



Top Stories

Ayman al-Zawahiri appears in new videotape

Al-Qaeda's second in command Ayman al-Zawahiri has released a new video tape onto the internet. On the tape, Zawahiri said that the United States and British forces "have achieved nothing but loss, disaster and misfortune" and called to "topple" the President of Pakistan.

Lamponing for Bush at Correspondents' Dinner

US President George Bush appeared alongside impersonator Steve Bridges to deliver a self-lamponing comedy act at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner.

Featured story

Australian civil rights activists protest terror suspects' internment

About 100 people, including family members of the accused, went to the Barwon maximum security prison to voice their disapproval of the treatment of the 13 men accused of terror offences. Speakers said the laws were unjust and constituted torture on the ground of the UN charter as being cruel and unusual.

Wikipedia Current Events

•The Sudanese government accepts a peace plan brokered by mediators of the African Union.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Various rebel Janjaweed militias, required to be disarmed according to the deal, struggle to extract last-minute concessions and have yet to give a clear signal on whether they would sign.

•The rebel group the Justice and Equality Movement refuses to sign on to the proposed peace agreement in its current form.

•The Government of the Central African Republic joins the United States Government and the Government of Chad in formally accusing the Government of Sudan of supporting the United Front for Democratic Change rebels and further alleges that UFDC rebels are entering southern Chad through the CAR-Chad-Sudan border area.

•The Parliament of Nepal, reinstated last week after a 4-year hiatus, unanimously approves a proposal by new prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala to hold elections for a special assembly to draw up a new constitution.

•24 miners have been killed in a mine explosion in the Chinese province of Shaanxi.

Economist John Kenneth Galbraith dies

John Kenneth Galbraith, the Canadian-born US economist, died in hospital yesterday 29 April 2006 in Cambridge, Massachusetts following a short illness. He was 97.

He wrote numerous books including *The Affluent Society* in 1958. He taught at Harvard from 1948 to 1975 and served as ambassador to India under President John F. Kennedy.

Lamponing for Bush at Correspondents' Dinner

US President George Bush appeared alongside impersonator Steve Bridges to deliver a self-lamponing comedy act at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner. The annual event is well known for its evening lineup of fun-filled theatrics, attended by politicians and people from the media and entertainment industries. In his double-act with Bridges, Bush sent up his reputation for delivering nonsense lines and making verbal gaffes (for which the word 'Bushism' has been coined).

Bush talked about spreading his agenda "globally and around the world, as well as internationally", whilst Bridges, who delivered many of the more cutting lines, said "how come I can't have dinner with the 36 per cent of the people who like me?". The President's pronunciation of the word "nuclear" and Dick Cheney's hunting accident were also made fun of.

The primary source for edgy political humor that Saturday night, however, occurred when rising star of *The Colbert Report*, Stephen Colbert, assumed the helm as critic. With the President sitting visibly within several feet,

Colbert warmed up the act by sarcastically admiring the president for thinking "with his gut, and not the head".

Colbert's subtle and subversive brand of political sarcasm is part of a larger act where he parodies as a right wing news anchorman for Fox News. "Fox News gives you both sides of the story — the president's side and the vice president's side," he said.

Colbert's jabs at the president and his administration, usually made from the Comedy Channel studio in Manhattan, garnered nervous laughter from the Washington D.C. audience. Although visibly red-faced, Bush sat quietly as Colbert continued to dig deeper into what bloggers and pundits are now considering to be the unfriendliest presidential roast in WHCA history.

At one point, Colbert flicked his front teeth, a globally recognized obscene gesture, at Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. This was in reference to the globally recognized obscene gesture which Justice Scalia himself made to his detractors while giving a speech at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, Massachusetts on March 27, 2006.

London Planetarium closes to make way for celebrity-themed show

The London Planetarium, famous for its distinctive green dome and for being next to Madame Tussauds, will close this week to make way for a new celebrity-themed show opening in July. The Planetarium used to be an attraction in its own right, but in recent years has become simply a feature tacked onto the end of the waxworks tour, the original 45 minute show cut down to just over 10 minutes. The planetarium will be renamed 'The Auditorium' and

will feature a show that "gets to the heart of celebrity", being produced in collaboration with animation house Aardman Productions.

Famous astronomer Sir Patrick Moore has called the decision "most regrettable", and many have commented that the change from space to celebrity is an unfortunate sign of our times.

To say 'farewell' to the planetarium, Tussauds have allowed free entry in its penultimate week, from 24th - 30th April. Visitors could enter through the group admissions entrance to see the show, running every twenty minutes. Unlike the queues for Madame Tussauds, which typically run right up the street, there were few people waiting to see the planetarium show, even on the Saturday. The show, entitled 'Journey to Infinity' was projected onto the inside of the dome using 'Digistar 3' digital projectors, and told the story of space, starting from Earth and zooming out to reveal the other planets in the Solar System, the Milky Way, the other galaxies and the rest of the universe. It ended with an optimistic message suggesting that humans would continue to explore space, going further than ever before.

The London Planetarium opened in 1958 on the site of an old cinema that was destroyed in the second world war. Evening laser performances called 'Laserium' were held between 1977 and 1990. A £4.5 million redevelopment saw it relaunch in 1995 with a new 'Digistar II' monochromatic 3D projection system. This was upgraded to the full-colour 'Digistar 3' system in 2004 which is currently in use.

The planetarium at the also famous Royal Observatory in Greenwich has also been closed since September 2004, however this is due to re-open in 2007 having received a £15 million redevelopment programme. It will be three times the size of the old planetarium, and has received backing from Astronomer Royal Sir Martin Rees, and the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, Professor John Brown.

Trapped Australian miners found alive

Two miners, trapped since Tuesday in the Beaconsfield Mine in Tasmania, Australia, have reportedly been found alive by rescuers. Todd Russell and Brandt Webb were trapped by a rockfall caused by a minor earthquake on Tuesday night. Hopes for their survival had faded after the body of a fellow trapped miner, Larry Knight, was discovered on Thursday.

According to the mine's owners, the pair are located in the mine where they were last seen, over 900m below the surface. Rescuers are communicating with, but still unable to free, the trapped men, and will be supplying them with food and water. It could be up to 48 hours before the pair are extracted from the mine.

London hosts anti-racism concert ahead of local elections

Saturday saw London's Trafalgar Square play host to a 'Love Music Hate Racism' anti-racism concert, ahead of the local elections taking place this week. The event aimed to celebrate multi-racial society and to send out a message telling people to use their vote to stop the British National Party gaining council seats in the election.

The lineup of bands at the event included Belle & Sebastian and The Paddingtons, with speakers including Gurinder Chadha (director of Bend it like Beckham) and Kat Fletcher (NUS President).

Love Music Hate Racism was set up in 2002 in response to rising levels of racism and electoral successes for the British National Party, whose policies are often considered fascist and designed to provoke racism. The organisation has arranged over 200 events across the UK. The organisation is inspired by Rock Against Racism, a similar group set up in the 1970s to challenge the National Front, famed for gigs featuring The Clash and the Tom Robinson Band.

Fears that the BNP may do well in the elections this week have grown since Employment Minister Margaret Hodge warned MPs that the BNP might make gains. Since her announcement, the number of voters considering voting for the BNP has been shown to grow in some polls, prompting some to criticise her announcement as being potentially counter-productive.

Police estimate that 3,000 people attended the event on Saturday.

Australian civil rights activists protest terror suspects' internment

About 100 people protested the detention and treatment of 13 men accused of terrorism offences and held at the Barwon maximum security prison, in the state of Victoria, Australia.

The protestors bussed and drove 56km from Melbourne out to the Barwon maximum security prison to voice their disapproval of the treatment of the 13 men accused of terror offences who are

currently being held in the Acacia Unit of the prison. Some of the accused have been held in solitary confinement for 6 months up to and during their trial.

The group Civil Rights Defence organised the event with family members of the accused and news reporters as a peaceful protest. A small group of about 15 police officers awaited the arrival of the group. The police said that their main concern was the health and safety of everyone as the protest was being held next to a busy road. Officers only approached when the Country Fire Authority was summoned by a passerby to put out a open camp fire, as there was fire restriction in effect in the area. The fire fighters were met with laughter and sarcastic applause. Enclosed fires and barbeques were considered acceptable.

The men being held are Nacer Benbirka, Shane Gregory Kent, Aiman Joud, Fadl Sayadi, Hany Taha, Amer Haddara Izzydeen Atik, Abdullah Meri, Shoue Hammoud, Bassem Raad, Ezzit Raad, Ahmed Raad and Majed Raad.

In a statement read at the protest, one of the accused and his wife (Eman Abdou and Shane Kent) said they were upset at the Australian media for participating in lying to the Australian public and the government for the way they have treated the accused.

"I believe the conditions out at the Barwon Prison Acacia Unit are oppressive and inhumane. Furthermore I am upset at the Australian media for participating in lying to the Australian public. These men have a right to a fair trial, and everyone is innocent until proven guilty," the statement

read.

Omar Merhi, brother of one of the accused, spoke at the gathering

The statement also went on say that the limited legal visits were often shortened and that the best treated accused are in solitary confinement for 18 hours a day. Omar Mehri, the brother of one of the accused spoke at the day's event and talked about verbal harassment and hate mail he and his family have received. He also talked of his brother being amazed to see grass after 5 months.

Speakers at the event said the current laws used to prosecute murderers and other criminals should be used to prosecute terrorist suspects and had the same sentiments as Eman Abdou and Shane Kent. They said the laws were unjust and the treatment of the accused was cruel and unusual, constituting torture under the terms of the UN charter.

Omar Merhi, brother of one of the detained said in a statement "My brother and the other arrested men are confused and want to know why they are in Australia's highest security unit for simply practising their religion."

Ten people injured as elderly driver hits crowd at Australian show

Ten people have been injured at the Royal Bathurst Show after they were allegedly hit by a vehicle driven by a 82-year-old woman. The Bathurst Show is the largest agricultural show in regional New South Wales, Australia.

According to police, the incident happened at 5:10 PM Saturday (7AM GMT) when a Mazda sedan

driven by an 82 year-old woman reversed into a large crowd which had been standing about the showground ring. Saturday is typically the busiest day of the show, with many events taking place in the ring.

Police and St. John Ambulance personnel who were already present at the show arrived almost immediately and began providing assistance. After assessing the incident, additional police, rescue, ambulance and fire personnel were deployed.

Those injured range in age from five to 71 years. The most severe of the injuries were sustained by a 71 year-old man who suffered head injuries and a five year old boy from a neighbouring city who suffered both head and severe leg injuries. Both have been airlifted to Westmead Hospital in Sydney and are described as being in a critical condition.

Other injured people were taken to both Bathurst and Orange Base Hospitals.

The driver of the vehicle was taken to hospital suffering from shock.

Police are investigating the incident, have seized the involved car, and questioned witnesses.

Many local citizens have been warning about pedestrian safety for show patrons for a number of years. Their concerns were not about the showground itself, but the fact that patrons have to cross a highway carrying 27,000 vehicles per day unassisted to get from the main parking area to the showground. Following Saturday's incident, the local council have hired crossing guards to help those crossing the highway.

Kidnapped Indian engineer killed by Taliban

Indian embassy officials in Afghanistan confirmed today that the body of the abducted Indian engineer Suryanarayana had been found in Kandahar. Suryanarayana had been abducted by the Taliban at gunpoint on Friday.

His abductors had stated that if all Indian citizens in Afghanistan did not leave that country by 19:00 Indian Standard Time today, Suryanarayana, who they claimed was an "American spy", would be killed. Suryanarayana was apparently killed while he was trying to escape a few hours ago. The Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has condemned the beheading, calling it an "inhuman act". Indian security forces are enroute to Afghanistan to investigate the matter and the Indian Foreign Secretary Mr. Shyam Saran has said that India will do whatever it takes to bring the perpetrators of this brutal murder to justice. Suryanarayana leaves behind his wife and three children.

Hawaii legislature reaches agreement to suspend gasoline price cap

Conference committee negotiators in the Hawaii state legislature have reached agreement on a bill that will suspend Hawaii's controversial gasoline price control law, commonly known as the "gas cap."

Under the proposed bill created by the conference committee, the current gas cap law would be immediately suspended for an indefinite period. The cap price would continue to be calculated, but the governor would have sole discretion to reinstate the price cap. The bill would also call for increased reporting of profits by oil

companies.

The bill draft still needs majority approval by both houses (which appears likely), and signature by Governor Linda Lingle.

The current law uses wholesale gasoline prices from three Mainland markets to set the maximum price that oil companies can charge for gasoline. Retailers are free to charge whatever they wish.

The law was proposed by the Democratic-controlled legislature during a time when oil company profits in Hawaii compared with the Mainland came under intense scrutiny. Republicans, including Lingle, opposed the bill.

Since the law went into effect in September 2005, price fluctuations caused by disruption of gasoline supply caused by Hurricane Katrina caused gasoline to be sold for more than \$3.00 a gallon in Honolulu, with significantly higher prices on the Neighbor Islands. Currently prices of unleaded gasoline in Honolulu range from \$3.00 to \$3.42 per gallon, the highest in the nation.

During the current legislative session which expires Thursday, the House of Representatives (the lower house) passed a version calling for outright repeal of the law, while the Senate (the upper house) called for modification of the formula used to calculate the cap.

However, in recent weeks, the main proponent of the gasoline price cap law, Senator Ron Menor (D-Mililani), softened his position, allowing for an indefinite suspension of the gas cap. Negotiations between the House and Senate had reached an

impasse over the calculation of the cap level. Senate negotiators pushed for a formula that would have set cap levels about 15 to 20 cents lower than the current formula. The leadership of the legislature intervened as the deadline for conference committee reports loomed.

Hawaii is the only state in the United States to institute price controls on gasoline in recent years.

Today in History

1786 - The Marriage of Figaro, an opera buffa composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, premiered at the Burgtheater in Vienna.

1840 - The Penny Black, the first official adhesive postage stamp, was issued in the United Kingdom.

1893 - The World's Columbian Exposition, a World's Fair to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus, opened in Chicago, United States.

1931 - The Empire State Building, at the time the tallest building in the world, opened in New York City.

1941 - Citizen Kane, a widely acclaimed film by Orson Welles, premiered.

1960 - Bombay State, India was partitioned into Gujarat and Maharashtra along linguistic lines. May 01 is Beltane in Ireland and Scotland, May Day in various countries.

Quote of the Day

"I react pragmatically. Where the market works, I'm for that. Where the government is necessary, I'm for that. I'm deeply suspicious of somebody who says, 'I'm in favor of privatization,' or, 'I'm deeply in favor of public ownership.' I'm in favor of whatever works in the particular case." ~ John Kenneth Galbraith

Word of the Day

haywire; *adj*

Definition

- Behaving erratically or in an uncontrollable manner, especially of a machine or mechanical process.

About Wikinews

We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including **you**) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.

Got news and no computer? Call the Wikinews Hotline

+1-866-653-4265
(toll-free in the U.S.)
+1-202-742-5918
(outside the U.S.)
+44-871-218-6397
(U.K. / Europe)

License

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License. Articles published in this Print edition were created by Wikinewsies.

To view a copy of this license, visit:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/>
or send a letter to
Creative Commons
543 Howard Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, California, 94105, USA

Audio Wikinews

Audio Wikinews is a free non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily.

<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio>

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit:
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print>