

Top Stories

Hurricane Dennis heads for Gulf Coast, leaves trail of destruction in its wake



Residents of the Gulf Coast are bracing for the landfall of Hurricane Dennis, a storm that has left a

path of destruction throughout the island nations of Jamaica, Haiti, and Cuba. Winds in excess of 145 mph have destroyed homes, and left Cuba to rely on ham radio as a means of communication.

Nigerian sentenced to death for admitting to gay relations



An official with the United Nations is decrying a Nigerian court decision to sentence a 50-year-old man to death by stoning after he admitting to having sex with another man. Reports have not named the individual.

Coordinated terrorist attack hits London



Four terrorist bombs have exploded in London, and US authorities have stated two more were found unexploded. As of July

8th, more than 50 people are dead, and hundreds are injured. A previously unheard of splinter group, "Al-Qaeda in Europe", is said to have claimed responsibility.

Wikipedia Current Events

•President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan says at a press conference that he does not believe that Osama bin Laden is in Afghanistan. CIA chief Porter Goss has said in a recent interview that he has an "excellent idea" of bin Laden's whereabouts.

•Following general elections in May, Ethiopia releases the first round of official results for 307 of 527 parliamentary seats. The ruling EPRDF has won 139 seats, while opposition parties CUD and UEDF won 93 and 42, respectively. Smaller parties and independent candidates won the remaining 33 seats. CUD and UEDF announced plans to form a coalition government.

Appalachian Mountains coal company target of protesters

A Friday protest in downtown Richmond drew around 200 protesters to Virginia's state capital to demonstrate against strip mining practices of Massey Energy Company. Demonstrators marched through town and gathered in front of the company's office building where nearly 20 laid in the street of the city's main thoroughfare, and were nearly arrested. A few linked arms around a sidewalk structure to avoid being hauled away by police.

Chanting "Blankenship, Blankenship, Blankenship," and waving bed sheets for flags, the demonstrators demanded to be seen and heard by the Massey Chairman and CEO, Don Blankenship. Arrests for civil disobedience were avoided when two security guards were sent by the company to retrieve a list of their demands.

The demonstration, timed to coincide with Scotland's G8 conference, was organized by a group called "Mountain Justice Summer" and environmentalists to protest mountain top removal mining techniques. The company's mining operations are located in the Appalachian Mountain chain in the

states of Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Massey is the United States fourth-largest coal mining operation.

A statement issued by a Massey spokesman defended their respect of people's rights, and decied what they said was, "a great deal of misinformation."

The Richmond Times-Dispatch reported that unofficial "legal observers" accompanied the demonstrators and carried notebooks to record crowd and police activity.

Dozens left dead in Caribbean as Hurricane Dennis moves toward U.S.



By clicking the image, a larger picture shows the key code that recorded the storms changes in intensity. CMISS Jul 8/2100Z

After scouring the Caribbean islands, Hurricane Dennis moved on toward the U.S. Gulf coast but not before its deadly fury was unleashed upon the region's many island nations.

The fury of Dennis overnight wracked the area with torrential flood, causing rains, dangerous rip tides, tidal swells and winds up to 175 miles per hour. According to reports from humanitarian aid organizations, at least 10 died in Cuba and 22 in Haiti. As of 9 July 2005 18:06 (UTC), reports of dead and injured from other Caribbean countries had not been reported.

Cuba, which has a national emergency response program in the event of Hurricanes, evacuated 660,000 people from the eastern part of the island, which was considered to be the most vulnerable part of

Wikipedia Current Events

•Authorities in the United Kingdom evacuate over 30,000 people from the centre of the city of Birmingham, Britain's second largest city.

•A "lights on" bill to resume normal government operation is approved in Minnesota. The Minnesota Legislature now has until July 14 to approve a budget.

the country. But Saturday morning, president Fidel Castro confirms in a national broadcast that at least 10 Cubans died as a result of the storm. Dennis slammed into Cuba's southern coastal province of Cienfuegos Friday afternoon with Category 4 force winds. It emerged on the north side of Cuba considerably weakened to Category 1.

By clicking the image, a larger picture shows the key code that recorded the storms changes in intensity. CMISS Jul 8/2100Z

In nearby Jamaica, although the island was spared the full force of Dennis, rains and tidal swells caused widespread flooding in 28 communities. Hundreds of families faced a weekend camped out in emergency shelters as health officials inspected flood areas for safety.

Walt Disney Co. reconciles with Disney heir

Today The Walt Disney Company issued a joint statement with business partners Roy E. Disney and Stanley Gold to the media, as a show of reunion between the two camps after nearly three years of hostility.

Roy E. Disney, son of company co-founder Roy O. Disney and nephew of the company namesake Walt Disney, had resigned from his job as chairman of Feature Animation at the company after experiencing difficulty with the company's board of directors, many of whom were biased towards company CEO Michael Eisner's view of what direction the company should take.

Eisner is due to retire from the company this September, and the talks with Disney and Gold are believed to have been led by Eisner's successor, Bob Iger, who is currently President and COO of the company. Iger has shown great interest in building relationships back up with many companies who have refused to work with Disney until Eisner leaves, such as Pixar Animation and George Lucas.

Large scores of Disney fans had hoped Roy would read the Disneyland Dedication Speech on the theme park's fiftieth birthday next week, which was originally read by Walt on the park's opening day, but Roy had already entered an annual sailing race from Los Angeles to Honolulu.

UK Police evacuate Birmingham city centre



Broad Street, Birmingham (this photo was not taken recently)

Police are in the process of evacuating Birmingham City Centre and part of the Ladywood residential district after having received intelligence regarding a possible threat. An estimated 20,000 people are being moved. Nightlife sites are being closed and people are being told to go home. The evacuation was begun at about 8.15 p.m. (1915 UTC) after the police issued a "Public Warning". Cars are being prohibited from entry inside the Inner Ring Road, and New Street railway station, the hub of the British passenger railway system has been closed.

A police spokeswoman said that the investigation was 'proportional' to the threat, but refused to comment on details of the threat. "West Midlands police are now closing down the Broad Street entertainment zone and asking people to leave Birmingham town centre and go home," said the spokesman.

BBC Radio Five Live and Sky News have unconfirmed reports of controlled explosions in the city's Chinatown district.

A BBC News 24 correspondent reports that the Police have prevented motorists from returning to their cars and hundreds of city revellers are filing their way on foot along Bristol Road to converge on the Edgbaston Cricket Ground.

In a press conference, West Midlands Police Assistant Chief Constable Stuart Hyde said that the intelligence they received is not believed to be connected to Thursday's terrorist bombings in London.

Earlier in the evening a controlled explosion on "a suspect package" had been carried out on a bus in Corporation Street, but they "no

longer believe it was suspicious device".

Broad Street is the City's best-known entertainment area and is home to hundreds of bars and clubs.

San Francisco anti-G8 rally turns violent



A participant in the protest holds anarchist literature. Source: Indybay.org

San Francisco, California – A rally in San Francisco's Mission District to protest the current G8 summit in the United Kingdom turned violent Friday as protestors turned on police officers and empty storefronts. Both police and protestors charge the other side with violence.

At least one police officer was rushed to a nearby hospital with head wounds. Other injuries have yet to be reported. The California city, widely considered a liberal bastion in the U.S., has since 2003 allowed impromptu, unlicensed rallies and protests where police are trained not to interfere with protestors unless public safety is threatened.

The protestors began their rally at 7:47 p.m. at the corner of 16th and Mission streets in San Francisco near the Wells Fargo bank. Reportedly, in less than an hour 150 people had gathered at the corner.

By 8:51 pm, more than 200 people began to move down the street towards 23rd and Mission streets through the heart of San Francisco's Latino enclave. Since the protestors failed to notify the city of their march and failed to get a permit, police told the marchers that the street march was illegal, asking the protestors to move to the sidewalk.

They began to move up 24th towards Valencia, where the first arrest was made of a protestor setting off illegal fireworks. Protesters who didn't know the specifics, heard of the arrest and started to step off of the sidewalk and run to avoid police. At 9:14 p.m. organizers called for a regroup at

16th and Mission.

Most people went to regroup, though some stayed behind. Windows were broken at Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and KFC restaurant as well as other corporate targets, labeled as symbols of global capitalism.

American flag burnings re-energized the group and trash cans were lit on fire. Protestors then moved newspaper stands into the street to create barricades against police cars.

Later, a police car was believed to have been set on fire due to a collision with a protester's sign. It turned out that it had only been a red smoke bomb. But the officer was beaten by protestors. The protest dispersed by 11:23 p.m. after an ambulance arrived to take the police officer to a nearby hospital.

Organizers of the protest reportedly claimed theirs was not just an anti-G8 protest, though they were the main target. A group calling itself "Anarchist Action" said that the protest was also march against capitalism and gentrification in San Francisco.

London bus bomb 'an hour late'

Police have revealed that the Tavistock Square bus bomb did not explode until nearly an hour after the bombs on the Underground system detonated.

The bomb exploded at 9.47am, while all three Tube bombs exploded within 50 seconds of each other at 8.50am.

Police are looking into "every possibility" as to why the bomb exploded such a long time after the others, and are not ruling anything in or out.

However they have stated that the bomb, consisting of 5kg of high explosives, was in a bag on the floor or on a seat at the rear of the upper deck - and not strapped to a person.

At the scene of the blast itself a meticulous finger tip search is taking place to find evidence. The roof of the bus has been taken away for a thorough forensic examination.

The bus itself will be removed in due

course.

The bus was fitted with an internal CCTV system, but it has not yet been stated if it was working. However the bus was seen by numerous traffic cameras as it made its journey that morning, and police are reviewing hours of footage.

Thirteen people died in the blast outside the British Medical Association building.

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.

London Tube bombs went 'bang bang bang, very close together'

After a press conference in London from the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London, more details are emerging about the attacks in London on Thursday.

Data from the Underground system's power and control systems have revealed that all three bombs went off within 50 seconds of each other, at 8.50am, with the managing director of Transport for London, Tim O'Toole saying the bombs went 'bang bang bang, very close together'.

The first bomb to detonate was on the Aldgate train, seconds before the others. The blast tripped out the power system, visible in the control room. The first call the police received that morning reported "a bang" at Aldgate East, coming within a minute of the blast.

The Edgware Road train, leaving for Paddington, exploded opposite a train coming from the other direction, making people think at first that it was a derailment. The first call to the Police spoke not of an explosion, but of a person falling under the wheels of the train. The confirmation of a bomb did not come until 9.17am, but by that time the emergency services were already on scene.

The Piccadilly line bomb cut the tunnel telephone system wires, which then tripped out the track current. The tunnel itself suffered only slight damage and is safe, but the train - which was packed with commuters - is very badly damaged.

London Underground declared a 'code Amber' within minutes, moving trains to

platforms and opening all doors. A 'code Red' - full evacuation - was set at around 9.15am. O'Toole described the decision to evacuate as being "very grave, not taken lightly". When questioned as to whether everything possible had been done on the day to save lives, the managing director of Transport for London was "very proud" of the choices made that morning.

As investigations continue, all bodies have been removed from the sub-surface Circle line trains, but the carriages themselves are still in situ while a painstaking forensic investigation takes place.

Currently, work is on-going to retrieve bodies and forensic evidence from the carriage of the train in the deep tunnel of the Piccadilly line near Kings's Cross. Teams of rescue workers looking for human remains are working alongside forensics experts in a "meticulous" search to find evidence.

Conditions are described as being very difficult, with high temperatures and lots of dust. Work was halted over Friday night when conditions became too bad, and resumed this morning. Efforts have been made to improve the ventilation.

Work will continue throughout tonight and possibly into Sunday. The exact number of bodies still in the wrecked carriage is unknown.

Access from King's Cross is impossible, so workers are taking the longer route from Russell Square station to get to the front of the train.

Police have revealed that the bombs were 'high explosives' - not homemade. However they are declining to be specific about their composition as the information could be useful when they interrogate suspects.

Police will not confirm or deny if any parts of a timer have been found, but have said that "any device will now be in a million pieces". Police believe the use of timers more likely than suicide bombings as the blasts were so closely timed, but are not ruling out anything.

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.

Weening takes stage to Gérardmer in photo finish

24 year old Dutchman Pieter Weening takes out the eighth stage of the Tour de France to Gérardmer by millimetres over German Andreas Klöden.

Weening joined a breakaway just as the route crossed the border to return to France after starting the day in Germany. Weening was caught by Klöden just before he reached the summit of the Col de la Schlucht with 15 km to the finish.

Weening and Klöden worked together to hold off the 30 strong pack by 27 seconds. Weening sat in Klöden's slipstream as they approached the line, and pulled out at the last moment to pip the German on the line by millimetres.

Nigerian sentenced to death for admitting to gay relations

Philip Alston, an official with the United Nations is decrying a Nigerian court decision to sentence a 50-year-old man to death by stoning after he admitted to having sex with another man. Reports have not named the individual.

The incident in question happened after the 50-year-old man was acquitted of charges that he had sexual relations with a much younger man. During further questioning, the judge asked the accused if he ever had sex with any other men.

Upon answering yes, the judge convicted the man of sodomy and sentenced him to death by stoning.

Nigeria, the most populous African country, is one of many countries that has started to adopt Sharia, or traditional Islamic law as detailed in the Koran. Since 2000, 12 of Nigeria's northernmost states have adopted Sharia codes for their courtrooms. Under Islamic law, homosexual conduct is a crime punishable by death.

"Sodomy cannot be considered one of the most serious crimes for which, under international law, the death penalty can be prescribed. The punishment is wholly disproportionate," Alston, U.N. Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or

Arbitrary Executions, said in a written statement Friday.

Nigeria's southern states are mostly Christian and do not follow Sharia law.

Tour de France week 1 wrap up

Stage 1 - Fromentine - Noirmoutier-en-l'Île 19.0km Individual Time Trial

1. David Zabriskie (USA) Team CSC 20:51
2. Lance Armstrong (USA) Discovery Channel 0:02
3. Alexandre Vinokourov (Kazakhstan) T-Mobile 0:53

David Zabriskie dominates the course and the competition to edge out Armstrong by 2 seconds. Most of Armstrong's challengers finish over a minute down. Jan Ullrich is demoralised by having Lance, who started 1 minute after him, catch and overtake him.

Stage 2 - Challans - Les Essarts 181.5km

1. Tom Boonen (Belgium) Quick.Step 3:51:31
2. Thor Hushovd (Norway) Credit Agricole s.t.
3. Robbie McEwen (Australia) Davitamon-Lotto s.t.

Tom Boonen dominates the first bunch sprint of this years Tour as he powered away to finish a bike length in front of his two biggest rivals for the Green Points Jersey in Hushovd and McEwen.

Stage 3 - La Chataigneraie - Tours 212.5km

1. Tom Boonen (Belgium) Quick.Step 4:36:09
2. Peter Wrolich (Austria) Gerolsteiner s.t.
3. Stuart O'Grady (Australia) Cofidis s.t.

Robbie McEwen crossed the line in third place but was relegated to last place after the Jury of Commissaires examined the finish in which McEwen had leaned on fellow Australian heavily with his arm and head at over 60 km/h. Tom Boonen wins easily in front of Peter Wrolich and O'Grady.

Stage 4 - Tours - Blois 67.5km Team Time Trial

1. Discovery Channel 1:10:39
2. Team CSC 0:02
3. T-Mobile 0:35

Discovery Channel takes the stage and Lance pulls on the maillot jaune (yellow jersey) for the first time this year after Dave Zabriskie from Danish Team CSC crashes within the last couple of kilometres of the stage. Team CSC had been 6 seconds in front of Discovery at the 45.8km time check in Onzain.

Stage 5 - Chambord - Montargis 183.0km

1. Robbie McEwen (Australia) Davitamon-Lotto 3:46:00
2. Tom Boonen (Belgium) Quick.Step s.t.
3. Thor Hushovd (Norway) Credit Agricole s.t.

Robbie McEwen edges out rival Tom Boonen by half a wheels length. His victory is a consolation after being relegated in Stage 3 putting him behind in the chase for the sprinters Green Jersey.

Stage 6 - Troyes - Nancy 199.0km

1. Lorenzo Bernucci (Italy) Fassa Bortolo 4:12:52
2. Alexandre Vinokourov (Kazakhstan) T-Mobile s.t.
3. Robert Förster (Germany) Gerolsteiner 0:07

A stage dominated by rain and a 175km breakaway by veteran Frenchman Christophe Mengin of the Francaise des Jeux team. Mengin bravely held on to a narrow lead of about 10 seconds as the peleton approached the final kilometre. Bernucci and Vinokourov attacked just prior to this point and had almost bridged the gap when Mengin went down in a slippery right hand bend. Bernucci avoided Mengin and stayed upright, while Vinokourov slowed and pulled a foot from his pedals. As the peleton rounded the same corner almost all of the 20 riders in the peleton went down. Bernucci held on to take out the first win of his pro career, while Vinokourov got his foot back in and maintained his second place. Vinokourov efforts enable him to gain a 7 second time split plus a time bonus of 12 second moving him up in to third in the General Classification.

Stage 7 - Lunéville - Karlsruhe 228.5km

1. Robbie McEwen (Australia) Davitamon-Lotto 5:03:45
2. Magnus Backstedt (Sweden) Liquigas-Bianchi s.t.
3. Bernard Eisel (Austria) Francaise des Jeux s.t.

Australian Robbie McEwen wins his second stage of this years Tour winning in a long straight bunch sprint in Karlsruhe in Germany. The win levels the score between Robbie and Tom Boonen each with 2 stage wins so far. Earlier in the day Fabian Wegmann a German on German team Gerolsteiner lead a solo breakaway from the peloton to pick up points in the King of the Mountains competition. Even though he was caught by the pack before the finish it was a successful day for Wegmann as he claimed the polka dot jersey for the King of the Mountains leader and also lead the tour as it pass over the border into to Germany. The tour returns into France today with the stage finishing in Gerardmer.

Pittsburgh Pirates rally to defeat New York Mets, 6-5

The Pittsburgh Pirates rallied to beat the New York Mets in the first game of a home series at PNC Park on Friday, July 8, 2005.

The Pirates went into the bottom of the 9th inning down, 5-1, and gave up the first two outs but managed to load the bases. The Mets then put in their closer, Looper, against Tike Redman. Redman, after fouling off several pitches in a 11-pitch at bat, finally hit one to bring the score to 5-3. Looper gave up 4 runs total in the bottom of the ninth, but managed to get out of the inning with the score tied. In the top of the 10th, the Pirates closer, José Mesa, allowed no hits. Then, in the bottom of the tenth, Humberto Cota hit a line drive with men on first and second with two outs to score the winning run.

Video game's secret sex scenes spark outrage

The w:National Institute on the Media and the Family (NIMF), a media watchdog group based in Minneapolis, Minnesota issued a "nationwide parental alert" today. This came after finding out about hidden sex scenes in the popular video game Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.

The game also has been criticised as being too violent. This is not limited to San Andreas: the entire series has come under fire for its content, mostly the last two games, Grand Theft Auto 3 and Grand Theft Auto: Vice City.



The sex scenes come in the form of a "mini-game" in which the player controls the male with the task of maximising his cohorts "excitement." The hidden game in GTA: San Andreas is not advertised or easy to find but can be unlocked by modifying the game using a program which has been widely available on the Internet for weeks. But for NIMF and the Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB), the organization which rates video games and rated GTA: San Andreas 'M' for Mature, the hidden mini-game came as a surprise. As such, the ESRB has launched an investigation into the matter.

To unlock the hidden sex mini-game on the Playstation 2 requires a special device to transfer the modified files to the console, making it significantly more difficult to enable than on the PC or XBox versions of the game.

Rockstar Games, the game's publisher, refused to comment on whether the sex scenes were inserted by their programmers. Rockstar Games has also said, "We thoroughly support the work of the ESRB, and believe that it has an exemplary record of rating games and promoting understanding of video game content. We also feel confident that the investigation will uphold the original rating of the game, as the work of the mod community is beyond the scope of either publishers or the ESRB."

In the game the character may have girlfriends, and at a certain point in his stats he can entertain his girlfriend with some "coffee". However, the "hot coffee" modification unlocks the secret sex scenes after the two share a drink.

Hurricane Dennis heads for Gulf Coast, leaves trail of destruction in its wake



Hurricane Dennis on June 9 at 7:15 p.m. EDT. Source: NOAA.

Residents along the US Gulf Coast evacuated or hunkered down Saturday as Hurricane Dennis lashed the Florida Keys with wind and sheets of rain and churned along a path toward areas still rebuilding from last year's storms.

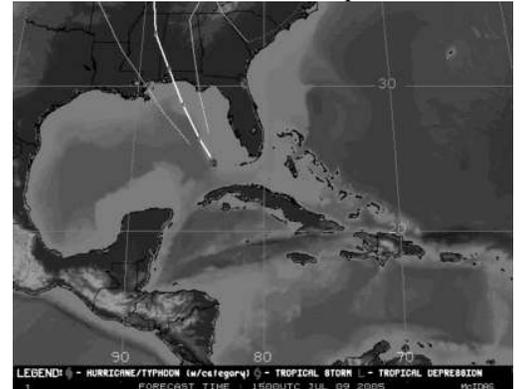
More than 1.4 million people from the Florida Panhandle to Alabama and Louisiana are under evacuation orders. Landfall was expected Sunday afternoon anywhere from the Florida Panhandle to southeast Louisiana.

At 6 pm EDT the center of Hurricane Dennis was located Near latitude 25.9 north... Longitude 84.9 west.

Dennis is moving northwest at about 14 mph. This motion is expected to continue today, with a gradual turn to the north-northwest tonight.

As of 6pm EDT, according to the National Weather Service, maximum sustained winds are near 115 mph, making Dennis a category three hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Scale. Winds are expected to increase even more this evening.

Hurricane force winds extend outward 40 miles from the center, while tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 175 miles.



Dennis churned into Cuba packing winds in

excess of 145 mph, leaving homes destroyed, and leading to reliance on ham radio as a means of communication. According to CNN, Dennis caused at least 10 deaths throughout Cuba. The Cuban Meteorological Service reported destruction to 85% of its communication infrastructure. 2005 Hurricane Season

Flooding led to widespread problems in Haiti, where the storm claimed 22 lives according to CNN. Mudslides, triggered by the large volume of rain blocked roads and sent 3,000 people to seek shelter in designated storm shelters in Jamaica.

When the storm moved across Cuba, oil companies began shutting down rigs in the Gulf of Mexico and residents in coastal areas of the United States started boarding up windows and preparing for the worst. The storm is expected to make landfall in the United States sometime Sunday evening, following a similar path as Hurricane Ivan last year. Current paths indicate the Florida Keys will be brushed by on the way to the Florida panhandle, coming ashore near Pensacola, FL.

Its current location is 25.9°N, 84.9° W, about 305 miles south of Panama City, Florida, and about 395 miles southeast of Biloxi, Mississippi.

The storm is creating seas in the 12-foot range, with highest seas reported at 30 feet according the National Weather Service. Residents in the Florida panhandle, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana are all under a hurricane watch as current predictions show the storm's progression to effect those states.

'Denmark will be attacked' says one expert, 'Denmark safe' says another

Security in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, was tightened after the attacks on London Thursday when more than 50 people were killed. Denmark supported the U.S.-led war on Iraq and fears of an attack are rising. "It's not a question of if we'll be attacked, but when" said security specialist Mikkel Vedby at the University in Copenhagen.

"This is how the world has become in the 21st century. There are people out there that want to harm us. They are at war with us

and it seems we're in war with them. We might be safe tomorrow or the next ten years." said Mikkel Vedby. He later added that Denmark needed to get ready to face a major terrorist attack.

The group that has claimed responsibility for the attacks on London, the "Secret Organisation Group of Al-Qaeda of Jihad Organisation", issued a statement yesterday where attacks on countries that supported the "crusades" against Iraq and Afghanistan are threatened. Denmark is on that list. The statement has not been verified.

Anja Dalgaard-Nielsen, a security expert from the Danish Institute for International Studies, disagrees and says Denmark is not in danger of being a terrorist target because radical Islamic groups there are too small to be able to organise an attack. "It is true we are in a similar position as the UK. The Danish government does work closely with the United States and the United Kingdom governments because of Iraq and Afghanistan."

As in other countries, security in Denmark has been stepped up at airports, rail stations, ports, borders, and other public places.

Baseball, softball dropped from 2012 Olympics

The International Olympic Committee has announced today that baseball and softball are to be cut from Olympic competition from 2012. Rugby, karate, rollersports, golf, and squash have been rumored to be included. The IOC meets later today to discuss the new Olympic Program.

The vote, held in Singapore, surprised some supporters of the sports, who believed that there were enough votes to retain them.

