



Top Stories

Gordon Brown becomes Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Gordon Brown has become Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Queen Elizabeth II invited him to form a government in a meeting at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday afternoon.

Audio tape released of missing Israeli soldier

Kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, 20, is believed to be alive, and Hamas has released an audio tape where Shalit says he needs to be hospitalized and that he regrets that Israel has not met the demands of the kidnappers.

Featured story

Paris Hilton released from jail

Paris Hilton is out of jail, after serving three weeks in the same. She was released early based on "a standard credit applied for good behavior."

Wikipedia Current Events

- At least 18 people die in fights between police and gangsters in a Rio de Janeiro favela.
- Protesters take to the streets in Iran as the government introduces petrol rationing and raises prices.
- Dr. Ashraf Marwan, who had previously been accused of being a senior Mossad agent operating in Egypt prior to the Yom Kippur War, is found dead below the balcony of his home in London.

Wikipedia Current Events

Scotland Yard investigates the "unexplained" death.

•At least ten people drown and thousands move to higher ground as a cyclone hits Balochistan, Pakistan.

•Longstanding tradition is abandoned in the House of Commons as every serving Member of Parliament, and others, clap and give a standing ovation to Tony Blair after he finishes his last Prime Minister's Questions.

•Queen Elizabeth II accepts the resignation of Tony Blair as Prime Minister.

•Gordon Brown, MP for Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath and former Chancellor of the Exchequer, accepts Queen Elizabeth II's invitation to form a new government, becoming the new Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

•Tony Blair takes the Chiltern Hundreds to stand down as MP for Sedgefield and accepts a role as the main Middle East envoy for the Quartet on the Middle East. His appointment is announced at the United Nations headquarters. Zalmay Khalilzad, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, welcomes the appointment of Blair as envoy.

•Journalists learn that Patricia Hewitt and Margaret Beckett will not be re-appointed as Health Secretary and Foreign Secretary respectively, when Brown

Wikipedia Current Events

assembles his government.

•Brown begins contact by telephone with U.S. President George W. Bush, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, Prime Minister of Italy Romano Prodi and Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, discussing working closely together.

•The wreckage of PMTair Flight U4 241 is discovered in Kampot Province, Cambodia. All 22 people on board were killed in the crash.

•The Government of Kyrgyzstan abolishes capital punishment.

•Jamaican-born Floridian Barrington Irving becomes the youngest person, and the first black person, to fly solo around the world.

Tony Blair becomes the Quartet's envoy to the Middle East

On the same day that Tony Blair resigned as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and quit as a Member of Parliament, he was appointed envoy to the Middle East for the Quartet on the Middle East. The Quartet is made up of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia.

The Quartet outlined Blair's duties in a statement: "As Quartet Representative, he will:

- mobilise international assistance to the

Palestinians, working closely with donors and existing coordination bodies

- help to identify, and secure appropriate international support in addressing the institutional governance needs of the Palestinian state, focusing as a matter of urgency on the rule of law
- develop plans to promote Palestinian economic development, including private sector partnerships, building on previously agreed frameworks, especially concerning access and movement
- and liaise with other countries as appropriate in support of the agreed Quartet objectives "

Tony Blair said, in his final address to Parliament on Wednesday, that "The absolute priority is to try to give effect to what is now the consensus across the international community -- that the only way of bringing stability and peace to the Middle East is a two-state solution," Blair continued, "I believe it is possible to do that but it will require a huge intensity of focus and work."

According to the Quartet statement, "Tony Blair will be supported in this work by a small team of experts, based in Jerusalem." Also, he will "report to and consult regularly with the Quartet and be guided by it as necessary."

A statement from the office of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said that as envoy, Blair could "allow for progress in the peace process."

An aide to the President of the Palestinian National Authority,

Mahmoud Abbas, told reporters that Abbas "hopes [Blair] can help relieve the suffering of our people and provide basic needs".

The Hamas organization who are the de facto rulers of the Gaza Strip said the appointment of Blair "was not helpful in solving the conflict in the Middle East."

Ian Paisley, the First Minister of Northern Ireland, credited Blair's efforts in that nation, saying: "I hope that what happened in Northern Ireland will be repeated and at the end of the day he will be able to look back and say it was well worthwhile."

Young bridge player wins at Antalya, Turkey

After having beaten the famous Zia Mahmood in the quarter of finals, the 22 years old Thomas Bessis established an unprecedented record of winning an international bridge open title both so young and facing his father Michel.

The full competition was scheduled on five days ; this morning, the young boy felt quite exhausted with no substitution allowed after yesterday 56 deals. At most other tables, the lead against three No-Trumps was Jack from J 10 9 8 4 but Thomas played the 4...

His aggressive style of bidding compensating those lacks of concentration, he won his first major international competition against six Indian bridge players.

Gordon Brown becomes Prime Minister of the United Kingdom

Gordon Brown has become Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Queen Elizabeth II invited him to form a government in a meeting at Buckingham Palace on Wednesday afternoon.

Brown, who has been Chancellor of the Exchequer for the past ten years, succeeds Tony Blair who tendered his resignation to the Queen earlier on Wednesday. In an emotional Prime Minister's Questions, Blair received a standing ovation from MPs and tributes from opposition leaders.

Tony Blair has led the Labour Party since 1994 and became Prime Minister following a landslide victory in the 1997 general election.

Gordon Brown was confirmed as leader of the Labour Party on 24th June after running unopposed in the recent leadership election. He is expected to announce appointments to the Cabinet over the next few days.

Later in the day, Tony Blair resigned his parliamentary seat for the constituency of Sedgefield to become an envoy to the Middle East for the Quartet, the nations and entities involved in seeking a resolution in the Middle East peace process (the United States, United Nations, European Union and Russia).

No survivors in Cambodian air crash

No survivors were found today when searchers reached the crash site of PMTair Flight U4 241 in Cambodia, a government minister said.

"All have died. It is confirmed," Information Minister Khieu Kanharith told reporters.

The wreckage of the PMTair Antonov An-24 was spotted by a helicopter crew early this morning, two days after the plane went missing from radar screens while on a flight from Angkor

International Airport in Siem Reap to the beach-resort town of Sihanoukville.

The crash site is located in the Dâmrei Mountains, or Elephant Mountains, northeast of Bokor Hill Station in Kampot Province, about 150 kilometers south of Phnom Penh, the capital.

Rescue helicopter pilot Tep Sitha, speaking to Reuters by mobile telephone, described the crash site as "high on the mountain."

A search operation involving around 1,000 people had scoured the mountainous jungle territory since the plane crashed on Monday. Monsoon rains, thick jungle and rugged terrain had hampered the search.

The 44-seat plane had 22 people aboard – 16 passengers, plus a flight crew of six – a Russian pilot, two Cambodian co-pilots, a Cambodian flight engineer and two Cambodian flight attendants. Among the passengers, 13 were from South Korea and three were from the Czech Republic.

Around a dozen Korean family members arrived in Phnom Penh yesterday from Seoul, and the Cambodian government said it would pay for their accommodations.

The cause of the crash is yet to be determined by an examination of the flight data recorder, but officials had earlier speculated that weather may have played a part.

The airline, PMTair, is a small Cambodian carrier that listed its fleet at five planes, including two Antonov An-24s, which it used for domestic flights. The type of Soviet-built plane, introduced in

1963, is common in Cambodia's civil and military aviation fleet.

Sar Sareth, director of PMTair, told the Associated Press yesterday that he did not know what year the crashed plane was built. He said it was in "good condition" before taking off, and "was always in compliance with flight technical and safety procedures."

The airline had begun regularly scheduled Siem Reap-Sihanoukville flights in January, providing a direct link between the two popular tourist towns.

In addition to domestic service, PMTair has international routes, including direct flights from Seoul to Siem Reap, feeding a large influx of tourists from South Korea in the past few years. Last year, around 250,000 South Koreans visited the country.

Yesterday, a South Korean government agency said it was putting PMTair on a list of carriers it was checking for safety.

"As PMT also does business at Incheon International Airport, a special safety inspection for the airline will be carried out until July 6," Chung Sang-ho, head of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, was quoted as saying by Yonhap News Agency.

One other Cambodian carrier, Royal Khmer Airlines, was also on the South Korean list, as was Garuda Indonesia, and three Russian carriers, SAT Airlines, Vladivostok Air and Dalavia.

Before Monday's crash, the worst incident for PMTair was a hard landing in 2005, when a piece of landing gear snapped off an An-24 on landing at Banlung, Ratanakiri, overcrowded with 59 passengers

aboard. There were no injuries, but the airline was temporarily grounded after the incident. In another incident, a plane had to return to the airport after takeoff because of engine failure.

The crash is Cambodia's first major aviation accident in nearly 10 years. In September 1997, a Vietnam Airlines Tupolev Tu-134 crashed while trying to land in heavy rain at Phnom Penh International Airport, killing 65 people and one person, a toddler, surviving.

America's Cup: Team New Zealand wins third race

Team New Zealand have won the third yacht race in the bid for America's Cup, beating the defending champion, Swiss syndicate, Alinghi. Sport commentators and yachties are describing the win as one of the greatest races in the history of the Cup.

Team New Zealand finished the race 25 seconds ahead of Alinghi, despite the leader changing three times throughout the race. This new win for Team New Zealand puts the overall score at 2 wins for Team New Zealand and one win for Alinghi. The winner of the America's Cup will be the first to reach five wins.

By the first mark of the race, Team New Zealand had a lead of one minute and 23 seconds. However, at this turn, their spinnaker got caught in the genoa gear and Richard Meacham, mid bowman, almost went over board. Due to this mistake, Alinghi were able to catch up and lead the second mark by 15 seconds. Grant Dalton, head of Team New Zealand, said, "The trouble we had at the leeward mark let [Alinghi] back into the race and [Team New Zealand] paid

the price."

But Team New Zealand managed to win, 25 seconds in front. Team New Zealand navigator, Kevin Hall said, "My heart rate would be doing about 180 right now but it's nice to be towing in and looking at them back there instead of in front of us like they were in the second beat."

The head of Alinghi, Ernesto Bertarelli believes that the race committee should not have started the race, which it did so at 4:59 p.m.. The race cannot be announced after 5.00 p.m.. "We waited for two hours..."

Team New Zealand strategist, Ray Davies said, "There was certainly a bit of dice rolling."

President of the Nelson Marlborough Yachting Association, Doug Mckee described the race as the most exciting one since Australia winning the America's Cup when the Australians won the Auld Mug from the New York Yacht Club who had held it for 132 years. "We are definitely good enough to win the cup."

Hall said, "It probably hasn't happened very often that you see three passes in an America's Cup race. It's a testament to the strength of both teams."

The wind speed was around 8-9 knots.

Alinghi beat Team New Zealand in 2003, also winning the America's Cup in Auckland, New Zealand.

German Wikipedia receives state funding

German authorities will dedicate resources of the federal budget to improve information about renewable resources on the

German version of Wikipedia. Entries on this topic will be managed by a private-sector body.

The challenge will be to motivate experts to get involved in the community lexicon. Such experts are used to publish in the normal newspapers. But Wikipedia is radically different: articles there continually grow with input from numerous authors, who often remain anonymous. The end product is constantly changing, and third parties can publish their own texts or even change them.

Two-year old girl becomes second youngest ever member of Mensa

A two-year old girl, Georgia Brown of Hampshire, United Kingdom has become the second youngest ever member of high-IQ society Mensa International. She was tested by professor Joan Freeman, an educational psychologist from Middlesex University, using the Stanford-Binet IQ test, receiving a score of 152. At two years, nine months old, Brown is the youngest current member of the society, one of only 30 members under the age of 10, and the youngest female member ever. She is the youngest of five siblings, the daughter of Martin Brown, a carpenter, and Lucy Brown, chief executive of the charity Disability Initiative.

Today in History

- 1389 - In the Battle of Kosovo, Turks defeated Serbs and Bosnians.
- 1914 - Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, sparking the outbreak of World War I.
- 1919 - The Treaty of Versailles was signed, ending World War I.
- 1956 - Workers in Poznań, Poland held massive protests demanding the lowering of food prices, rising

of wages and revoking some recent law changes that worsened working conditions, but were violently repressed the following day.

1969 - In response to a police raid at the Stonewall Inn in New York City, groups of gay and transgender people began to riot against New York City Police officers, sparking the modern worldwide LGBT social movement.

1978 - The United States Supreme Court, in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265 (1978), barred quota systems in college admissions but affirmed the constitutionality of programs giving advantage to minorities.

June 28 is Vidovdan in Serbia.

Quote of the Day

To renounce liberty is to renounce being a man, to surrender the rights of humanity and even its duties. For him who renounces everything no indemnity is possible. Such a renunciation is incompatible with man's nature; to remove all liberty from his will is to remove all morality from his acts.

~ Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Word of the Day

- egregious; adj
1. Exceptional, conspicuous, outstanding, usually in a negative fashion.

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