



Top Stories

European Union calls for release of British crewmen in Iran

The European Union has released a statement calling for the release of all 15 British sailors and marines being detained in Iran and that "appropriate measures" will be taken if Iran refuses to release them.



First Guantánamo Bay prisoner sentenced

Australian David Hicks is sentenced to nine months in prison after pleading guilty to providing material support to the Taliban. Hicks has been detained for more than 5 years as an unlawful combatant.



Featured story

Mouse makes nest in cash machine, eats money

In Estonia, a mouse made it's nest in a cash machine and spent the weekend eating thousands of pounds worth of bank notes. The critter was discovered after a customer making a withdrawal got half-eaten bills from the machine.



Wikipedia Current Events

- Iranian students protest outside the British embassy in Tehran.
- World Wrestling Entertainment's flagship pay-per-view, Wrestlemania 23 takes place at Ford Field in Detroit, Michigan. An attendance over 70,000 spectators is expected.
- Juno Awards of 2007 starts

Strong earthquake near Solomon Islands, tsunami warnings issued

According to the the US Geological Survey, a magnitude 7.6 earthquake struck Sunday, April 1, 2007 at 20:39:56 (UTC) about 45 km (25 mi) south-southeast of Gizo, New Georgia Islands, Solomon Islands.

Tsunami warnings have been issued for Queensland Australia's Barrier Reef Islands and Willis Island in the Coral Sea, as well as South Pacific states.

According to the NOAA/NWS West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Centre, a tsunami has been observed at the following sites:

- Honiara, Solomon Island
- Latitude: 9.4S
- Longitude: 159.9E
- Time: 21:48 UTC
- Amplitude: 0.15M/0.5ft

The tsunami amplitudes are measured relative to normal sea level, not crest-to-trough heights.

2007 Cricket World Cup: Sri Lanka vs West Indies

Sri Lanka beat the West Indies by 113 runs in the Super 8 phase of the World Cup at the Providence Stadium, Georgetown, Guyana.

This was a crucial game for the West Indies as they had already suffered defeat in both their previous Super 8 games, against Australia and New Zealand. Sri Lanka too had lost out to South Africa in their previous Super 8 encounter.

Toss: West Indies won, and elected to field first.

First Guantánamo Bay prisoner sentenced

Australian Guantánamo Bay prisoner David Hicks has been sentenced on Friday by a special military court after pleading guilty to providing material support to the Taliban. He was sentenced to seven years in prison but he will only need to complete nine months of his penalty, most of it back in Australia, under the terms of his plea agreement.

Hicks, who has been detained for more than 5 years, is to be transferred to Australia within 60 days. The plea deal also forbids Hicks from speaking to the media for one year after his sentence, suing the U.S. government for alleged abuse during his imprisonment, and appealing his sentence. The deal also mentions that he should not profit from selling his story. These terms were criticised by Michael Ratner,

president of the Center for Constitutional Rights as a "modern cutting out of his tongue", with prosecutors using the leverage of a plea deal to stifle information and public debate about the controversial detention process.

His father Terry Hicks reacted that he was glad that his son was returning home. But he also told Australian Broadcasting Corp.:" The bottom line of all this is that at least he's back home. He's out of that hell hole... I believe one of provisos was that he had to sign a form to say he wasn't badly treated. We know for a fact that he was, and I'm going to push that issue. "

Prosecutor Marine Lt. Col. Kevin Chenail had asked for the maximum sentence, referring to Hicks by his pseudonym 'Muhammad Dawood'. He told the panel of military officers that: "Today in this courtroom, we are on the front lines of the global war on terror... The enemy is sitting at the defense table. We are face to face with the enemy..." who was "trying to kill Americans."

Australian Prime Minister John Howard told reporters in Sydney that:"He's not a hero in my eyes and he ought not to be a hero in the eyes of any people in the Australian community. The bottom line will always be that he pleaded guilty to knowingly assisting a terrorist organisation."

It was suggested yesterday, by Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown, that the speech restrictions in the plea deal were put in place as a deliberate attempt to meddle in upcoming elections. "Of course it's a fix," said Brown. "The message has gone very clearly from Canberra to Washington to Guantanamo Bay: don't allow Hicks

to be released until after the elections and certainly don't allow him to speak."

Howard disputed that interpretation of events. "We didn't impose the sentence, the sentence was imposed by the military commission and the plea bargain was worked out between the military prosecution and Mr Hicks's lawyers, and the suggestion...that it's got something to do with the Australian election is absurd."

Mouse makes nest in cash machine, eats money

In Estonia, a mouse made its nest in a cash machine and spent the weekend eating thousands of pounds worth of bank notes (Estonian kroon). The critter was discovered after a customer making a withdrawal got half-eaten bills from the machine.

"At some stage over the weekend the chewed money jammed, and the mouse seems to have spent the rest of the weekend turning the notes into bedding. It probably was attracted by the warmth from the machine and decided to make itself at home."— Kristina Tamberg, spokeswoman for Hansapank Bank in Tallinn.

Experts are now investigating how the rodent was able to get into the ATM.

Nepal: Former rebels join government; elections set for June

Five former Maoist rebels were sworn in as ministers as part of a peace pact designed to end a decade-long insurgency that has killed more than 13,000 people in Nepal. The new government has announced assembly elections for late June, 2007. Thereafter, the new assembly is due to write a new constitution for the Himalayan

nation.

Russia bans foreigners from retail sales jobs

Under a new law that went into effect today, non-Russians will not be allowed to work as salespeople in shops and markets. The ban was presented by Vladimir Putin as a way of improving employment prospects for Russian citizens. Russian media warns that it will increase the labor costs for retailers and drive up inflation. The Federal Migration Service, a government agency, reported nearly full compliance in Moscow.

Google TiSP April fools joke

Today, Sunday, Google "released" their Google TiSP service. This April Fool appears on their homepage as "New! Get FREE breakthrough broadband with Google TiSP (BETA)." This directs you to a page with details of Google's TiSP package, a package that will give you broadband after you flush a fiber-optic cable down your toilet. Google issued a press release at midnight on April 1st, 2007.

Iranian students protest outside British embassy in Tehran

Between 100 and 200 students gathered outside the British embassy in Tehran to protest the alledged incursion into Iranian waters by the Royal Navy. The protesters threw rocks, chanted "Death to Britain" and called for the expulsion of the ambassador. Police prevented the protesters from entering the compound.

Today in History

1792 - By the Coinage Act, the United States Mint was founded and the U.S. currency was decimalised.

1801 - British forces led by Horatio Nelson defeated the Dano-Norwegian fleet in the Battle of

Copenhagen.

1956 - As the World Turns premiered on U.S. television as the first half-hour serial drama.

1982 - Argentine special forces invaded the Falkland Islands, sparking the Falklands War.

1992 - John Gotti the crime boss of the Gambino crime family, was convicted of racketeering, murder, conspiracy to commit murder, loansharking, obstruction of justice, illegal gambling and tax evasion.

April 02 is Passover begins at sunset (Judaism, 2007); Malvinas Day in Argentina.

Quote of the Day

How far should one accept the rules of the society in which one lives? To put it another way: at what point does conformity become corruption? Only by answering such questions does the conscience truly define itself. ~ Kenneth Tynan

Word of the Day

stultify; v

1. To cause to appear foolish or incompetent.
2. To deprive of strength or efficiency; make useless or worthless.

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