



Top Stories

Over 120 killed by suicide bomb in Iraq

Conflicting media reports say that at least 128 people have been killed and over 220, possibly over 350, were injured in Baghdad, Iraq after a truck packed with at least a ton of explosives blew up inside the Sadriyah market.

Scholar says Jehovah's Witnesses wrong about blood transfusions

Bible scholar Professor Michael Duggan, who teaches biblical literature at St. Mary's University College in Calgary, Alberta, says the Jehovah's Witnesses have taken a bible reading out of context. Duggan says they are about animals blood when they are killed. He also argues the "way the Jehovah's Witnesses read the biblical text is simply wrong."

Featured story

Seven bushfires near Perth, Western Australia

Fourteen houses have been destroyed and another 3 damaged by a bush fire burning in Jarra forests and farmland near the historical timber town of Dwellingup 70km south east of Perth, Western Australia.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Hassan Nasrallah, head of Hezbollah, openly states for the first time that the governments of Iran and Syria are supporting Hezbollah financially, with weapons, and with training, and

Wikipedia Current Events

"everybody knows it."

- Iraq War: at least 135 people are killed and 226 injured in a truck bombing in Baghdad (BBC); five people are killed and 40 injured in car bombs in Kirkuk.

- An outbreak of the deadly strain of avian flu, H5N1, is confirmed at a Bernard Matthews turkey farm in Holton, Suffolk in the United Kingdom.

- A State of Emergency is declared in Bolivia after 'El Niño'-like flooding.

- After calls from Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi to cancel all matches, Italian Football Federation commissioner Luca Pancalli indefinitely suspends all football matches in Italy while an investigation into riots on February 2, during which a 38-year-old police officer was killed and 71 people were injured, begins.

- British Prime Minister Tony Blair urges Labour Party to 'weather the storm' during current political crisis for the party, and that 'policies will win the next election'.

- The Spring Festival travel season in China begins, in which 156 million passengers will travel by train.

- Russia investigates smelly orange snow, oily to touch, which has fallen across an area of 1500 square kilometres in the Omsk region of the country.

- American Football: Michael Irvin,

Wikipedia Current Events

Thurman Thomas, Gene Hickerson, Bruce Matthews, Charlie Sanders and Roger Wehrli are selected for induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Policeman killed in football-related violence in Italy

In Catania, Italy, a police officer has succumbed during football violence. 40-year-old Filippo Raciti died in the hospital from injuries afflicted by a small explosive device that struck him in the face. Several hooligans have been arrested but no suspect has been arrested for the death of Raciti yet.

Clashes erupted after the Serie A Sicilian derby between Catania and Palermo. The match, which started earlier because of public safety concerns, had already been interrupted once, after 58 minutes. After a controversial goal from Caracciolo (which may or may not have been offside), fans started rioting and tear gas drifted onto the field. "We had to go back to the changing rooms because we couldn't breathe. If we cannot get into our heads that football is a sport we cannot live in the world of football." said Palermo coach Francesco Guidolin reacted.

After 40 minutes the players were able to resume the match, which Palermo won 2-1. Di Michele used his hand to score the winning goal, which the referee didn't notice. After the game was over, aggression continued outside the football stadium, with dozens of

injured taken to the hospital.

In response to the ongoing football violence in Italy and after this particular incident, Italian Football Federation commissioner Luca Pancalli suspended all professional, amateur and national team matches. He had warned about such a measure earlier last Sunday after riots in several cities. Catania chairman and owner Antonino Pulvirenti stated his intention to leave the football world. In a reaction to the events, Maurizio Zamparini, chairman of the Palermo football team, called for stricter football laws, such as in the United Kingdom. Italian prime minister Romano Prodi stated: "...we need a strong and clear signal to avoid the degeneration of this sport which we are seeing more dramatically and more often."

The day after the events, graffiti appeared in the headquarters of local newspaper Il Tirreno in Livorno and in the city of Piacenza, hailing the events as revenge for the death in 2001 of anti-globalization activist Carlo Giuliani. Giuliani was killed during demonstrations against a Group of Eight summit in 2001.

Ferry collision on the river Mersey

The Sea Express One (formerly SeaCat Isle of Man) of the Isle of Man Steam Packet was hit twice, in heavy fog on the River Mersey at Liverpool by a tug towing the "Alaska Rainbow." cargo ship near the entrance to Alfred Dock, Birkenhead, at 11.20 on Saturday morning.

None of the reported 294 passengers and crew were hurt, and the ferry is moored at Liverpool Pier Head while water is being pumped from the engine room. 80 cars remain on board, and

passengers have been warned that some may have been damaged.

While further north a plane was lost in fog Missing airplane may have been found.

Missing airplane possibly found near Blackpool, England

An airplane, a Warrior PA28 that went missing at 1700 GMT may have been found Saturday night, February 3rd as rescuers searching for the airplane have discovered wreckage about a mile from South Shore near Blackpool, England.

The pilot of the air plane reported to Blackpool Tower that he was low on fuel before 5 pm Saturday evening and disappeared from radar screens shortly afterwards.

There is no news about the two men who were on board the airplane. The weather conditions on parts of the coast are described as foggy.

Three lifeboats, two coastguard teams and an RAF helicopter are searching for the airplane which was believed to have been traveling from Exeter to Blackpool, says Lancashire Police.

Iraqi suicide bomber kills 121, injures over 200 others

Conflicting media reports say that at least 128 people have been killed and over 220, possibly over 350, were injured in Baghdad, Iraq after a truck packed with at least a ton of explosives blew up inside the Sadriyah market.

Officials say that the death toll will likely climb, and officials for the Iraqi Health Ministry say that 105 have been killed and over 330 injured.

The truck was supposed to be delivering food, oil and flour to the

market when the driver detonated the explosives.

"It was a suicide attacker who entered the market at a time when it was packed with people. There are still bodies under the rubble," said head of the Interior Ministry explosives department, Major General Jihad al-Jabiri.

"It was a strong blow. A car exploded. I fell on the ground," said a young man with a bandaged head who was in the explosion.

Victims were trapped under piles of rubble, and the surrounding area was completely destroyed. At least 10 buildings have been leveled as a result of the blast.

No claim of responsibility for the blast has been made.

A curfew has been issued for the surrounding area which is set to expire at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday. All roads leading into and out of the area have been shut down.

This is the biggest attack to take place since November 23, 2006 when at least 215 people were killed when insurgents attacked a Sadr City Shiite slum.

CNN had recently confirmed that 373 people were injured, along with 128 (currently) killed.

Assassin of Turkish-Armenian journalist 'treated as national hero'

According to news reports from Turkey, a number of the members of the Turkish security forces, though unofficially, are treating Ogün Samast, the assassin of Hrant Dink as if he were a national hero.

For instance, after being taken into custody, Samast was filmed shoulder to shoulder with the

Turkish police, in front of a Turkish flag and a quote from Turkey's founder Atatürk: "The nation's land is sacred. It cannot be left to fate."

On January 24th, Ogün Samast was transferred to the Bayrampaşa prison, Istanbul's largest prison. Before the transfer, inmates from a section of the prison were temporarily moved to another section, which, as a result, housed more than 100 inmates, 80 more than its maximum capacity. Then, the now-vacant section, often subject to inmates' complaints regarding bedbugs, was cleaned and disinfected. Finally, the walls were painted, a brand new cotton bed was put in, and red carpet was laid out on the floors of the section.

When Samast was brought to the Bayrampaşa Prison, inmates witnessed that he was welcomed with cheers and applause by the jail management, soldiers, and the guards. Witnesses also report that Samast was given two guards to serve him. He ate kebab, a luxury food compared to the food given to other inmates.

After four days, Samast was transferred to the Kandıra F-type Prison.

Ultra-nationalist elements of the Turkish society seem to have penetrated into the Turkish security forces. These events resulted major Turkish newspapers such as Sabah, Radikal, and Vatan to accuse the Turkish security forces and the Turkish state of supporting, endorsing, and cooperating with the killers of the journalist.

A 52 year old Turkish-Armenian journalist, Hrant Dink was assassinated in front of the Agos newspaper office, at the Istanbul district of Osmanbey, where he worked as the editor and a

journalist. Dink, a brave journalist who was not afraid to discuss one of Turkey's most controversial issues, clearly called what happened to Armenians in 1915 when the land was being governed by the Ottoman Empire the Armenian Genocide.

Following his father's assassination, Dink's daughter, referring to the fascist obsession with pure blood, said: "They shot my father. Is their blood purer now? They were afraid to face him, they shot him in the back."

Large numbers of people marched protesting the killing of Hrant Dink on the day of his funeral, carrying placards that read "We are all Armenian" and "We are all Hrant Dink".

Bird Flu confirmed in 1,000 UK turkeys

1,000 turkeys in the United Kingdom have been confirmed by UK government officials as dying of a strain of avian flu and a further 1,600 have died since the infection was initially reported. The birds, believed to be from a Bernard Matthews owned farm in Suffolk fell ill and died this week after contracting the H5 strain of the flu. It is likely that all other poultry on the farm will be culled.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs confirmed on Saturday (3rd February 2006), that the turkeys had contracted the H5N1 strain of the virus.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs were told of the turkeys condition on Thursday (1st February 2007) and instantaneously ordered restrictions to be placed on the farm. The department were swift in carrying out a full investigation and sent samples to be tested at facilities in

Weybridge.

This report comes less than a year after a mass culling of 50,000 birds in Norfolk after an outbreak of the H7 strain.

H5N1 hits Britain

H5N1, the deadly strain of bird flu that has already claimed many lives in Asia, was confirmed this morning as the strain that killed 2,600 turkeys on a farm in Suffolk.

The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), conducted further tests to determine the strain after it was found that most of the turkeys on a Bernard Matthews farm showed signs of illness and tested positive for avian flu in preliminary tests.

As a further precaution, 159,000 turkeys from the same farm will be culled.

The European Council issued a directive stating that a protection zone (a zone where all birds are to be kept indoors and biologically tested for the flu) should be set up on a 3 km radius from the infected farm. They also ordered a 10 km radius "surveillance" zone whereby the sale of birds at markets is banned, water used by domestic and wild birds is to be kept separate, pedestrian movement is limited, an increased awareness of the symptoms of affected birds and birds are not to be transported unless being transported to slaughter.

Officials are confident that the outbreak has been contained but ask people to be vigilant.

Suffolk County Council also set up a helpline for people with queries or if they find birds showing signs of malaise: 08456 032 814.

Defra has also made general advice on avian-flu available on its helpline: Defra Helpline - 08459 33 55 77

"Shrinking Cities" debuts in Detroit, Michigan

The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit and Cranbrook Art Museum debut Shrinking Cities. The project, which examines urban decline in cities across the globe is sponsored by Germany's Federal Cultural Foundation.

Shrinking Cities includes contributions from more than 100 artists, architects, researchers, filmmakers, journalists, culture experts, and sociologists aimed not only at showing the effects of this global phenomenon but also exploring how to deal with it.

The project, which began in 2002, involves local teams from five cities: Detroit, USA, Manchester/Liverpool, Britain, Ivanovo, Russia and Halle/Leipzig, Germany. The teams examined the negatives and the positives of urban decline. Along with the exhibit contribution of the team and international idea competition was launched.

Shrinking Cities premiered in Berlin in 2004 and later traveled to Halle and Leipzig Germany. In Detroit it will run from 3 February until 1 April. Cranbrook Art Museum and the newly founded Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit will cohost the exhibit, with buses running in between the two.

Tornado kills 19 in Florida

At least 19 people have been killed in central Florida in the city of Lady Lake and Paisley after severe storms and a tornado ripped through the cities in the middle of the night. Eleven of those killed were in Paisley and three were in

Lady Lake.

The death toll is expected to rise as rescue crews resume tomorrow morning.

Volusia, Sumter, Lake and Seminole counties have all been declared a state of an emergency as dozens of houses, mobile homes and a church were destroyed. Clothes and furniture are scattered around the wrecked houses and pieces of trees are scattered about. Cars are reported to have been turned over or thrown around in the air.

"Our priority today is search and rescue," said Gov. of Florida, Charlie Crist. Rescuers are still looking through the wreckage to find survivors of those who might have been killed.

A spokesman for the emergency response team of Lake county, Chris Patton calls the damage "devastating" and worse than "hurricanes in 2004."

"We have complete devastation of homes, of businesses, religious institutions. It was unlike even perhaps the hurricanes of 2004 when we had minor roof damage, screen damage, pool damage. This is way far more devastating," said Patton.

The storms hit at about 3:15 [EST] a.m. on Friday morning. At least 20,000-30,000 people are without power.

Turkish government proposes to outlaw LGBT websites

A proposal by the Turkish government to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey is threatening online gay rights in Turkey. If the proposal is accepted, Turkish websites through which the Turkish LGBT community socializes will be closed and prohibited. According to

the press release by Lambda Istanbul, a Turkish LGBT organization, the words "Lesbian", "Gay", "Bisexual", "Transgender" (LGBT) and "Transsexual" are already banned from Turkish internet cafes.

Today in History

1859 - Constantin von Tischendorf found the Codex Sinaiticus, a 4th-century uncial manuscript of the New Testament, in a monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt.

1862 - Bacardi, one of the world's largest rum producers, was founded as a small distillery in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba.

1899 - The Philippine-American War broke out.

1945 - Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin met at the Yalta Conference.

1957 - USS Nautilus, the first nuclear-powered submarine, logged her 60,000th nautical mile, matching the endurance of the fictional Nautilus described in Jules Verne's novel 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.

February 04 is Independence Day in Sri Lanka (1948); Lichun begins in East Asia (05:18 UTC, 2007).

Quote of the Day

Men weren't really the enemy — they were fellow victims suffering from an outmoded masculine mystique that made them feel unnecessarily inadequate when there were no bears to kill.

~ Betty Friedan

Word of the Day

slapdash; adv

1. In a hasty or careless manner.
2. Directly, right there.

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