



Top Stories

Greater Manchester Police Chief found dead

The Chief of Greater Manchester Police, Michael Todd has been found dead in North Wales. It has been reported that he was found at the bottom of a cliff, although that that has not yet been confirmed. The discovery comes after an extensive search by mountain rescue teams, following Mr Todd's unexpected absence late yesterday.



Strong winds and heavy rain across southern UK

The southern United Kingdom has experienced heavy rains and strong winds, with approximately 10,000 homes now without power. In addition to damage to property, many journeys have been disrupted, as a result of cancelled flights, in addition to closed roads and rail tracks.



Algerian rebel group claims kidnapping of two Austrians in Tunisia

A group affiliated with Al-Qaeda has claimed that it kidnapped two Austrian tourists in the North African nation of Tunisia on February 22, 2008. They had been listed as



Top Stories

missing by the Austrian government, but until now, it was not known that they had been abducted.

Socialists win second term as Spain's ruling party

In the 2008 Spanish general election, the Socialist Workers' Party has emerged as the winner for the second election in a row, edging out the conservative People's Party in a vote characterized by fears of a faltering economy and militant separatists.



Wikipedia Current Events

Barack Obama wins the Mississippi Democratic primary.

- The United States House of Representatives fails to override President Bush's veto of a bill outlawing waterboarding and other interrogation techniques.
- Admiral William Fallon resigns as Commander of the U.S. Central Command due to reports in Esquire Magazine of disagreement with President George W. Bush over the administration's policy with Iran.
- Cricket Australia and the Pakistan Cricket Board announce that the tour of Pakistan by the Australia national cricket team has been postponed due to security issues.
- The Space Shuttle Endeavour launches from Kennedy Space

Wikipedia Current Events

Center carrying the crew of STS-123, the Japanese Experiment Module, and Dextre. The ship will rendezvous with the International Space Station.

- At least 12 people are killed when a bomb explodes at offices of Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency in Lahore.

Space Shuttle Endeavour launches for mission STS-123

Space Shuttle Endeavour successfully launched this morning from Launch Complex 39A at the Kennedy Space Center, on mission STS-123 to assemble the International Space Station (ISS). Lift-off occurred at 06:28:14 UTC (02:28 local time). On board was a crew of seven astronauts; Mission Commander Dominic Gorie, Pilot Gregory Johnson, Robert Behnken, Michael Foreman, Richard Linnehan, Takao Doi and Garrett Reisman.

All except Reisman will return to Earth aboard Endeavour in two week's time. Reisman, a member of the ISS Expedition 16 and 17 crews, will remain aboard the Space Station, replacing Léopold Eyharts who launched aboard STS-122 last month.

During the 16-day mission - the longest Shuttle flight in support of the ISS - the crew will install two major ISS components. the Kibō Pressurised Logistics Module and the Canadian Special Purpose Dexterous Manipulator (SPDM). The Kibō Pressurised Logistics

Module is the first of three components which will form the Japanese Experiment Module (JEM). It will be temporarily installed on a spare docking port of the Harmony module of the Station, and will later be fitted to the main pressurised experiment module, which is slated for launch aboard STS-124, to be flown by Discovery in late May.

SPDM, also known as Dextre, is a twin robotic arm system, or Remote Manipulator System (RMS), which will be installed on the end of the Space Station's Canadarm2 robotic arm. It will allow complex tasks to be completed without the need for a spacewalk.

Five extra-vehicular activities are planned for the mission. The first three of these will be to assemble, install and test the Dextre SPDM. This will be followed by an EVA to test new tile repair techniques in the event of a Shuttle becoming damaged on a later mission. This test comes ahead of the planned STS-125 mission to service the Hubble Space Telescope in August. The final EVA will be to stow the Orbiter Boom Sensor System (OBSS) on the Space Station.

This usually remains on the Shuttle for launch and landing, however as the next mission, STS-124, is carrying a very large payload - the JEM pressurised experiment module - the OBSS cannot be accommodated in its payload bay for launch. Because it will be needed once the Shuttle reaches orbit, Discovery will collect the OBSS from the ISS, and return it to Earth at the end of its mission. The OBSS is used to conduct photography of the orbiter's heat shield, in order to check for damage, similar to that which caused the Columbia

accident.

Two minor problems occurred during the launch. Firstly, the primary Flash Evaporator System failed, resulting in a switch to the backup system, which performed normally. The Flash Evaporator System is used to cool the Shuttle prior to the deployment of its radiators. The radiators were deployed normally following payload bay door opening, once the Shuttle was in orbit. The other issue was that instrumentation failed for a small number of Reaction Control System (RCS) thrusters, which are used to control the Shuttles attitude.

Neither problem is expected to affect the mission. The ascent to orbit has been initially assessed as "clean" in terms of debris impacts, the only concern is a suspected birdstrike ten seconds after launch, however it is believed that Endeavour was not travelling fast enough to sustain damage.

This is the 122nd launch of the Space Shuttle, the 21st of Endeavour, and the 25th Shuttle mission to the ISS. It also marks the ninth, and second manned, orbital launch of 2008. Launch occurred at night, making this the Shuttle's 30th night launch. This flight was originally scheduled to launch on February 14th, but after the previous mission, STS-122, was delayed due to bad sensors inside the external fuel tank, STS-123 was pushed back to no earlier than March 11.

Adam Air may be shut down after string of accidents

Indonesian budget carrier Adam Air has been warned by Indonesia's transport minister that unless the airline improves safety it will be shut down. Adam Air has suffered a string of recent

accidents.

"We are giving them a chance to improve. If there's no change, we will place them in the third category," said Transport Minister Jusman Syafii Djamal, according to the state's Antara news agency. The third category refers to the lowest a three-category ratings system for airline safety introduced last year. Airlines in the third category will be shut down in three months unless improvements occur. Adam Air is in the second category, which means that although the airline meets minimum requirements some problems still remain. "We give an early warning to make the carrier improve its safety," Djamal told reporters.

The announcement follows the news yesterday that an Adam Air Boeing 737-400 had overshot the runway at Batam island's airport, injuring five of the over 170 people on board. It is the third serious accident in just over a year. On New Years day 2007 Adam Air Flight 574 crashed into the ocean near Sulawesi, leaving 102 missing, presumed dead. The following month Flight 172 cracked in half after a hard landing but held together, preventing fatalities. Both aircraft were Boeing 737s.

Danke Drajat, spokesman for Adam Air, said that the airline was making efforts to comply with the demand. "We are completing all manuals and revamping the standard operating procedure," he said.

The Adam Air accidents accounted for two of the three main accidents that caused the European Union to ban Indonesian airlines from EU airspace last year over safety standards. The other, Garuda

Indonesia Flight 200, involved a 737 belonging to the state owned flag carrier speeding off a runway at Yogyakarta during an attempted landing; 21 people were killed.

Greater Manchester Police Chief found dead

The chief of Greater Manchester Police, Michael Todd has been found dead in North Wales. It has been reported that he was found at the bottom of a cliff with letters found nearby, either on his body or in his car, which were addressed to family and friends, although this has not been confirmed.

The discovery comes after an extensive search by mountain rescue teams, following Todd's unexpected absence. According to GMP, the chief Constable had been on a walking trip, which was not uncommon, however when he failed to return the alarm was raised.

Sources in GMP have said that it was possible the 51 year old had committed suicide, with recent behaviour, including phone calls to close colleagues and friends, having been noticed, however the cause of death has not yet been confirmed.

Current Home Secretary Jacqui Smith was quoted as saying Todd had "contributed greatly to the fight against crime and terrorism". A profile on the BBC news site also mentions Todd had called for close co-operation between MI5 and a dedicated counter terrorism unit established in Greater Manchester.

The deputy police chief has commented on the death saying "I and all the officers of Greater Manchester Police and all the members of Greater Manchester Police Authority are absolutely

shocked by what's happened and what has taken place in the last 16 hours."

The full text of the Deputy Police Chief's statement can be found below:

"Yesterday our Chief Constable Michael Todd was off duty walking in Snowdonia. Last night we became concerned for his welfare and as a result searches started to find him.

These searches have continued today and unfortunately this afternoon a body has been found. I believe that it is Michael but we have not been able to formal identify him at this time.

The weather conditions are extremely bad at the moment and are hindering our inquiries. There will be a coroner's investigation which means I can't say anymore at this time.

As you can imagine all of his friends and colleagues are extremely upset. Our hearts and thoughts are with his family, and I would ask that they be left in peace to come to terms with this tragic shock."

2008 Tour de Taiwan Stage 3: Varied changes at Changhua Stage

The 3rd Stage of 2008 Tour de Taiwan was held today in Changhua County - the long-distance circulation. This race started at Baguashan, along County Route 19 through two townships including Tienwei and Yuanlin, and finally entered the climbing stage near the Arch of Baguashan. The route challenged cyclists' speed in the climbing stage, and many consider the Changhua County part of the race, the hardest of the tournament.

"To do the best intention for "Changhua County walk out, the World entered in", we [the Changhua County Government] cooperated with bicycle companies especially Merida for this [Tour de Taiwan] race to promote the best landscape in Changhua including Bagu Buddha, historic spot of Lukang, Wang-Gong Footbridge, and Tienwei Highway Garden to improve the tourism industry in Changhua County."

—Po-yuan Chuo, Magistrate of Changhua County

In this race, Tomoya Kano and Shinichi Fukushima sprinted for the leading advantage with four other cyclists, but after entering the downtown route, Angus Morton suddenly crashed when downgrading. This sudden crash reduced the the differences within the six cyclists leading the group before the climbing stage. Finally, Peter McDonald from Drapac Porsche Development Program Team accidentally won the stage champion with his teammates' help.

With the advantages of steady weather and the climbing stage, Giant Asia Racing Team group took the lead, and Kuan-hua Lai from Giant Asia led in Taiwan Group during this stage. John Murphy from Health Net Pro Cycling Team still retained the liead in overall and sprint classes.

The Tour de Taiwan is a professional road bicycle racing event on the UCI Asia Tour. The event was established by Giant Sport Foundation founder King Liu in 1978. Last year's winner was Shawn Milne representing the United States.

ACLU describes President Bush's veto of CIA waterboarding ban as 'a callous disregard for human rights'

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has described President Bush's veto of CIA waterboarding ban as, among other things, "a brazen move signaling a callous disregard for human rights." The executive director of the ACLU, Anthony Romero, said that "it is fundamentally un-American when our president vetoes laws against torture." Romero believes "the president's veto sends a message to the world that despite Congress' actions, our country will continue to engage in this inhumane and heinous conduct when we should be affirming unequivocally and in one voice that torture and abuse will stop and never happen again. No one is above the rule of law, including the president. Congress should hold firm and persist in trying to get an anti-torture bill signed into law."

John McCain's support of the bill was also mentioned with Caroline Fredrickson saying that "Senator McCain has been the leading voice in Congress on the issue of torture for many years. He led the charge in 2005 to extend the Army Field Manual to all DoD agencies. But by voting 'no' last month, he has given President Bush cover to veto a further extension that would rein in the CIA. The president cannot continue telling our citizens and the world that the United States does not torture when, at the same time, he vetoes legislation that would outlaw such policies. America needs Congress to continue sending President Bush anti-torture legislation until he complies with the will of the people and the Congress and signs it in to law."

The bill, which passed the House of Representatives in November and the Senate in February despite warnings that it would be vetoed, established guidelines for intelligence activities. One of these guidelines would limit the CIA to only using interrogation methods allowed in the U.S. Army Field Manual.

Toronto police announce arrests of 96 people in drug-trafficking investigation

Police in Toronto, Canada have announced the results of a five-week undercover operation against drug traffickers that ended Monday.

In total, 96 people were arrested in the city's Bloorcourt, Bloordale, Parkdale and Alexandra Park regions. Nearly half were free on probation or bail at the time of their arrests, and two men were charged with assaulting a police officer while resisting arrest.

These arrests are part of Project Infiltrate Crack Entrepreneurs (Project ICE).

Police also seized \$31,800 worth of cocaine, \$800 worth of marijuana and small amounts of other controlled substances, as well as \$10,798 in cash.

More than a quarter of those arrested were from the homeless or transient populations of the city.

The city's Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy teams are patrolling neighbourhoods as part of a "follow-up maintenance program" promised by the police force.

Toronto police Detective Sergeant Ed Roseto appealed for help from local residents in the four troubled neighbourhoods. "... we can and

will improve the quality of life in these communities," he said.

Five injured as Adam Air 737 overruns Batam island runway

On Monday, five people were injured after a Boeing 737-400, operated by Adam Air, overshot the runway today while landing at Hang Nadim Airport on the island of Batam in Indonesia.

The aircraft skidded 75 metres (245 feet) into a grassy field after touching down in rainy conditions. Damage was done to the right wing, hydraulics and main landing gear. The plane came to rest with the nose in the air and leaning towards the right.

Of the 176 passengers (one source says 174) and crew on board, five passengers required treatment for neck and head injuries.

Adam Suherman, president of the airline, said the plane had skidded 10 metres beyond the extreme end of the runway. He also gave the time of the crash as 10:40 and noted that the plane was currently resting on soft ground.

Suherman gave the registration of the aircraft as PK-KKT. This would make the aircraft the one Boeing gave the serial number 24353 and owned by CIT Group Incorporated.

Adam Air spokesman Danke Drajat described the plane as having been in "good condition" at its last major inspection in December. He suggested the weather condition may be to blame for the crash, the third to strike the budget carrier in just over a year. On New Year's Day in 2007 Flight 574 crashed into the sea, leaving 102 missing, presumed dead. The following month the fuselage of Flight 172 cracked in half during a hard landing. Both involved Boeing 737

aircraft.

Pantun Banjarnahor, Hang Nadim Airport's chief of operations, said that visibility was adequate for a safe landing. The airport was closed for over two hours. It is unclear how many flights were affected.

The National Transportation Safety Committee is investigating.

Algerian rebel group claims kidnapping of two Austrians in Tunisia

An Algerian rebel group that has pledged its allegiance to Al-Qaeda announced on Monday that it had kidnapped two Austrians vacationing in Tunisia on February 22, 2008.

The statement was read by Salah Abou-Mohammad, a spokesman for the Islamist group which last January announced it was redefining itself as "Al-Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb".

"A squadron of heroic mujahideen was able to infiltrate deep into the Tunisian state and succeeded in kidnapping two Austrian tourists," Abou-Mohammed said. "The two kidnapped are in good health and are being treated well in keeping with the teachings of Islamic Sharia."

He added, "We tell Western tourists flocking to Tunisia for leisure at a time when our brethren are being slaughtered in Gaza by the Jews with the complicity of Western states ... the apostate Tunisian state is not able, and will not be able, to protect you."

Austrian authorities have confirmed that two of its citizens have been missing since mid-

February, but declined to identify them. Reports in local Austrian media say that they are a couple from near Salzburg: Andrea Kloiber, aged 43, and Wolfgang Ebner, aged 51. Abou-Mohammad identified them by their professions as a nurse and a consultant, respectively.

According to a statement released by the Tunisian government, the pair was last reported heading into the Sahara in a direction that could have taken them across the border.

"Until now there is no element that proves that the two Austrian citizens are in Tunisian territory or that they were kidnapped inside Tunisian borders," it said. However it also said, "The authorities have begun carrying out intensive search operations by land and air."

Tunisia was also the scene of the 2002 Ghriba synagogue bombing, for which Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility. That attack left 14 Germans, six Tunisians, and one Frenchman dead and more than 30 others wounded.

National Hockey League news

There were 3 games played in the National Hockey League on March 10, 2008.

Game summaries

New York Rangers @ Buffalo Sabres

Jason Pominville scored the first goal for the Sabres, putting them up 1-0 just 16 seconds into the game. Just over a minute later, the Rangers tied up the score when Fedor Tyutin scored. In the second period, the Rangers took the lead when Jaromir Jagr scored his 18th of the season, his 639th of his career. Thomas Vanek tied

the score with a power play goal 14:14 into the second period. The game remained a 2-2 tie through regulation. In the shootout, Brendan Shanahan scored in the first round. Pominville managed to tie the shootout at 1-1 in the third round, but Scott Gomez, who went second in round 3, scored on Ryan Miller. Henrik Lundqvist picked up his third straight win after making 19 saves on 21 Sabres shots.

St. Louis Blues @ Calgary Flames

Alex Tanguay scored the first goal for the Flames 21 seconds into the first period. Kristian Huselius scored his 22nd goal of the season 7:13 into the game. Less than two minutes later, St. Louis cut Calgary's lead in half when David Backes scored. Calgary retook a 2 goal lead when Jarome Iginla scored his 41st goal of the season. Brad Boyes' goal in the second period kept the Blues within one goal. Matthew Lombardi scored a short handed goal a few minutes later for Calgary. Marcus Nilson and Daymond Langkow scored a goal each just over a minute apart in the third period. Boyes scored his second goal of the night for St. Louis with less than 10 minutes remaining in the game. Tanguay, who started the offense for Calgary in the first period, scored a short handed empty net goal, putting the Flames ahead by 4, where they would stay through the rest of the game. Iginla's goal, his 365th in his career surpasses Theo Fleury for the all-time leading goal scorer in Calgary Flames franchise history. In addition, the Flames pull ahead of the Minnesota Wild in the Northwest division standings. The Blues have now lost 3 straight, and 9 of their last 10 games.

Vancouver Canucks @ Los Angeles Kings

Patrick O'Sullivan broke the

scoreless tie 8:27 into the third period. Ryan Kesler tied it up with 2:41 left in regulation, which sent the game into overtime. Kesler tipped Willie Mitchell's slapshot into the goal just 46 seconds into the 4-on-4 overtime, giving Kesler his second goal of the night, and the Canucks their third win in a row. Dan Cloutier made 38 saves on the night. Roberto Luongo had an easier night between the pipes for Vancouver, seeing only 18 shots throughout the game, and stopping all but one of them.

Player of the Day

Today's Player of the Day is Ryan Kesler of the Vancouver Canucks. Kesler scored the game-tying goal to force overtime with less than 3 minutes left in regulation, and deflected in the game winning goal less than a minute into overtime.

Today in History

1881 – Andrew Watson made his debut with the Scotland national football team and became the world's first black international football player.

1930 – Gandhi began the Dandi March, a 24-day walk to defy the British tax on salt in colonial India.

1938 – Anschluss Österreichs: Austria was occupied by the Wehrmacht, and subsequently became Ostmark, a province within the German Reich.

1940 – The Moscow Peace Treaty was signed, ending the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union.

1993 – A series of thirteen coordinated bomb explosions took place in Bombay, India, killing up to 250 civilians and injuring over 700 others.

2003 – Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić was assassinated in Belgrade.

March 12 is Independence Day in Mauritius (1968); Arbor Day in China.

Quote of the Day

All human beings are also dream beings. Dreaming ties all mankind together. ~ Jack Kerouac

Word of the Day

candor n

1. Sincere and open speech, honesty in expression.
2. Impartiality.

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Quote of the Day

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page

Word of the Day

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