



Top Stories

Plane crash in Iran kills 80

An Iran Air Tour commercial jet, flight 945, with at least 148 people onboard, has crash-landed in Iran killing at least 80 people and injuring as many as 60.

Shiv Shankar Menon to take over as India's new Foreign Secretary

The present High Commissioner to Pakistan will take over the post of Foreign Secretary from Shyam Saran in October.

Featured story

Super high speed internet launched in New Zealand

KAREN is super high speed Internet that is capable of transmitting data with speeds of up to ten gigabytes per second.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Dozens of leftist lawmakers occupy the stage of the Congress of Mexico to stop Vicente Fox from delivering his final State of the Union speech. Fox refused to deliver the speech which will be telecast later.
- Hurricane John attacks the coast of Baja California. It has been upgraded to Category 3.
- An Iranian passenger jet carrying 148 people crashes in Mashhad, Iran killing 29 people.
- The European Union proposes new talks on the Middle East roadmap for peace.
- Spain approves plans to deploy

Wikipedia Current Events

1,100 troops to Lebanon as part of a UN peacekeeping force.

- The Japanese Vice Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Takao Kitabata, says Japan has enough petroleum reserves to prevent an oil crisis if economic sanctions are imposed on Iran over its nuclear program. Japan is almost entirely dependent on the Middle East for its oil and imports 15 percent of its total oil consumption from Iran.
- The 2006 Zakouma elephant slaughter is the latest of a series of massacres which has killed off over 97 percent of the original (the year 1970) Chadian elephant population of 300,000 animals.
- Prime Minister of Poland, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, calls on the EU to develop a common foreign policy and build a "credible" military force.

Clinical study supports pollen tablets as hay fever treatment

A large clinical trial found that grass pollen tablets under the tongue (sublingual) are an effective treatment option for hay fever sufferers. The results have been published in this month's edition of the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.

Tablets with grass pollen that dissolve quickly under the tongue may provide doctors with a better tool to fight the illness. The patient could take the pills at his own home, and after a while the symptoms may disappear

completely and treatment can be ceased. Contrary to the current standard treatment, this therapy targets the immune system in such a way that it treats the cause and not just the symptoms.

634 patients from 8 countries participated in the trial. Half received Grazax® tablets (a product of ALK-Abello, Hørsholm, Denmark), the other half placebo pills. The group receiving treatment showed fewer symptoms during hay fever season and consequently cut down on their medication use. Grazax® also caused few and tolerable side effects such as itching and swelling in the mouth.

Combined with several earlier papers, these results provide a basis for ALK-Abello to apply for European approval of their drug. It has already been approved in Sweden, and the company will follow a Mutual Recognition Procedure hoping to get their product in European pharmacies by the end of 2006. The company will continue to fund further inquiries into Grazax® and will keep collaborating with scientists from several European countries.

During hay fever season, patients develop a runny nose, swelling of the mucous membranes of the nose, sneezing and teary eyes, a condition doctors call allergic rhinoconjunctivitis. The condition seems to be increasingly frequent, with approximately 10% of the population suffering from grass pollen allergy. First-line treatment

includes antihistaminics (like cetirizine or Zyrtec/Zyrlex) and steroid sprays, but results are often disappointing.

Long term results have been demonstrated for weekly shots with pollen extracts (a procedure called desensitization), but too many visits to the doctor make the process troublesome. Also, the patient has to wait some time before leaving the doctor's office, due to the risk of developing a kind of shock state termed anaphylactic shock.

Plane crash in Iran kills 80

An Iran Air Tour commercial jet, flight 945, has crash landed in Iran and has killed at least 80 people and injured as many as 60. None of the crew was killed. The plane crash landed at approximately 1:45 p.m. local time in Iran. The plane is a Russian made Tupolev 154 passenger jet. There were at least 148 people on the plane according to Iranian Civil Aviation official, Reza Jafarzadeh.

There are conflicting reports as to how many have been killed. The Hindu reports that at least 80 have been killed, but BBC News reports that only 29 have been killed.

The plane crashed after landing when a tire blew up causing the plane go off the runway and "then its left wing hit the ground and caught fire," said chairman of Iran's civil aviation, Nourollah Rezai Niaraki, but Jafarzadeh says the cause of the crash is not yet known. The jet was coming from Bandar Abbas, a port city in southern Iran and was landing at an airport in Mashhad located in northeast Iran.

"As the plane was landing one of

its tyres burst, forcing to it to swerve off the runway before hitting nearby barriers and bursting into flames," another aviation official said.

Witnesses say that the "plane was going up and down" when it was attempting to land and that a "huge sound" was heard coming from "underneath" the plane.

"The plane was going up and down when we were trying to land. When we landed, I heard a huge sound from underneath the plane. The plane leaned to one side and started sliding on the ground and then a fire started from the front of the plane," said one of the survivors.

Mashhad, which is home to the Imam Reza shrine, is a popular destination for pilgrimages of Shias.

Iran Air Tours currently has 43 planes in operation.

On August 22, 2006, another Tupolev Tu-154 Russian made passenger jet crashed in the Ukraine killing all the passengers aboard.

Man arrested on suspicion of family murders in Greater Manchester, England

A man has been arrested in connection with the murders of a mother and her three children. The thirty-six year-old was arrested at Heathrow Airport this morning. He was leaving an incoming flight from Bangkok, Thailand.

It is believed that the man arrested is Rahan Arshad, the husband and father of the victims. He is expected be taken to Manchester, England for questioning later today.

The corpses of thirty-two year-old Uzma Rahan and her three children were found in their home in Cheadle Hulme in Greater Manchester on August 20. Police think the four bodies had been there for up to four weeks.

Police say they were aware that Mr. Rahan had left the country on a Thailand-bound flight about four weeks ago. After the bodies were discovered, officers wanted to trace the whereabouts of Mr. Rahan immediately.

Mrs. Rahan, eleven year-old Adam, eight year-old Abbas and six year-old Henne were found to have serious head injuries, and post-mortem tests concluded that they died from being beaten to death.

Three days after the bodies were discovered, a thirty-five year-old woman and a forty year-old man were arrested in connection with the deaths, but they were later released on police bail.

Tropical depression Ernesto hits Carolina's coast in U.S.

Ernesto, now a tropical storm, made landfall along the coastline of the state of North Carolina near Long Beach in Brunswick County at 11:40 p.m. eastern time.

Reports say the storm was near hurricane strength when it made landfall, but officials are welcoming the rain.

"We need some rain around here - just not all at once," said Jean Evans, a worker for a convenience store in North Carolina's Holden Beach.

The threat of flooding is the main concern with meteorologists.

"The storm system is moving quite fast, and it's bringing a lot of moisture with it. You always have flash flooding with these types of systems in the mid-Atlantic because of mountainous terrain. People really need to monitor that. You don't want to go through standing water or running water because you don't know how deep it is," said meteorologist at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, Florida, Jennifer Pralgo.

Hurricane watches have been activated in from South Santee River in South Carolina to Cape Lookout in North Carolina, but all watches located south of Santee River are no longer in effect.

There is no word on any serious damage as of yet.

Scugog flag controversy comes to an end

Port Perry, Ont — The Scugog flag controversy has now come to an end. The controversy began when councillor Lynn Philip Hodgson lowered the town hall flag out of respect for a fallen Canadian soldier.

Liz Drebit, CUPE Local 1785-01 unit chairman, said she is "extremely upset by the spin that portrayed the grievance as a lack of respect for fallen Canadian soldiers". "My apologies to the Legion. Never ever did we have any intent to cause them any distress, and pain, any suffering because of this," she said.

"I thought I was doing the right thing at the time and I still think I did," Hodgson said yesterday.

"The public reaction to the lowering of the flag in a timely manner needs to be addressed," said Drebit.

The union dropped the grievance and said it was all a "misunderstanding."

User-generated search engine "Jatalla" launched

After its previously expected July roll-out date was delayed, Jatalla.com has made available a prototype of its search engine. The new search engine appears unique in that relevance rankings are produced only by users themselves, rather than through the use of web crawlers and page analysis algorithms.

In this way, Jatalla resembles Wikipedia, Digg, and del.icio.us as part of a growing trend of user-controlled content, collective processing, and transparency. This approach may be contrasted with that of search engines in which rankings are produced by a formula that is determined internally, as indicated in a recent court ruling.

Shiv Shankar Menon to take over as India's new Foreign Secretary

India's present High Commissioner to Pakistan, Shiv Shankar Menon will, with effect from 1st October, take over the post of Foreign Secretary, succeeding Shyam Saran. Saran has been designated the Special Envoy for negotiating the Indo-US nuclear deal. Menon, 57, is a 1972 batch Indian Foreign Service officer who has served in countries such as China, Israel, Austria, Japan and Sri Lanka and was an advisor in the Department of Atomic Energy during the course of his diplomatic career. He succeeded Vijay Nambiar as High Commissioner to Pakistan in 2003, and will now hold the post of Foreign Secretary for a term of three years.

Basketball: Greece beats the United States, 101-95 on semi-final

With a very tough defence and an attack of 101 points, the European Champions, Greece, beat the national team of the United States of America with a score 101-95, on the semi-final of the 2006 Fiba World Championship which took place in Saitama, Japan.

The Greek team had a very good day - especially Vassilis Spanoulis and Dimitris Diamantidis - while the zone defence organized by the Greek coach Panayiotis Giannakis blocked the NBA stars who, despite their good performance, will not take part in the final. The best player of the USA team was Denver Nuggets star, Carmello Anthony, who scored 25 points. The other semi-final of the 2006 Fiba World Championship is the game between Argentina and Spain.

STATISTICS (points and fouls)

Greece: Papaloukas 8, Diamantidis 12(2), Tsartsaris 3(1), Hadjivrettas 2, Vasilopoulos, Schorchianitis 12, Papadopoulos 8, Kakiouzis 13(1), Fotsis 9(1), Dikoudis 8, Spanoulis 20(3).

United States: Paul 3, Wade 22(1), Arenas, Heinrich 12(4), Bowen, Anthony 25(3), Jameson, Battier 1, James 15, Johnson 3(1), Bosh 2, Miller, Howard 10.

Super high speed internet launched in New Zealand

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Helen Clark, yesterday unveiled Kiwi Advanced Research and Education Network (KAREN). It is super high speed Internet that is capable of transmitting data with speeds of up to ten gigabits per second, 10,000 times faster than the current spread of

broadband, and 200,000 times faster than dial-up.

The New Zealand Government put NZ\$43 million (\$28.1 million USD) into the Crown company: Research and Education Advanced Network of New Zealand (REANNZ) organization, responsible for the running of KAREN.

KAREN will link universities and research institutions in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hawkes Bay, Nelson and Rotorua and then to the rest of the world via a TelstraClear fibre optic cable.

The network will allow geologists/geophysicists to access U.S. data on fault lines, 3D modellers the ability to collaborate on international mapping projects and students will be able to participate in interactive video lectures with experts, anywhere in the world.

The technology so far is limited to just universities and research institutions but Minister for Education Steve Maharey said: "The network will be extended over time to include other institutions, including schools, libraries and museums." It is also limited to just one university in the South Island, it is located in the HIT Lab NZ at the University of Canterbury.

Clark said: "The link is crucial in order to attract and retain scientists, because it allows a greater level of real time collaboration between scientists based in New Zealand, and their colleagues around the world."

The Telecommunications' Users Association of New Zealand chief executive, Ernie Newman, said: "Karen was a 'great initiative' for

the science community, and that would have wider benefits for the country."

Dr. Mark Billinhurst, HIT Lab director, said: "The network meant the country was now legitimately part of the international research community."

Pilot dies as Dutch F-16 fighter jet crashes in Afghanistan

In southern Afghanistan in the province of Ghazni, the 29-year old Dutch pilot Michael Donkervoort died when his F-16 fighter jet crashed.

"The plane was flying at a great height when the accident occurred, which means it can be ruled out that the craft was shot down. We therefore assume it was an accident," said the Dutch Defense Ministry.

There has been an investigation launched into the cause of the crash, which was found by a team of rescuers from the United States.

The jet was flying with another F-16 when it crashed.

Today in History

31 BC - Troops under Octavian defeated the forces of Mark Antony and Cleopatra in the naval Battle of Actium.

1666 - Great Fire of London: A large fire began in London and burned for three days, destroying 10,000 buildings, including St. Paul's Cathedral, but only 16 people are known to have died.

1870 - Franco-Prussian War: Napoleon III of France was captured after the Battle of Sedan; the Second French Empire collapsed within days.

1898 - Forces led by Horatio Kitchener (pictured) defeated Sudanese tribesmen at the Battle

of Omdurman, establishing British dominance in northeastern Africa.

1945 - The Japanese Instrument of Surrender was signed on the deck of the USS Missouri, formally ending World War II.

September 02 is National Day for Vietnam (1945)

Quote of the Day

"Who is the happiest of men? He who values the merits of others, and in their pleasure takes joy, even as though 'twere his own."
~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Word of the Day

hedonism; n

- (philosophy): The belief that pleasure or happiness is the highest good in life.
- A lifestyle based on or implying hedonism.

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