



Top Stories

UN to send troops to Darfur, Sudan

At least 26,000 United Nations (UN) troops will be sent to the Darfur region of Sudan in an attempt to stop violence from spreading and to protect civilians from the fighting.



News Corp. acquires Dow Jones & Co.

The Bancroft family, which controls Dow Jones' shareholder votes, approved the deal amid opposition from some key members who were fearful that Journal's reputation and content would be altered under its new owner.

Featured story

Alan Turing Building opens at University of Manchester



The Manchester University's School of Mathematics moved into its new building named after one of its most widely known academics, Alan Turing, one of the pioneers of computer science.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Sudan pledges support for a joint United Nations and African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur.
- Sixty-nine Chinese coal miners are rescued from the Zhijian mine in Henan province. (AFP via ABC News Australia)
- The US House of Representatives passes a resolution to lift travel restrictions on Taiwan's president and other high-level officials visiting the United States.
- The Prime Minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero visits the Canary Islands to inspect the damage caused by five days of fires on the islands of Gran Canaria and Tenerife.
- Norihiro Akagi resigns as Japan's agriculture minister after scandals involving him adversely affected the Liberal Democratic Party's performance in the Japanese House of Councillors election, 2007.

Alan Turing Building opens at University of Manchester

The School of Mathematics, University of Manchester finished moving in to its new building Monday. The building is named after one of its most widely known academics Alan Turing, one of the founders of computer science and a Reader in Mathematics at Manchester.

Although Turing is one of the city and university's most famous sons, there are very few things named in his honour. The city

council was criticised for naming an uninspiring piece of by-pass Alan Turing Way, and a statue erected by public subscription bears a plaque pointing out the failure of the computing industry to contribute.

The new building deliberately attempts to provide a conducive atmosphere for mathematical collaboration with a design that aims to promote chance encounter in public spaces. It also aims to save energy with solar panels fitted to the roof.

The building also houses the Astronomy and Astrophysics Group, and the Photon Sciences Institute.

UN to send troops to Darfur, Sudan

At least 26,000 United Nations (UN) troops will be sent to the Darfur region of Sudan in Africa under resolution 1769 in an attempt to stop violence from spreading and to protect civilians from the fighting. The force includes at least 19,555 troops and nearly 7,000 civilian police officers in a force being called the "United Nations-African Union Mission" (UNAMID). The UN Security Council voted unanimously to send troops to the region.

At least 200,000 people have been killed in four years of fighting in the region and more than two million have been displaced.

Troops will be sent to the region under Chapter 7 of the UN charter

which states that the UN "shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken to maintain or restore international peace and security."

Language authorizing the troops to seize illegal weapons caches and mentions of possible future sanctions if Sudan does not cooperate was removed during negotiations. The resolution does allow troops to monitor weapon caches.

"If any party blocks progress and the killings continue, I and others will redouble our efforts to impose further sanctions. The plan for Darfur from now on is to achieve a cease-fire, including an end to aerial bombings of civilians; drive forward peace talks ... and, as peace is established, offer to begin to invest in recovery and reconstruction," said the new British Prime Minister Gordon Brown on Tuesday while visiting the UN headquarters in New York.

Troops are expected to be in the region no later than December of this year but may take up to a year to fully deploy. This will be the largest peacekeeping force ever deployed and cost over two billion (USD) a year to keep the force in the region. The resolution does not allow for more than 26,000 troops to be deployed.

Facebook down for "upgrades"; multiple blogs suggest site was hacked

Popular social networking website Facebook went down for unknown upgrades, possibly to circumvent multiple holes that were published in a white paper earlier. From roughly 1:00 to 4:15 pm ET, users reported the site was down.

Blogs have speculated it may be simply a server upgrade, or it may be new features. One web development blogger has even raised the theory that the site was hacked, with the login box showing multiple random email addresses, through "<input>" coding. Another user replied to this posting, saying that they were even able to read the other, random user's inbox. Both a blogger who works at a computing company's office in Johannesburg, South Africa and a Norwegian news outlet reported similar troubles. Many blogs received comments from people with similar circumstances, worldwide.

A white paper by Adrienne Felt, posted on July 27, 2007, explained step-by-step how to use an exploit to hijack a user's account. The white paper was then partially censored by the author, until the vulnerability has been fixed by Facebook. Regardless of whether the change was prompted by this paper, both the XSS hole and problem with forms described by the author were fixed during the upgrade.

The site read "We're upgrading. We'll be back soon." with no further explanation.

This is the first known global outage for the site.

This comes as a rival site, ConnectU, has filed a lawsuit against Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg for allegedly stealing the idea and the code. The hearing is scheduled for tomorrow.

Also on Wednesday, the Black Hat Briefings computer security conference begins. The conference unites people from "government agencies and global corporations with the underground's most

respected hackers."

Scholarships awarded to isolated pacific islanders in Micronesia

The Habel Outer Island Education announced Tuesday that it will be awarding over US \$3,500 in tuition assistance scholarships to students from the Outer Islands of Yap State, in the Federated States of Micronesia.

The fund is a South Carolina based 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, administered by unpaid volunteers, including many returned Peace Corps Volunteers who have served time in Micronesia's public schools.

The scholarships were awarded to two female high school students from the Atoll of Ulithi. These students will be traveling to the neighboring Republic of Palau to attend classes at the private all-girls Bethanaia High School.

Habele was incorporated in 2006, and began informal scholarships three years earlier in 2003. In addition to providing scholarships to students who attend private schools, the organization also gathers and distributes donations of school supplies to the public schools in the Outer Islands of Yap.

US Chief Justice John Roberts hospitalized

Chief Justice John Roberts was hospitalized after having a seizure in his summer home in Maine. A statement released by Supreme Court spokeswoman Kathy Arberg stated that Justice Roberts took a minor fall from the seizure, and has been transported to the Penobscot Bay Medical Center. In addition, she said that Justice Roberts has undergone a, "thorough neurological evaluation,

which revealed no cause for concern."

Justice Roberts, 52, had a similar incident in 1993, when he suffered a "isolated, idiosyncratic seizure," according to White House doctors.

The Justice was returning from a boat ride at around 2 p.m. EDT (UTC-4) Monday when he fell on a dock near his home in Port Clyde on Maine's Hupper Island, Arberg said. He was taken by boat to the mainland, and transferred to an ambulance, said St. George Fire Chief Tim Polky. Doctors have determined that this incident was caused by "a benign idiopathic seizure." Both descriptions, according to Arberg, hint that doctors could not determine the cause of the seizures, or link them to any known condition.

Cricket: India defeat England in second Test

India have beaten England by seven wickets in the second Test cricket match of the Indian tour of England at Trent Bridge, Nottingham, England.

Despite the loss of three wickets on the final day, the Indian batsmen comfortably reached the 73 run target set by England.

India lead the three-match series 1-0 after the first Test ended in a draw, and England must win the final Test at The Oval to avoid their first home Test series defeat since 2001.

The start of play was delayed on the first day as the outfield was wet following heavy rain. Before play finally got underway after lunch on Friday, India won the toss and captain Rahul Dravid chose to field first.

Zaheer Khan made two

breakthroughs early in the England innings to dismiss Andrew Strauss and captain Michael Vaughan. R P Singh then trapped Kevin Pietersen lbw to reduce England to 47-3. Although Paul Collingwood and Alastair Cook shared a partnership of 54, India's bowlers found some swing and reduced England to 169-7 at the close of day one.

On the second day England were soon bowled out for just 198, with Zaheer Khan leading the bowling attack with 4-59. In response, the England bowlers did little to trouble the Indian batsmen, and Dinesh Karthik and Wasim Jaffer soon reached half centuries. The breakthrough came just before Tea when Jaffer was caught off Tremlett's bowling, while Karthik followed just after the interval. India soon surpassed England's first innings total, and Sachin Tendulkar scored a fifty and his 11,000th run in Test cricket. A partnership of 97 was brought to an end when Rahul Dravid was caught by Ian Bell, and bad weather forced the close of play soon afterwards with India on 254-3.

England struggled in the field on day three as India's lead passed 100. Sourav Ganguly scored fifty and shared a partnership of 96 with Sachin Tendulkar. After lunch, Tendulkar was dismissed by a controversial lbw decision, nine runs short of his century. After V. V. S. Laxman was dismissed for 54, India's tail-enders did not add much to their total and they were eventually bowled out for 481, leading England by 283 runs. Monty Panesar took 4-101 and Chris Tremlett took 3-80. Play ended for the day sixteen overs into England's second innings, with England still 240 runs behind on 43-0.

Michael Vaughan scored 124 runs on day four and shared a 112 run stand with Paul Collingwood (63), and Andrew Strauss scored 55. However England's last seven wickets fell for just 68 runs with Zaheer Khan taking 5-75. England were all out for 355, leaving India to chase a target of just 73 in their second innings. Three overs of India's second innings were played before the close of play on day four, with India on 10-0, needing just 63 runs for victory.

Indian bowler Sreesanth was fined half of his match fee for colliding with England batsman Michael Vaughan during the fourth day's play, breaking the ICC Code of Conduct which prohibits "Inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between players during play". The match was also marred by incidents of sledging.

On the final day India were hardly troubled in reaching their target although Chris Tremlett took three wickets, including that of Sachin Tendulkar for just one run.

New Zealand's copyright bill report strikes criticism

A report by Parliament's commerce select committee has been released on the bill seeking to amend New Zealand's current copyright law. InternetNZ has voiced their disappointment in the report and the bill.

Currently under New Zealand law it is illegal, but common, for example, to copy a CD's music for playing on a digital music player. The Copyright (New Technologies and Performers' Rights) Amendment Bill now makes this legal as long as there is only one copy for anyone in the same household, the original CD is kept and it is not sold. The bill had previously included time

restrictions for this, but they have now been removed....

"copyright law in New Zealand needs to be completely re-thought in the context of modern technology and the Internet."
—Keith Davidson.

The report also wishes the bill to be amended to give more power to the copyright holders. The proposed amendment would allow the copyright holders to decide whether or not they wish their works to be exempt under the new, proposed law. The only condition is that the consumers are informed of this decision.

Commentators have cried out against this, they state that there is not much of a point if they can decide not to be applicable to the law. The Internet Society of New Zealand (InternetNZ) executive director, Keith Davidson, has said, "The removal of the two year expiry is good, but what's the point of offering format shifting to the public when the music industry can opt out of allowing it?"

It will also be illegal for people to try and bypass security that disables copying, like that found on DVDs. A conviction would pose either a NZ\$150,000 fine or five years in jail.

Davidson says that InternetNZ does not support the bill in its amended form by the committee. "Overall, the Bill as reported back does contain improvements on the draft. [...] The Committee is recommending legislation that is not fit for purpose."

UK PM Brown meets with US President Bush at Camp David

United Kingdom Prime Minister Gordon Brown met United States President George W. Bush at Camp David in Maryland for their first

formal talks since Brown took office in June.

Gordon Brown arrived at Camp David on Sunday, July 30. Monday, they addressed the press in a joint press conference. According to reports, the talks focused on Iraq, Afghanistan, Darfur, world trade and climate change, amid speculation whether the two leaders could work together. Correspondents say they appeared relaxed as they faced reporters after their talks....

"Everybody is wondering whether or not the Prime Minister and I were able to find common ground, to get along, to have a meaningful discussion. And the answer is, absolutely." —President Bush

Both reiterated a commitment to fighting terrorism, which Prime Minister Brown called "a crime against humanity", and discussed ways of making sure that the two countries' security systems are "properly aligned" and share information.

President Bush spoke of waging an ideological struggle between those who "believe in freedom and justice and human rights and human dignity, and cold-blooded killers who will kill innocent people to achieve their objectives" and said that defending the "young democracies" of Afghanistan and Iraq was a way to defeat "an ideology of darkness" with a "more hopeful ideology".

"It's very important for us to make it clear to those who are in harm's way that these missions will be driven not by local politics but by conditions on the ground," the President added....

"It's in Britain's national interest that with all our energies we work together to address all the great challenges that we face

also together: nuclear proliferation, climate change, global poverty and prosperity, the Middle East peace process, [...] and most immediately, international terrorism." —Prime Minister Brown

Prime Minister Brown acknowledged a responsibility to support the Iraqi government and said the the U.S. and the U.K. had a threefold aim: security for the Iraqi people, political reconciliation, and a stake for Iraqis in their future.

The Prime Minister spoke of a step by step transfer of control to the Iraqi government and security forces, with the British forces moving from a combat to overwatch mode in three of the four provinces under their responsibility. He said military commanders will determine when a similar transition will be made for the remaining province - Basra and that the recommendation will be placed before parliament. The head of the British military said last week that that the transfer is likely by the year end.

Seven of Iraq's 18 provinces, mostly in the Shia dominated south and the Kurdish north, are now formally under the control of Iraqi government and security forces. On being asked if U.S. deployment will continue till after the presidential elections next year, President Bush reiterated that this was going to take a long time, and said he will not prejudge a report by U.S. Commander in Iraq, General David Petraeus, on how the recent troop 'surge' has altered the security situation.

UK Prime Minister proposed setting up a Basra economic development agency to bring jobs and businesses - "economic hope" for

the region, and offered financial support for the project.

Both leaders expressed strong concern over the situation in Darfur, and agreed to step up pressure to end the violence in the region by expediting a U.N. resolution mandating a U.N.-African Union peace force.

Meanwhile, at the U.N. Security Council, a revised draft resolution is being circulated today that drops language critical of Sudan government forces and scales back the peace-keeping force's mandate to monitor arms violation, following Sudan's objections. The peacekeeping force is to assume responsibility by the year's end but it will take up to a year to be fully deployed.

"We're agreed on encouragement for early peace talks, a call to cease violence on the ground, an end to aerial bombing of civilians, and support for economic development if this happens, and further sanctions if this does not happen.", Prime Minister Brown said.

Prime Minister Brown expressed support for President Bush's "bold initiative" in the Middle East peace process and said the two leaders agreed that sanctions against Iran were working and that they were prepared to toughen sanction with a new U.N. resolutions.

Both leaders expressed support for measures to combat poverty, lack of education and healthcare, particularly malaria and HIV/AIDS, including ways to bring public and private sectors, faith groups and civil society to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Prime Minister Brown, who has

already spoken to several leaders around the world regarding the Doha round of trade talks, said contact between world leaders will be stepped up to quickly reach an agreement, which both leaders stressed was an important goal that they were optimistic of attaining.

Climate change was an important issue and needs to be tackled in the context of sustainable development as well as energy security, Prime Minister Brown said, and said that this agenda, agreed at this year's G8 in Germany, would be discussed in meetings over the next few months.

Today in History

1774 – British scientist Joseph Priestley discovered the chemical element oxygen, corroborating the prior discovery of this element by German-Swedish pharmaceutical chemist Carl Wilhelm Scheele.

1831 – A new London Bridge designed by engineer John Rennie opened, where it stood over London's River Thames until American entrepreneur Robert P. McCulloch bought it in 1968 and subsequently moved it to Lake Havasu City, Arizona.

1927 – In the Nanchang Uprising, the first major engagement in the Chinese Civil War, Communist forces seized control over the entire city of Nanchang from the Kuomintang.

1944 – World War II: The Polish Home Army began the Warsaw Uprising in Warsaw against the Nazi occupation of Poland – a rebellion that lasted 63 days until it was quelled by the Germans.

1981 – The American cable television network MTV made its debut with the music video for the song "Video Killed the Radio Star" by The Buggles.

August 01 is Emancipation Day in

Trinidad and Tobago, Swiss National Day in Switzerland

Quote of the Day

People ask what are my intentions with my films — my aims. It is a difficult and dangerous question, and I usually give an evasive answer: I try to tell the truth about the human condition, the truth as I see it. ~ Ingmar Bergman

Word of the Day

calque; n

1. A word-for-word translation of a saying, or a morpheme-by-morpheme translation of a word, from one language to another.

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