, etc.; to deign to acknowledge.

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