



Top Stories

Hurricane Katrina strikes Florida, kills seven



As hurricane Katrina moves beyond the Floridian peninsula, death tolls are

beginning to surface. On Friday, the official count was seven dead, at least five missing.

World Health Organization declares tuberculosis emergency in Africa

A World Health Organization (WHO) committee comprising of 43 African health ministers has declared a tuberculosis emergency in the continent.

Featured story

Man allowed to keep deceased friend in warehouse freezer

Russian businessman Xiao Li Bei has received permission to keep his deceased friend in an industrial freezer.

Wikipedia Current Events

- 120,000 people are expected at the Jean-Michel Jarre's concert Space of Freedom in Gdańsk Shipyard in Poland commemorating 25th anniversary of the creation of "Solidarity" trade union; live at 20:00 CET at iTVP
- The High Court of Fiji overturns that country's sodomy laws after hearing the case of one Australian and a native Fijian who were previously sentenced to two years in jail under the legislation
- 14 children and three adults die as a fire breaks out in a building in Paris which housed African immigrants.
- An Israeli Border Policeman is wounded when a Palestinian man stabs him in the back of the neck near The Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The Interior Ministry of Israel has announced that the number of Israeli citizens living in Israeli settlements on the West Bank has increased by more than 9,000 thus far this year.

Michigan hotel quarantined after anthrax scare



A Midland, Michigan hotel was temporarily quarantined Thursday night when a letter with suspicious white powder was opened at the Ashman Court Hotel on Main Street.

A hotel employee is said to have opened the letter around 16:00 UTC time on Thursday. Shortly after, the police, FBI and HAZMAT teams were called to the building. Preliminary results from FBI tests showed that the envelope did not contain the deadly poison anthrax, as first thought.

The letter contained "a threat" according to local reports, however details were not released. It is also unknown as to what substance the white powder is.

This is the second anthrax scare on the city this year, exactly four months ago the Midland Daily News office, located across the street to the hotel, was sent a similar envelope with suspicious powder. It is not known if the two cases are related or not.

World Health Organization declares tuberculosis emergency in Africa

A World Health Organization (WHO)

committee comprising of 43 African health ministers has declared a tuberculosis emergency in the continent.

The number of Tb cases in African countries per year has quadrupled since 1990, and continues to rise. Now 540,000 people die of the disease in Africa every year.

The only more deadly disease in the world is HIV/AIDS - around the world, Tb kills two million people a year, out of some nine million annual infections.



Angolan eleven-year-old Joaquina Francisco - tuberculosis patient.

Some African countries such as Tanzania and Malawi pioneered Tb control strategies that were later adopted around the globe. But they were not successful - Malawi saw the number of Tb cases a year rise by four times over the past 15 years. Poverty, poor health systems and the HIV/AIDS virus have been blamed by the WHO for this.

Funding is a particularly critical issue. Eight of the nine worst affected African countries reported that, for 2003, they had short-falls in the funding their Tb control programmes needed. However the WHO stresses that money alone will not end the crisis - health systems must be improved, and the rate at which health professionals are lost in the region must be reduced.

Africa is the only region in the world to be experiencing an increase in Tb cases - in the rest of the world, infection rates are either stable or falling.

Tropical Storm Katrina threatens Florida, Bahamas



Tropical Storm Katrina on August 24, 2005 at 13:15 UTC

As of 11:30 a.m. EDT on August 26 (1530 UTC), the center of Hurricane Katrina was located over the Gulf of Mexico about 45 miles (70 km) northwest of Key West, and 75 miles (120 km) south-southwest of Naples, Florida. The storm was reported moving southwest near 7 mph (11 km/h) with maximum sustained winds of approximately 100 mph (160 km/h) with higher gusts.

Katrina is expected to strengthen further, likely to at least a Category 3 hurricane and possibly a Category 4 hurricane, as it curves north towards a final landfall on the U.S. Gulf Coast.

Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 70 miles from the center.

The minimum central pressure recently observed by an air force reserve unit reconnaissance aircraft was 981 mb or 28.97 inches.

Due to its slow forward speed, Katrina is expected to produce a significant heavy rainfall event over the central and northwest Bahamas as well as south Florida. Total rainfall accumulations of 6 to 12 inches and isolated maximum amounts of 15 to 20 inches are possible.

Storm surge flooding of 3 to 5 feet above normal tide levels, along with large and dangerous battering waves, can be expected near the center in areas of onshore winds in the Bahamas.

Man allowed to keep deceased friend in warehouse freezer

Russian businessman Xiao Li Bei has received permission to keep his deceased

friend in an industrial freezer.

Police in the town of Novosibirsk discovered the body during a routine health and safety inspection of Xiao's warehouse. Xiao, of Chinese ancestry, told police that his friend died of natural causes two years prior.

Challenged in court on the issue, prosecutors allowed Xiao to continue on as he has, unless evidence contrary to the natural death claim arises. There is no Russian law against personally storing human remains.

Xiao commented "I just thought it would be easier to store the body myself. There's so much bureaucracy here I knew the paperwork would be endless otherwise. And I have a large industrial freezer in my warehouse."

Controversial Berlin opera features interactive drug usage

Berlin's Neukoellner Opera House is causing a stir with its new production, *The Yellow Princess*.

The story presented in the French opera, by Camille Saint-Saens, is of an artist "whose life is dictated by a love for drugs and Japan." As a result, the performers smoke cannabis joints on stage, and the theatre itself is encouraging the audience to join in.

Artistic director Bernhard Glocksins says that the theatre is claiming the metaphorical "artistic licence", to excuse the actions of the actors and audience, which are against German law. Glocksins was quoted by Ananova as saying opera would be "improved with a few joints and some appetising lines", noting the production was partly an experiment, to see what they could "get away with."

"Artistic licence" is at par to an "artistic liberty", where something is exaggerated or changed for the sake of the art itself. For example a visual artist painting a landscape might move a tree to another area of their work, for better balance, or a poet ignoring pentameter when writing a traditional sonnet.

Authorities search for victims of Peruvian air crash

Rescuers are searching for the victims of the Tans Peru airliner crash which occurred earlier this month. Emergency services rescued 5 survivors on Thursday morning. TANS say that 41 people were killed and a further 57 injured in this, the fifth airliner crash worldwide this month. The Boeing 737-200 airliner crash-landed in heavy jungle near the city of Pucallpa, 840 kilometres northeast of Lima, the capital city. Peruvian authorities have ordered an investigation and have shipped the aircraft's two flight data recorders, or "black boxes" to the US for data retrieval.

Jorge Belevan said "We've also found five more survivors and that takes the number (of survivors) to 57. Two people are still missing and there are 41 dead," Local authorities also said that the death toll is likely to rise due to inaccessible location of the crash site. This is the second TANS Peru plane crash in three years, following the January 2003 crash of flight 222 in the Peruvian rainforest. In that plane crash there were no survivors.

Peruvian government lawyer Marco Ochoa said that rescuers are opening the skin of the aircraft to determine whether there are more bodies trapped inside.

Survivors said that the plane was caught in a fierce storm about 10 minutes before the crash. The plane then caught fire and landed in swampland.

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Today in History

1776 - British forces under General William Howe defeated Americans under General George Washington in the Battle of Long Island.

1896 – Zanzibar surrendered within an hour after the Anglo-Zanzibar War broke out.

1928 – The Kellogg-Briand Pact, outlawing war, was signed by sixty nations.

1939 – Experimental jetplane Heinkel He 178 became the world's first aircraft to fly under turbojet power.

2003 – The planet Mars made its closest approach to Earth in nearly 60,000 years.

August 27 is Independence Day for Moldova

Quote of the Day

"You think that a wall as solid as the earth separates civilization from barbarism. I tell you the division is a thread, a sheet of glass. A touch here, a push there, and you bring back the reign of Saturn." ~ John Buchan

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