



Top Stories

190 dead in Ethiopia floods

At least 190 people have been confirmed dead after heavy rains caused a river to burst its banks in the eastern Ethiopian city of Dire Dawa. A further 300 are reported missing.

Flooding kills dozens in North Korea, leaves thousands more homeless

Flooding due to heavy rains has left over a hundred dead and has caused severe damage to North Korea's rice crop, prompting concerns over food scarcity.

Featured story

Apollo Moon landings tapes reported missing

The magnetic tapes containing the original video recordings of the five Apollo Moon landings have been reported missing.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The Dechatu River in Ethiopia floods, killing over 200 people.
- Fifteen local employees of the French charity organisation Action Against Hunger are found dead in a town in northeastern Sri Lanka at the center of heavy fighting between Tamil rebels and government forces. Both sides have denied involvement in the killings.
- The Déby administration of Chad formally recognizes the People's Republic of China. Chad recognized the Republic of Taiwan from 1997-2006. Chadian

Wikipedia Current Events

diplomats cited the prospects of greater financial investments and China's veto on the United Nations Security Council as the principal factors motivating the diplomatic shift.

• Lebanon rejects a draft U.N. resolution calling for an end to the conflict between Israel and Hizbollah, insisting it must include an explicit demand for a full Israeli pullout from south Lebanon.

• Israeli troops attack the Lebanese town of Qana claiming to destroy the launchers that launched the missiles at Haifa.

• At least six rockets hit Haifa, Israel; one more rocket hits right outside of Haifa, and others hit the Ma'alot, Carmiel area, and Kiryat Shmona. The death toll is at least three in Haifa and 12 for Northern Israel as a whole.

• Reuters has pulled a photograph of Beirut, Lebanon, admitting that it was altered by the photographer, saying "photo editing software was improperly used on this image. A corrected version will immediately follow this advisory. We are sorry for any inconvenience."

• Hezbollah rockets kill at least ten people in Israel.

• Israel arrests the Speaker of the Palestinian Parliament, Abdel Aziz Duwaik. Duwaik is a member of Hamas. (ABC News)

• Tomo Križnar, the Slovenian diplomatic envoy and human-

Wikipedia Current Events

rights activist to Sudan, is formally charged with espionage and illegally entering Darfur. Križnar, who admits entering Darfur without the required visa, was arrested in July.

• Tajik President Emomali Rahmonov began a state visit to India.

• About 800 South Korean Christians left Afghanistan after their planned "peace festival" was called off due to concerns that their presence could spark violence.

I'm staying for at least a year: Tony Blair

Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, intends to remain in power for "at least another year" despite calls for his resignation from within his own Labour Party.

The Sunday Telegraph reports that it has learned from senior sources that Blair feels "rejuvenated" after a trip to the United States and believes he can continue to play a major role as prime minister.

According to the report, Blair, 53, is planning to stare down his critics, including some members of his Cabinet, to push through reforms in health and education.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer and the man long touted as Blair's successor, has been quietly urging a transfer of power to occur shortly after May 2007, the tenth anniversary of

Blair's premiership.

If Blair tries to hang on to power much after next May he may face a full scale revolt by backbench Labour MPs who circulated a letter earlier this year calling for the prime minister to announce a timetable for his departure. Under the party constitution, 70 Labour MPs need to sign a letter calling for a leadership change in order to set a formal challenge into motion.

Blair has been the most successful leader in the Labour Party's history having won three successive elections. However, he led his party to a narrow victory in the 2005 election leading to widespread speculation that he would resign during this term in favour of Brown. His popularity has sagged due to his government's involvement in the Iraq war as well as the Cash for Peerages corruption scandal and several ministerial resignations.

Lebanon fighting escalates as UN debates ceasefire

Fifteen Israelis were killed and more than 115 injured in an attack that saw more than 180 missiles hit towns in northern Israel Sunday. At least seven rockets hit Haifa, Israel's third largest city, killing three and injuring more than 100. Other missiles have hit the Ma'alot, Carmiel and Kiryat Shmona.

Twelve reserve soldiers died when a Hezbollah missile hit Kfar Giladi in Israel. "The scene is very difficult, it can be described as a battlefield," Shimon Abutbul, a rescue worker at the scene said. "There was a lot of blood."

In Lebanon, 17 people were killed as Israeli warplanes and artillery struck southern Lebanon. Three Chinese UN peacekeepers were

injured when a rocket landed near their post.

Israeli jets also struck the southern suburbs of Beirut.

Israel has announced the detention of a Hezbollah combatant suspected of being involved in the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers that prompted the Israeli incursion into Lebanon last month.

The mounting casualties occur as the UN Security Council continues discussions on a draft resolution to halt the fighting. France and the United States have agreed to the wording of a decree which is expected to come to a vote on Monday or Tuesday.

The draft calls for the "full cessation of hostilities based upon, in particular, the immediate cessation by Hezbollah of all attacks and the immediate cessation by Israel of all offensive military operations".

The pending resolution has been welcomed by Israel but condemned by the Syrian foreign minister, Walid Muallem, who called it a "recipe for the continuation of the war". A senior Lebanese official has said his country would reject the resolution because it does not ask that Israeli forces withdraw from Lebanese soil.

No full recount in Mexican election

Mexico's electoral tribunal has ordered a partial recount of ballots cast in last month's election, rejecting demands by left-wing candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador for a full recount.

Right-wing candidate Felipe Calderon had roughly 220,000

votes more than Lopez Obrador in the July 2nd vote according to the present official results, a margin of less than 0.6%. Lopez Obrador accuses Calderon's supporters of electoral irregularities. Under Mexican law a president-elect must be declared by September 6th.

Ballots cast at less than 10% of the country's polling stations will be recounted.

Speaking at a rally in Mexico City following the ruling, Lopez Obrador told his supporters that "peaceful civic resistance" will continue. "We maintain our demand," he said. "We disagree with the tribunal's decision. They must reverse it."

His supporters, chanting "vote-by-vote" and "if there is no solution, there will be revolution" blocked the entrance to the tribunal.

In a speech on July 30, Lopez Obrador stated his point of view on democracy, "Let's bear in mind that democracy is not just the best system of government that humanity has found : it is also the most effective method of guaranteeing coexistence in conditions of harmony. Democracy generates checks and balances, it promotes dignity and avoids that one person or a few people, whether from the higher or lower echelons of the social scale, behave as absolute owners of public power."

Regarding his request for a full recount, he stated, "The most decisive proof that we won the presidential election lies in the attitude of rejection that the candidate of the Right has adopted when faced with the demand for a recount of all the votes. If he argues that he won he has no reason not to clear up any doubt

and clean up the election. Who owes nothing, fears nothing....."

The partial recount is scheduled to begin on Wednesday August 9 and is expected to last five days.

Castro recovering following surgery: Cuban officials

Fidel Castro's condition is "satisfactory" following surgery last Monday for intestinal bleeding according to Cuban vice-premier Carlos Lage and Cuba's health minister José Ramón Balaguer who adds that it will not be long before the Cuban leader returns to work. On Saturday, Cuban parliamentary speaker Ricardo Alcaron told CNN's Spanish service that Castro "remains in stable condition" and is "resting in order to recover as quickly as possible".

Lage, who is in Bolivia for the opening of that country's constitutional convention, said that Castro sends the Bolivian people "fraternal greetings" according to Cuban press agency Prensa Latina. Lage denied reports that Castro has stomach cancer and said that the ailing leader had "been made well by the operation and is recuperating favourably."

Venezuelan president Hugh Chavez sent his good wishes during his weekly broadcast saying "Fidel Castro, a hug for you, friend and comrade and I know you are getting better."

"We have reliable information of your quick and notable recuperation" said Chavez on Castro's condition. In a telephone conversation with Bolivian leader Eva Morales later in the broadcast, Chavez said of the Cuban leader "this morning I learned that he's very well, that he is already getting out of bed, he's talking more than he should — because

he talks a lot, you know. He has sent us greetings,"

Castro, who turns 80 later this month, temporarily transferred power to his 75 year-old brother, Raul Castro, prior to his surgery leading to widespread speculation in the United States that he is dying or dead.

No pictures of Castro have been released since his surgery was announced last Monday fuelling speculation around the world about his condition. Acting Cuban leader Raul Castro has also not been seen in public in the past week.

The island's government has increased security due to fears of a US attack during Castro's illness. US Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice told NBC News "The notion that somehow the United States is going to invade Cuba, because there are troubles in Cuba, is simply far-fetched"

Until temporarily relinquishing power to his brother last week. Fidel Castro had led the country since the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

Iran bans Shirin Ebadi-led human rights group

The government of Iran has banned the human rights group Defenders of Human Rights Center led by Nobel Peace laureate Shirin Ebadi.

On Saturday, the Iranian newspaper Shargh reported an Interior Ministry statement announcing the ban, "As the group calling itself 'Defenders of Human Rights Center' has not obtained a permit from the interior ministry, its activities are illegal and the violators of this decision will be prosecuted,".

Ebadi told reporters that such a permit was not required, "Non-governmental organizations that observe the law and do not disrupt public safety do not need a permit. So the... Center does not need authorization".

She said that the group had applied for the permit but the Interior Ministry denied the request without any explanation.

Saying that the "move is not in Iran's national interest", Ebadi said that the group will protest against the decision and explore legal options to "obtain our rights".

The group was started by six prominent lawyers and has campaigned on human and minority rights issues for the past four years. It has criticized Iran's judiciary for violations of human rights.

Abdolfattah Soltani, a member of the group was sentenced last month to five years in jail on charges of disclosing confidential information and opposing the regime. He had represented the imprisoned journalist Akbar Ganji as well as the family of the Iranian-Canadian photographer Zahra Kazemi, who was killed in custody in 2003.

The group demanded an independent probe into the death of dissident student activist Akbar Mohammadi, who died in prison on Sunday following a hunger strike.

The ban comes on the 100th anniversary of Iran's "constitutional revolution" of August 5, 1906, when the monarch of what was then Persia decreed the creation of a constitution and an elected parliament - the Majlis.

"The ban has a bad meaning for the country" on such a day, said Mohammad Dadkhah, a founder of the rights group.

Ebadi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 by the Norwegian Nobel Committee, for "her efforts for democracy and human rights...especially on the struggle for the rights of women and children.". She was the first Iranian and first Muslim woman to receive the honour.

Vaccine targets obesity in rats

American scientists have successfully used a vaccine to slow down weight gain in an animal model, as reported in the scientific journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)*. The vaccinated rodents showed less increase in body weight even though they ate as much as their non-vaccinated counterparts. If supported by further studies, vaccination could become a promising new tool in the battle against the obesity pandemic, although application in humans is probably not for the near future.

The research team led by Dr. Kim Janda of the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, vaccinated male rats using three different haptens (small molecules which can elicit an immune response when attached to a large carrier such as a protein). Vaccination teaches the immune system to recognise and destroy a target.

In this experiment, the target was ghrelin, a hormone produced by the stomach in both humans and rodents. Ghrelin stimulates appetite and promotes the build-up of fat tissue. It was also previously shown that mice with the ghrelin gene knocked out (makes the mice unable to

produce ghrelin), expend more energy and break down their fat stores more easily. In this study, vaccinated rats retained the same appetite, but the other effects were altered resulting in a lesser weight gain. The fact that the appetite remained unchanged came as a surprise to the investigators, but the idea of being able to eat the same and put on less weight is intriguing.

The rats in this study were on a low-energy, low-fat diet quite unlike the typical diet of people with obesity, where energy-rich snacks predominate. It remains uncertain whether these findings could be extended to that setting. The group is already planning further studies to ascertain the therapeutic potential of the new vaccine. The question also remains whether it will prove effective in already obese subjects, and the group plans further investigations into this matter.

Vaccines are generally used to combat infectious diseases, but recently their field of application has been expanded to unconventional areas, drug addiction for example. One of the possible advantages of this approach to the field of obesity medicine, is that vaccination could promote long term effects. This could supersede the need for chronic intake of drugs sometimes associated with severe adverse effects (such as the banned Fen-phen).

Canadian held in China faces execution

China is planning to execute a Canadian national next week according to his wife who is seeking help from the Canadian government to free the man.

Huseyin Celil, a Uighur Muslim

who immigrated to Canada as a refugee, had been a dissident in China in the 1990s urging greater religious freedom. He was arrested last decade for trying to start a political party and fled China after breaking out of prison. He was sentenced to death in absentia by a Chinese court for his role in the anti-government movement. China also claims Celil was involved in a political assassination, a charge he and his family deny. Celil settled in Canada as a refugee and eventually gained citizenship. He was visiting his wife's family in Kyrgystan March when he was arrested at the request of the Chinese. He was extradited to China in June.

His wife, Kamila Talendibaeva of Burlington, Ontario was told by Calil's sister, who lives in China, that Calil was being held in a prison in the western Chinese province of Xinjiang and may be executed as early as August 10.

"I can't get any information. I can't get any news and I'm just crying all the time thinking of him," Talendibaeva told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

A Canadian official says that Ottawa has been in contact with China and received assurances that Celil will not be executed.

"In the past 48 hours or so, Chinese government officials at a senior level assured our embassy officials in Beijing that they would not seek the death penalty against Mr. Celil," Conservative Member of Parliament Jason Kenney told CBC News.

Day 1 report of Wikimania 2006

Wikimania 2006 is the second annual Wikimedia conference.

Hosted by the Berkman Center for Internet and Society at the Harvard Law School campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, it began August 4 and will run until August 6.

Wikimania began with a keynote presentation from Jimmy Wales, the founder of Wikipedia and the Wikimedia Foundation. Wales played a short portion of a clip from a recent episode of U.S. television program *The Colbert Report* discussing Wikipedia. In the clip, Colbert says that "any website that has a longer entry on truthiness than Lutheranism has got its priorities straight." His keynote continued by re-emphasising Wikimedia's mission, as stated by Wales in a Slashdot interview: "Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge. That's what we're doing".

Wales stated that Wikipedia is "not as good as Britannica — yet". Additionally, he also stated that in the coming year, Wikipedia will be making "a turn towards quality". "We have always had this goal, but we all know we're not there yet - in the coming years one of the themes is going to be a turn towards quality." said Wales.

He then introduced Brad Patrick, the general counsel and recently-appointed interim CEO of Wikimedia. Patrick said he found Wikimedia after reading Wales' list *Ten Things That Will Be Free* on Lawrence Lessig's blog. After discovering the Wikimedia Foundation, Patrick emailed Wales about meeting for lunch. He had lunch with Wales a few months later and was hired as general counsel shortly after.

Wales went on to describe Wikia,

the company he co-founded with Angela Beesley. He announced that Wikia has received venture capital, allowing them to hire full-time engineers to work on the MediaWiki software. He emphasized that Wikia, has "a total commitment to free knowledge and respect for communities."

Later, Wales announced that the One Laptop Per Child project will be including Wikipedia as the first element in the content repository. He also announced that the board has approved Wikiversity as "a center for the creation and use of free learning materials and activities". Wikiversity will "create and host a range of free-content multilingual learning materials for all age groups in all languages". It will be launched soon with a three language, six month, beta trial period.

Wales described a project called Wikiwyg: a WYSIWIG editor for the wiki. Wikiwyg is an attempt to make the wiki easier to edit. "An intelligence test by making it hard to edit, just does not work," noted Wales. While the release date is uncertain both Wikia and Socialtext are devoting full-time engineers to the project.

Wales emphasized the need to focus on quality. He also briefly discussed the commitment in the German Wikipedia to rolling out a stable version. He stated that if we do not have it rolled out by next year's keynote "we are making a big mistake".

Wales finished his keynote by giving an update on his *Ten Things That Will Be Free* and proposing "that the foundation seek funding to hire community coordinator and recruiters for important languages where we currently do poorly".

This article features first-hand journalism by a Wikinews member. See the talk page for more details. Articles are translated through WORTNET.

Other notable speakers included Ward Cunningham, Lawrence Lessig, Eben Moglen and many members of the Wikimedia communities.

The day wrapped up with a poster reception and a party celebrating Wikia's 250,000 articles and Wikia's founders Angela Beesley and Jimmy Wales birthdays.

Archived copies of many of the presentations are available on the Wikimania wiki.

British soldier killed in southern Afghanistan

The Ministry of Defence has confirmed that a British soldier has been killed in southern Afghanistan during a joint operation with Canadian-led NATO troops. "It is with regret that we can confirm that a member of the UK Armed Forces has been killed in action this afternoon during ongoing operations against insurgent positions in Helmand Province, Southern Afghanistan," said an MOD statement.

According to a spokesman for the International Security Assistance Force, a NATO peacekeeping organisation, troops came under fire after a successful operation.

The soldier's details have not been released as next of kin have not yet been told.

In the past two months, ten British soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan.

The Sunday Telegraph today

quoted commandos as saying British troops in Afghanistan are on "the brink of exhaustion".

Syrian minister rejects proposed U.N. resolution

Syria has rejected a proposed United Nations resolution, backed by both the United States and France, for a cease fire in the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict.

Syria's foreign minister has said that the resolution is a "a recipe for the continuation of the war," and "adopted Israel's point of view only."

Syria has also warned that their armed forces are under orders to respond immediately if Israel attacks. Syria's foreign minister said that "If Israel attacks Syria by any means, on the ground, by air, our leadership ordered the armed forces to reply immediately," and that "Syria is ready for the possibility of a regional war if the Israeli aggression continues."

Reuters retracts image; suspends employee due to threat

The Reuters news agency has retracted a photograph of Beirut, Lebanon, after finding out that it was altered. Reuters released a statement saying: "Photo editing software was improperly used on this image. A corrected version will immediately follow this advisory. We are sorry for any inconvenience." The photograph had shown two plumes of black smoke rising out of buildings in Beirut.

Meanwhile a Reuters employee was suspended after using Reuters internet access to issue a threat saying, "I look forward to the day when you pigs get your throats cut." The e-mail was sent to Charles Johnson, who maintains the Little Green Footballs blog.

Johnson said: "This particular death threat is a bit different from the run of the mill hate mail we get around here, because an IP lookup on the sender reveals that he/she/it was using an account at none other than Reuters News. I think it's more than fair to say that Reuters has a big problem."

Reuters spokesman Ed Williams said: "I can confirm that an employee has been suspended pending further investigation. The individual was not an employee of Reuters' news division."

Jenson Button wins 2006 Hungarian Grand Prix

A rainy weekend turned out to be a great show for the spectators of the 13th round of the FIA Formula-1 championship. The Hungarian Grand Prix held on Hungaroring, Budapest provided an entertaining race with a few upsets.

An absolutely unlucky race for the Renault and Ferrari teams, only Felipe Massa finished at the tail of the peleton. Giancarlo Fisichella lost control of his car and ended the race very soon after the start. His teammate Fernando Alonso was in the lead for most of the race, but ended it right after his pit-stop, probably because a badly tucked right front wheel. Michael Schumacher ended his race not long after Alonso, because of the suspension damage in the numerous battles during the race.

Thus, the victory suddenly came to the hands of Jenson Button, Honda driver.

Tough luck for Kimi Raikkonen, who collided with Vitantonio Liuzzi and was replaced by his teammate Pedro De La Rosa in second place.

And a very good race for Nick

Heifeld, the BMW-Sauber team's driver finished third.

The race probably disproved the popular statement that "the problem of Formula-1 races is no overtaking", saying that it's not completely true

Drug trial victim says he has cancer

A man who fell ill after participating in a drug trial at Northwick Park Hospital in north-west London earlier this year has revealed he has the early signs of an "aggressive" form of cancer.

David Oakley was one of six men who volunteered to take part in a trial of a drug intended to cure conditions like rheumatoid arthritis and leukemia in March. But after taking the drug, the thirty-five year-old suffered multiple organ failure and prominent inflammation.

Mr Oakley, who lives in west London, told today's Mail on Sunday that doctors have informed him he has "definite early signs" of lymph cancer. He also fears he could develop other debilitating illnesses like rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, chronic fatigue syndrome and lupus. He will now undergo tests to see what treatments will be required. "It's very frightening," he told the newspaper. "I'm trying not to be too down about the thought of having chemotherapy or that I might die."

Mr Oakley was paid £2,000 for his involvement in the trial, and that money subsidised his marriage to wife Katrina in June. He now fears their hope of having children has been jeopardised as a result of his ill health. "Katrina and I had planned to start trying for children

six months after getting married, but we can't do that now. Everything is on hold."

There is nothing to suggest that Mr Oakley's cancer was triggered by the experiment. He is now seeking compensation from Parexel, the company which organised the drug trial. "Really, I'm just trying to do my bit and pointing out their mistake. If someone doesn't point it out it could happen again and there's no way I would like to see someone else go through what we're going through right now." Earlier this year, six men had to be admitted to an intensive care unit at the same hospital, in another Parexel drug trial which caused much upset.

American cyclist Floyd Landis tested positive for excessive levels of testosterone in second test

The second urine sample provided by the winner of this year's Tour de France, American cyclist Floyd Landis, has tested positive for excessive levels of testosterone. This confirms the results of the earlier test done after his victory in the Tour de France on 20 July.

The International Cycling Union said: "The UCI communicates that the analysis of the sample B of Floyd Landis's urine has confirmed the result of an adverse analytical finding notified by the anti-doping laboratory of Paris on July 26, following the analysis of the sample A.". Landis now faces the prospect of being stripped of his title, along with the possibility of a two year ban.

He also stands to lose \$575,700 in prize money. This would be the first time a winner has been disqualified for doping in the Tour's history.

The American has refuted the charges saying his body naturally produces high levels of testosterone.

In its comment about Landis sample analyses, the USA Cycling announced that it'll "refer this case to the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) as the organization solely responsible for the adjudication of anti-doping cases involving American athletes in the Olympic movement"

The Phonak team fired Landis on Saturday for "violating the teams internal Code of Ethics", a statement released by the team said.

Oscar Pereiro Sio who finished second, 57 seconds adrift, now claims himself the true Tour de France champion after hearing about Landis' result.

Since 1984 testosterone use is forbidden, but difficult to test for because the body produces it naturally. A test involves measuring the testosterone/epitestosterone (T/E) ratio. An average caucasian has a 1:1 ratio but it is tolerated up to 4:1 (ratio was 6:1 or even 10:1 in the past). A new test using a spectrometer and carbon 13 ratio (CIR) exists. This new test gives a more accurate result for the presence of synthetic testosterone. This test was used on Floyd's samples in order to confirm synthetic testosterone in his blood.

Today in History

1679 - Le Griffon, a brigantine by René-Robert de LaSalle, became the first sailing ship to navigate the Great Lakes.

1782 - The Badge of Military Merit, the original Purple Heart, was established as a military decoration in the Continental Army.

1947 - An expedition led by Thor Heyerdahl crossed the Pacific Ocean in 101 days on his raft, Kon-Tiki.

1965 - Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman of the Federation of Malaysia demanded that Singapore withdraw from the federation, choosing to "sever ties with a State Government that showed no measure of loyalty to its Central Government."

1998 - The bombing of U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya killed 224 people and injured over 4,500.

August 08 is Independence Day in Côte d'Ivoire (1960); Civic Holiday in Canada, Emancipation Day in various Caribbean countries (2006).

Quote of the Day

"One of the primary tests of the mood of a society at any given time is whether its comfortable people tend to identify, psychologically, with the power and achievements of the very successful or with the needs and sufferings of the underprivileged."

~ Richard Hofstadter

Word of the Day

ace up one's sleeve; idiom

- (idiomatic) A surprise advantage of which others are not aware

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