



Top Stories

Israeli PM Ariel Sharon undergoes emergency surgery

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon underwent four hours of emergency surgery after a CT scan revealed that he had severe intestinal damage. Sharon suffered a major stroke on January 4, 2006.

Protest against Muhammad caricatures in Paris

Several thousands of Muslims demonstrated today in Paris, France, over the publication of Muhammad caricatures republished in the country.

Featured story

Berlin court repeals preliminary injunction against Wikimedia Germany

The Amtsgericht Berlin-Charlottenburg has repealed an injunction that it had issued in January against Wikimedia Deutschland, the German chapter of the Wikimedia Foundation.

Wikipedia Current Events

- H5N1 avian flu virus: Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy report their first cases of H5N1-infected wild birds, all swans thought to have migrated from Russia in recent months.
- Tokelau begins voting in a referendum to determine whether it remains a New Zealand territory, or becomes a state in free association with New Zealand.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Steve Fossett completes the world record for the longest non-stop, unrefuelled, flight when the Virgin Atlantic Global Flyer lands at Bournemouth airport in southern England after a flight lasting 76 hours and 45 minutes which covered a distance of 26,389.3 miles (42,469.46 km). The aircraft had to declare an emergency landing after suffering total electrical failure, and had only 200 lbs (90 kg) of fuel remaining.
- Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon undergoes emergency surgery due to digestive problems. His condition is critical.
- In the United States, it has been revealed the White House knew of extensive flooding of New Orleans in the hours after Hurricane Katrina struck last August. The former head of America's top emergency body, Michael Brown, has told a Senate Committee he informed the White House of the seriousness of the situation at a time when even the media wasn't fully aware of the extent of the flooding.
- The Danish editor who first published the Prophet Mohammed cartoons that sparked global protests has been sent on leave.
- Thousands of people are planning to gather in London on Saturday to rally against the controversial cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

Lewis "Scooter" Libby testified that leak was authorized

According to federal prosecutors, Lewis "Scooter" Libby Jr., the former chief of staff to Vice President Dick Cheney, told a grand jury that superiors authorized him to disclose to reporters information from the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate. Portions of the report included still-classified information on Iraqi weapons capability leaked in June and July 2003.

In a letter by special prosecutor Patrick J. Fitzgerald, written in January and included papers filed in court by Libby's defense team on Monday, it is unclear whether "superiors" was meant by Fitzgerald to mean that Libby referred to his immediate boss, the V.P. Cheney. If so, it could broaden the scandal. It is also unclear whether the information leaked involved intelligence that was still classified.

Mr. Libby was obliged to step down after he was indicted on charges that he lied about his role in exposing the identity of Valerie Plame Wilson, a C.I.A. operative, to the journalist Robert Novak in July 2003.

Federal prosecutors plan to use the confession to establish that Mr. Libby was part of the Bush administration's public relations campaign to rebut Mr. Wilson's op-ed column in The New York Times. The column stated that there was little evidence to support the administrations claims that

Saddam Hussein was pursuing weapons of mass destruction.

Protest against Muhammad caricatures in Paris

Paris, France Several thousands of Muslims protested today in Paris, France, as well as the eastern city of Strasbourg, against the publication of caricatures of the prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper and the re-publication of some of these caricatures in French newspapers: the daily France Soir and the weekly Charlie Hebdo.

The protesters consider that these caricatures insulted their prophet, and thus, they contend, their religion and themselves. Charlie Hebdo is a weekly paper known for its extremely acerbic positions against organized religion; it often mocks Catholicism, the largest religious denomination in France.

Some banners claimed that freedom of speech should not imply the possibility of insulting religious figures. Other banners claimed that French society was applying dual standards. Some protesters demanded a law against "islamophobia"; France does not have blasphemy laws and has a tradition of anticlericalism.

Many of the female protesters wore a scarf to hide their hair, and some wore a hijab or veil. The French government enacted a law prohibiting conspicuous religious symbols in government-operated schools, a move widely considered to be targeting the veil and scarf, which many consider a sign of subordination of females.

The protest was organized by Muslim associations from the Paris region, most notably the Union of Muslim Associations from Seine-Saint-Denis. Seine-Saint-Denis, a

département with a high proportion of immigrants, is notorious for social tensions. This is where the 2005 civil unrest started from.

In a related move, the French Council for Muslim Worship (CFCM), a private nonprofit considered by the French government to be its main contact with the Muslim community, is litigating against the newspapers, alleging the publication of the caricatures incited to religious hatred. Muslim associations attempted to prevent the publication of Charlie Hebdo, but their claim was rejected on procedural grounds.

The protest was followed at a distance by a large complement of CRS and other police forces. No notable incidents were mentioned.

French satirical weekly reprints caricatures

Paris, France- The French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo reprinted in its Wednesday February 8, 2006, issue the cartoons originally printed in Jyllands-Posten, representing caricatures of the Muslim prophet Muhammad. Charlie Hebdo is known for its ferocious critical tone and general hostility towards organized religion.

Charlie Hebdo normally prints 140,000 copies; 160,000 were printed of these issues, but were sold out before midday. The paper announced an exceptional re-issue of 160,000 the next day. According to Le Figaro, the final printout could exceed 400,000.

Some French Muslim associations had tried to obtain an injunction against the publishing of the paper, claiming that the cartoons incited to racial and religious

hatred, but the court rejected their request on procedural grounds, as recommended by the public prosecutor. The judge, Jean-Claude Magendie, remarked that the 1881 law on the Press is very formal in order to protect the rights of defense with respect to freedom of speech.

The French government had law enforcement officers, many equipped for riot control, guard the outside of the parisian offices of the paper, should some protesters try to disrupt public order. However, at mid-day, no protesters could be seen. Charlie Hebdo is normally highly critical of police action and extraordinary security measures.

Another French satirical weekly, Le Canard enchaîné did not publish the Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons because they were, according to it, "not very fun and not very original", but published series of cartoons mocking Islamists (those exploiting the Muslim faith for political purposes). The Canard called them "Satanic drawings", in a probable allusion to The Satanic Verses, a novel whose author was sentenced to death by Islamists.

Curious death befalls collaborator days before movie release

Allen Shelleck, 76, associate in the children's book series Curious George, was found dead in his driveway 8 February 2006. Covered in black garbage bags, his body had been disregarded by neighbors and passersby who presumably mistook it for a collection of refuse.

Speculation has risen around the case due to the seemingly odd coincidence of Shelleck's death with the Curious George film's

Friday release. As of yet, investigators are not releasing any solid information involving the case.

A Boynton Beach, Florida Border's Book and Music store employee, Shelleck had been missing from work for two days prior to the discovery of the body by Burt Venturelli, a maintenance worker at the retirement complex Shelleck called home.

Venterelli told Sun-Sentinel reporters "I went to drag it this morning and said, 'This is a body, this isn't garbage.'" He also stated that Shelleck's body was naked from the waist up and that there was "blood all over the place."

Iran to abandon Nuclear Non Proliferation (NPT) if threatened to cut down on nuclear activities

Coming on the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has said that if forced to limit its nuclear activities, Iran will altogether abandon the NPT.

Ahmad said that the nuclear program is a peaceful pursuit to better "industry, medicine and economy". Addressing large crowds in Tehran, he attacked the notion of a referral to the United Nations Security Council, and the perceived bullying by the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency. He further warned, in reference to Article IV of the NPT which allows for civilian development of nuclear energy, in exchange for nuclear weapons states disarming (Article VI), that "On the other hand, if we are seeing that in total disregard for our following these rules and regulations that you still push to impose on Iranian rights- understand that it will not be

tolerated and that the nation of Iran will reconsider its policies".

Although the vast majority of sovereign states (187) are party to the NPT, Iran would join the small minority of states that are not party to the NPT. North Korea withdrew from the NPT on January 10, 2003. Overt nuclear weapons powers India and Pakistan and the suspected nuclear weapons power Israel are not parties to the NPT.

Having previously reiterated in 2004 that it would not leave the NPT, Iran performed a u-turn on its position towards treaty signatories, first showing signs during Sept 2005 when Iran's top nuclear negotiator that it would quit the NPT when Ali Larijani warned that Tehran could quit the NPT if brought before the UNSC.

Steve Fossett breaks record for longest nonstop flight, lands safely

Steve Fossett, 61, has broken the record for flying the longest nonstop flight in aviation history and has landed safely in England although, Steve Ridgeway chief executive of Virgin Atlantic, the company sponsoring Fossett's record bid said, "he burst two tires on landing and the poor Global Flyer had to be dragged off the runway."

Fossett had to land in England instead of a military in Kent because of generator problems.

After the flight, Fossett told the press, "I was really lucky to make it here today, there was a lot going on. The tension of the final part really took it out of me, but I will be fine in the morning."

Fossett flew 26,389 miles (40,210 km) when he passed over Shannon Ireland, even though he

lost 750 pounds of fuel just after take-off from Kennedy Space Center Wednesday. His record has been recorded to have been broken at; 11:59am on February 11, 2006, (EST). His trip has taken about 80 hours (3 1/2 days) and covered 42,469 km.

The plane Fossett was flying is a lightweight experimental aircraft. The Global Flyer is the only plane to make a non-stop circumnavigation of the earth on one tank of fuel.

Fossett broke the previous record of 25,361 miles (40,210 km) set by Dick Rutan flying the lightweight Voyager aircraft in 1986.

Fossett has broken 110 world records.

Craigslist sued for hosting discriminatory housing ads

The craigslist, a popular free online classifieds site, has been sued for hosting discriminatory housing ads by the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law Inc., a fair housing group.

The housing ads cited as objectionable included such statements as "NO MINORITIES," "Requirements: Clean Godly Christian Male," and "Only Muslims apply."

Stephen Libowsky, a lawyer for the housing group, said "Our goal is to have the Internet places like Craigslist treated no differently than newspapers and other media who have traditionally been posting real estate advertisements. All of the gains are going to get lost if the same rules don't apply."

craigslist CEO Jim Buckmaster said

"We admit that one or two postings per 100,000 are discriminatory" but explained that Craigslist's 19 employees could not physically screen the 8 million new ads posted each month. He continued, "Instead, we've done something much more powerful and effective, in providing our users with a flagging system whereby problematic ads are promptly removed by users themselves." He claimed the "NO MINORITIES" ad was removed within two hours.

Buckmaster wrote on the site that, "Though well-intentioned, this lawsuit misguidedly demands that we regress to primitive, mistake-prone, and wholly inadequate methods, methods which would actually be less effective in catching discriminatory ads than what we have in place currently, and which would vastly reduce the number of legitimate non-discriminatory ads that the site could process."

He continued, "Ironically, if this lawsuit were to succeed the net effect would be to deal a double blow to civil rights - by significantly reducing access to equal opportunity housing, and by undercutting our fundamental free speech rights - thereby doing a great disservice to the very persons these lawyers purport to represent."

Buckmaster also said "It is our understanding that the law is very clear to the effect that sites like craigslist cannot be held legally liable for the content of postings submitted by end users." This claim appears based upon Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act which states that "No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any

information provided by another information content provider."

Under section 7b of the website's Terms of Service agreement, users are not allowed to post an ad "that violates the Fair Housing Act by stating, in any notice or ad for the sale or rental of any dwelling, a discriminatory preference based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (or violates any state or local law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of these or other characteristics)".

Israeli PM Ariel Sharon undergoes emergency surgery

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon underwent emergency surgery at Hadassah Medical Center in Israel to treat intestinal damage revealed by a recent computed tomography, better known as a CT scan. The Chief Surgeon said, "Sharon is out of danger, for the moment. His condition is stable and the surgery was a success." Sharon is currently in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the hospital.

Yesterday doctors treating Sharon had noticed a swollen abdomen and ordered a CT scan on his torso and found the damage to his intestine. Later tests had shown that part of the large intestine had developed necrosis and needed to be immediately removed.

Hospital director Shlomo Mor-Yosef stated a press conference that there were "no complications" during surgery. "His (Sharon's) key problem is lack of consciousness. There is no significant change in his condition. Doctors did not find any occluded artery and there were no blood vessels blocked. He is stable but in critical condition at this time and he is in no immediate danger at

this moment."

Yosef also said that Sharon's sons and family had met earlier and decided to go forward with the surgery and treatment.

Doctors removed at least 50cm of Sharon's large intestine.

Yosef also said that possible reasons as to why Sharon's intestine was damaged were, "maybe infection or decline of blood supply to the intestine." Yosef also said that the surgery was both a "routine procedure" and "not a dramatic" one. "Hospitals perform these operations sometimes two or three times a day," he added.

Yael Bossem-Levy, a spokesman for Hadassah Medical Center said earlier that, "the prime minister's life is in danger. His condition is now very serious, or critical. Sharon's digestive tract has undergone severe deterioration while he's been unconscious, and there appears to be a blockage in his blood circulation. The restricted blood flow raised the possibility of necrosis, or death of tissue, in the intestines."

Levy also stated that Sharon's condition has "deteriorated to its most critical point since his admission."

The 77 year-old leader has been hospitalized since January 4th, after suffering a massive stroke which left him comatose. This is his seventh surgery since his hospitalization.

Sharon has been hospitalized for thirty-nine days, and has been on a feeding tube for two weeks.

Hospital morale vital during any outbreak: expert warns

Hospitals must prepare their staff for the trauma from an outbreak of bird flu, a medical expert advised today. If not, they risk the collapse not only of services but also of morale at a time when they most need both.

Charles Gomersall, the director of intensive care at Hong Kong's Princess Margaret Hospital, told a symposium on bird flu that he "predicts will have few staff two weeks into an epidemic if do not have mechanisms in place to minimize the stress and effect on morale."

He said hospitals need to offer staff counselling and daily briefings in order to manage the stress.

H5N1 avian flu virus has mostly affected birds, but at least 88 people in seven countries have died since the re-emergence of the virus late 2003.

There is no evidence yet that the virus has mutated to point where humans can pass it on, but experts predict millions could die if it does.

Gomersall insists hospitals need properly equipped facilities and trained staff now. Once an epidemic starts there is only a very short time between when symptoms present and admission to intensive care.

Neil Entwistle agrees to extradition

Neil Entwistle, 27, appeared before a Magistrates' court today and agreed to extradition to the United States, where he will face double-murder and weapons charges. Entwistle is now the prime suspect in the killings of his

wife Rachel, 27, and nine-month old baby daughter Lillian. Both were shot to death and left under a pile of blankets in the bedroom of their Hopkinton, Massachusetts home.

District Judge Anthony Evans said in court, to Entwistle, "You are agreeing to be sent immediately to the US and there will be no extradition proceedings?" Entwistle replied, "that's right, yes."

Ben Brandon, Entwistles council, said "Neil believes he will receive a fair and proper hearing in the US on these very serious allegations," and wishes to go back to the U.S. "as soon as possible. He is anxious that any delay could cause his late wife's family, and his own, additional distress."

Earlier on Thursday, Entwistle had said before the court, that he did not agree to extradition "at this stage."

However; Entwistles lawyer said that "he never changed his mind. He was always inclined to consent to extradition. He was going to think about it overnight with our advice. And overnight, after reserving his position, he has consented."

Entwistle was reportedly planning a murder-suicide. Instead, police believe he fled to England, where he was subsequently arrested in London.

If convicted of first-degree murder, Entwistle could face life in prison.

University of Illinois student newspaper runs six Prophet Mohammed cartoons

University of Illinois student newspaper The Daily Illini has republished six of the Prophet Mohammed cartoons from the

Jyllands-Posten in an editorial published on February 9, 2006.

Opinions Page editor for the Daily Illini, Chuck Prochaska said, "we felt this would be a perfect opportunity for us to have a free-speech debate about a clash of worlds we've had ever since 9/11. It just seemed people didn't have a grasp about why this controversy was going on. Everyone knew there were cartoons and that they were allegedly offensive, but they were very difficult to find (on the Internet) if you don't speak Danish."

The decision to run the cartoon was reached after Prochaska and editor Acton Gorton discussed the controversy surrounding the cartoon in different humanities classes in the past few days.

Reactions to the cartoon were strong Prochaska said; however, the controversy did not create any riots or produce any threats. He also stated that several muslims called the paper's office to complain about the cartoon, but they were not threatening. "It's almost a split. A lot of people are saying 'Congratulations for having the guts to do this and defend the First Amendment.' Others are saying 'Just because you have the right to do this doesn't mean you should.'"

Some Muslim students voiced concern saying, "We don't understand why people have to see the images to understand (their offense)."

However, other Muslim students were not angry with the decision of the paper to print the cartoons. Bilal Aziz, a muslim student at the university said, "I can see the images opening up further

discussion on the Muslim religion."

In a letter to the editor published February 10, Urbana-Champaign campus Chancellor Richard Herman noted his disappointment in the decision to publish the cartoons but encouraged students and the local community to exercise their rights to freedom of expression.

Some letters to the editor from Muslim students expressed their disappointment and outrage at the newspaper's decision. Other letters, including those from alumni, voiced their approval at the editors' courage to run the controversial cartoons.

So far, many national newspapers have declined to run the cartoons, and at the moment, only one other student newspaper in the whole country has run the cartoons in their paper.

Today in History

1689 - The Convention Parliament was convened to determine if James II, the last Catholic king of England, had vacated the throne when he fled to France in 1688.

1733 - Georgia Day: James Oglethorpe established the city of Savannah and the Province of Georgia, a penal colony for the resettlement of people in debtor's prison in the United Kingdom.

1809 - Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States of America was born.

1818 - Led by General Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile formally proclaimed its independence from Spain.

1912 - Xuantong Emperor of the Manchu Qing dynasty (pictured), the last Emperor of China, abdicated.

2001 - NEAR Shoemaker touched down on Eros, becoming the first spacecraft to land on an asteroid. February 12 is Daeboreum in Korea, Lantern Festival in the Chinese lunar calendar (2006); Darwin Day.

Quote of the Day

"Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

~ Abraham Lincoln

About Wikinews

We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including **you**) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.

Got news and no computer? Call the Wikinews Hotline

+1-866-653-4265
(toll-free in the U.S.)
+1-202-742-5918
(outside the U.S.)

License

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License. Articles published in this Print edition were created by Wikinewsies.

To view a copy of this license, visit:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/>
or send a letter to
Creative Commons
543 Howard Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, California, 94105, USA

Audio Wikinews

Audio Wikinews is a free non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily.

<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio>

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit:
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print>