



WIKINEWS

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NASA's Phoenix spacecraft lands safely on Mars

NASA's Phoenix spacecraft has landed safely on Mars, following a ten-month flight. Landing occurred yesterday evening at around 23:38 GMT (20:38 EDT), with confirmation being received by flight controllers around fifteen minutes later at 23:53. Phoenix was launched atop a Delta II rocket last August. It is the first Mars Scout spacecraft to be sent to explore Mars. It will search for water and complex molecules at the North Pole of Mars.

Former vice president of Democratic Republic of Congo arrested on charges of war crimes

One of the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) vice presidents and former militia leader Jean-Pierre Bemba, has been arrested in Belgium on charges of war crimes. This comes as United Nations (U.N.) peacekeepers discovered three mass graves in the nation containing an estimated total of 100 bodies.

President Bush to meet with LDS Church leaders in Utah

United States President George W. Bush is set to meet with leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints next week in Utah. President Bush's primary purpose in visiting Utah is to raise money for Republican presidential candidate John McCain's general election campaign. The Deseret News and

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The Salt Lake Tribune have reported that the meeting is scheduled for May 29.

Eleven days later, a survivor pulled from rubble after Chinese earthquake

Eleven days, or 266 hours after an earthquake in Sichuan Province in China which killed over 60,000 people, a survivor has been rescued from the rubble of his own house in the city of Mianzhu. Xiao Zhihu, 80, who is said to be in stable condition at a local hospital, was paralyzed prior to the earthquake and was found underneath a pillar that once held up his house.

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Argentine farmers announce that they will stop selling grain for export from 28 May to 2 June in a deepening row with the federal government over export taxes.

- The Russian Constitutional Court meets in its first session since it relocated from Moscow to the historical building of the Governing Senate at the Decembrists Square in Saint Petersburg.
- The S&P/Case-Shiller index shows a record annual decline in United States house prices of 14.1%.
- The State Peace and Development Council extends Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest by one year.
- Police in Burma detain more than

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a dozen members of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy.

- The People's Republic of China evacuates 100,000 from Sichuan Province as engineers prepare to dynamite Tangjashan Lake formed when landslides from the 2008 Sichuan earthquake dammed the Jianhe river.
- Thabo Mbeki, the President of South Africa, leaves for Japan to attend a conference on African development despite concerns about the 2008 South African riots.
- Protesting soldiers seize the deputy head of the Army of Guinea a week after Lansana Kouyate is dismissed as Prime Minister.
- Leiden University Medical Center scientists decipher the first complete DNA sequence of a woman.

Football: Thomas Sørensen ready for new club

Danish national goalkeeper Thomas Sørensen is ready to leave Aston Villa after four years with the club. Sørensen rules out extending his current contract with the club, saying: "It would be the strangest thing I have ever experienced. If Martin O'Neill called me and offered me a contract, I would not sign it. It is over."

Currently, Thomas Sørensen is home in Denmark for friendlies

against the Netherlands and Poland next week.

Speaking to Danish Ritzau, Sørensen said: "We are in talks with several clubs. So that's positive. I am not nervous about finding a suitable club before the next season." Sørensen declined to mention any specific club names.

This will mark the end of four years at Aston Villa, while Thomas Sørensen might not have wanted the last year, as he did not play a single match this season.

Even though Sørensen, through his agent, said he would decline an offer from Ipswich Town F.C., Those Were The Days reports that the Championship League club may seek to recruit Sørensen. Sources predict that he will wind up with a Premier League team or return to Denmark to play for F.C. København.

At least 30 dead after bus crashes off cliff and into river in South Africa

At least 30 people have been killed and the death toll may rise further after a bus thought to be carrying 80 people fell 80 metres (262 feet) down a cliff in South Africa's mountainous KwaZulu-Natal province, coming to rest inverted in a river.

Up to 32 more people have been hospitalised after the bus lost control due to a brake failure. The exact number of passengers, while thought to be 80, is unconfirmed at present as police have been unable to contact the vehicle's owner and the driver was killed in the disaster. The death toll could yet increase as police divers and military helicopters were still conducting search and rescue operations on the river and the wreck. Ambulances from across

the Eastern Cape are at the scene.

Four children are amongst the dead. It is unknown how many live passengers, if any, remain trapped in the wreckage of the bus, which crashed near Cedarville. It is also unclear how deeply underwater it is, with reports varying from half-submerged to one and a half metres below the waterline. Video footage from Sky News shows an overturned bus that is accessible to rescuers, suggesting either that the water is shallow or that the vehicle has already been dragged from the river.

South Africa's death toll on roads is statistically among the world's worst, with 10,000 killed every year. It is unclear what caused the brakes to fail.

Canadian foreign affairs minister resigns amid controversy

Maxime Bernier, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, resigned after it was revealed that he left classified materials at an insecure location. Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced Bernier's resignation in Ottawa on Monday.

Bernier was once in a relationship with Julie Couillard, whose previous associations with the controversial Hells Angels biker group were reported in recent months. In an interview with French-language television network TVA, Couillard indicated that Bernier left behind some designated secret documents at her residence. She returned these to the federal government upon advice from a lawyer.

Opposition politicians were critical of Harper and his handling of the matter, noting that until today the Prime Minister downplayed security concerns surrounding

Bernier's relationship with Couillard. Negative reaction to Bernier's resignation quickly came from Liberal party house leader Ralph Goodale and NDP leader Jack Layton.

Bernier has a track record of controversy as a member of the Harper government. Last week, he hastily promised Canadian military aircraft for relief efforts in cyclone-ravaged Burma, although the aircraft in question were already occupied elsewhere. The Canadian government was forced to rent a Russian aircraft to fulfil Bernier's promise. Bernier also received criticism earlier this year after he made public comments calling for the removal of an Afghanistan governor from office.

David Emerson will assume Bernier's Foreign Affairs duties, at least for the short term.

Google claims that lawsuit threatens Internet

Google, the owners of YouTube, claimed in a court briefing today that the one billion dollar lawsuit against the company "threatens the way hundreds of millions of people legitimately exchange information."

Viacom Inc. is suing Google over the 150,000 videos, for which Viacom owns the copyright, that were allegedly being shown on YouTube. Google has responded by saying that they followed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which prevents companies from being prosecuted if they bring down copyrighted content as soon as they are made aware of it. "Viacom's lawsuit challenges the protections of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that Congress enacted a decade ago to encourage the development of services like YouTube," said

Google. "Congress recognized that such services could not and would not exist if they faced liability for copyright infringement based on materials users uploaded to their services. It chose to immunize these services from copyright liability provided they are properly responsive to notices of alleged infringement from content owners."

"Looking at the online world today, there is no question that Congress made the correct policy choice," Google continued. "Legitimate services like YouTube provide the world with free and authorized access to extraordinary libraries of information that would not be available without the DMCA -- information created by users who have every right to share it."

Google then claimed that "YouTube also fulfills its end of the DMCA bargain, and indeed goes far beyond its legal obligations in assisting content owners to protect their works."

Long March rocket launches first Fengyun-3 weather satellite

The Chinese National Space Administration has launched a Long March 4C carrier rocket, carrying the Fengyun-3A (FY-3A) weather satellite. FY-3A is the first of thirteen Fengyun-3 satellites, which will be launched in the next twelve years.

The launch occurred from Launch Area 1 at the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in Shanxi province, China. Lift-off was at 03:02 GMT this morning, and the ascent to orbit took around 27 minutes, resulting in the successful deployment of the satellite.

Fengyun-3A will provide weather forecasts for the upcoming

Olympic Games. It will also be used for general forecasting, both for China and the rest of the world. It will be able to make forecasts around a fortnight in advance. With a 250 metre resolution, it is the most advanced Chinese weather satellite yet launched.

This is the 26th orbital launch of 2008, the 106th launch of a Long March rocket, and the 3rd launch of the Long March 4C, which first flew in 2006. The next scheduled Chinese launch is believed to be a Long March 3B from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre, with the Chinastat 9 satellite. This will occur in early June.

2008 Computex Preview: Three awards, One target

2008 COMPUTEX Taipei, which will be started next Tuesday at the Taipei World Trade Center and TWTC Nangang, will have significant growth to be the biggest one since the first holding in 1982. There will be several features in this show like several ongoing seminars and forums, great transformations for theme pavilions, and WiMAX Taipei Expo, which will be started one-day earlier (June 2) to echo the WiMAX Pavilion, mainly promoted by Taipei Computer Association (TCA). In addition, buyers will have opportunities to do sourcing and market researching on pavilions from three awards - "Best Choice of COMPUTEX", "Taiwan Excellence Awards", and newly-set "Design and Innovation Award of COMPUTEX".

"Best Choice of COMPUTEX", set to encourage technological innovation in the ICT industry and help companies expand their export markets, is the 7th-annual holding by TCA since 2002. Differ than past years, not only the

professional juries will decide the best thirty-nines (including Special Award from Juries, Best Choices of the Year from Overseas and Domestic Enterprises) from nominated 125 products in the second runoffs, international buyers and industrial businesspeople (including IPOs) are welcomed to predict the final winners via the Internet before the Opening Ceremony next Tuesday.

"Design and Innovation Award of COMPUTEX", a newly-set award by Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) and International Forum Design (iF) to discover innovative, applicative, and creative products, showcased a significant differences than the "Best Choice of COMPUTEX".

According to TAITRA, professional juries including Christoph Böninger (brains4design GmbH), Duck Hsieh (Duck Image Corporation), James Irvine (James Irvine S.r.l.), Kris Verstockt (Cre8 design studio), and Roger Pin-Si Lin (Nova Design Co., Ltd.), will adjudicate the final seventeens (including the final four gold awards) from 139 entries submitted by 67 contestants from 5 countries based on the criteria of "Degree of innovation", "Design quality", "Workmanship", "Choice of materials", "Environmental friendliness", "Functionality", "Ergonomics", "Utility value", "Safety", "Universal design", and "Brand value/Branding".

Besides of the Design and Innovation Award, with rich achievements were established from several international design awards by companies in Taiwan, the Taiwan Design Center, set to promote the design and cultural industries in Taiwan, will hold the "2008 Design Think Forum" entitled with theme topic "Design

for next Billion Customers" to prospect the future of the design industry world-wide next Wednesday (June 6).

"Taiwan Excellence Awards", created to promote products made in Taiwan, announced its winners from Gold and Silver Award classes prior to the show last Thursday (May 22). This year, 388 ICT products participated in this competition and the ICT industry scored a better performance with 6 Golds and 14 Silvers in the final jury. It not only showcased a significant improvement but also symbolized the ICT industry in Taiwan as a stable industrial position in the presence.

Although the three main awards (Best Choice of COMPUTEX, Design and Innovation Award of COMPUTEX, and Taiwan Excellence Awards) are adjudicated with different styles and standards, but in consequence, to promote excellent ICT products made in Taiwan into the global market is the main object which the governmental units and the ICT industry in Taiwan should be done.

FIFA suspend Asian Soccer Champions Iraq

The FIFA Executive Committee decided to suspend the Iraqi Football Association as of May 26, 2008, following government interference. The Iraqi Government dissolved the Iraqi National Olympic Committee and all national sport federations, including the Iraqi Football Association. The suspension for Iraq is from all tournaments for 12 months.

The FIFA Executive Committee will recommend the suspension to the FIFA Congress, which meets in Sydney on Friday, but left the door open for a reprieve if Baghdad

reversed its decision by May 29 at 4:00 PM Central European Time.

The suspension puts Iraq's World Cup qualification in doubt since qualification has already started for the region. Iraq was scheduled to play Australia in a 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifier in Brisbane on Sunday then again in Dubai next week and if they miss those matches, Australia would be given the points.

Today in History

- 1588 – Anglo-Spanish War: The Spanish Armada, with 130 ships and over 30,000 men, set sail from Lisbon for the English Channel to engage English naval forces.
- 1644 – English Civil War: Royalist troops allegedly slaughtered up to 1,600 people during their storm and capture of the Town of Bolton.
- 1918 – The Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, one of the first democratic republics in the Muslim world, was proclaimed in Ganja by the Azerbaijani National Council following the breakup of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic.
- 1961 – The British newspaper The Observer published English lawyer Peter Benenson's article The Forgotten Prisoners, starting a letter-writing campaign that grew and became the human rights organization Amnesty International.
- 1998 – Under its nuclear development programme, the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission carried out five underground nuclear tests in the Chagai Hills in the Chagai District of the Balochistan province.
- May 28 is Republic Day in Armenia and Azerbaijan (both 1918)

Quote of the Day

In my books I have lifted bits from various religions in trying to come

to a better understanding; I've made use of religious themes and symbols. Now, as the world becomes more pagan, one has to lead people in the same direction in a different way...

~ Patrick White

Word of the Day

misogyny n

1. The hatred of, or pathological aversion to women.

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