



Top Stories

Soldier gets killed by bomb in Afghanistan

A Canadian soldier was just killed in Afghanistan by a bomb as he patrolled an area west of Kandahar on foot. He died around 1 pm in Panjwaii. One soldier was slightly hurt. Military officials have not yet released the name of the soldier.

Sony plans global replacement of laptop batteries

After several laptop producers recalled a total of about 7 million products containing Sony batteries, the Sony Corporation said it will "initiate a global replacement program... in order to address concern related to recent over-heating incidents."

Featured story

New York City considers stricter regulations on trans fat

The Health Board of New York City on Tuesday presented a plan to ban trans fatty acids (or trans fat) from the eateries in the city. Snacks and fast food often contain an elevated level of trans fat, which has been linked to coronary heart disease. The plan would have serious implications for both fast food chains and restaurants.

Wikipedia Current Events

• A Brazilian Gol Transportes Aéreos flight with 155 passengers onboard, has disappeared from radar.

Wikipedia Current Events

•A tape of senior Al Qaeda figure Ayman al-Zawahiri is released in which he brands US President George W. Bush a "lying failure" over the war on terror. He goes on to condemn Pope Benedict XVI as an "impostor" for his recent controversial speech and labels Roman Catholicism a religion "made of myths".

•Rep. Mark Foley, R-Fla., resigns from the United States House of Representatives in the wake of questions about e-mails and instant messages he wrote to a former Capitol page.

•Soyuz TMA-8, with the Expedition 13 crew and Iranian-American space tourist Anousheh Ansari on board, lands safely on the Kazakh steppe.

•Typhoon Xangsane lashes the northern Philippines, killing at least 48 people and causing extensive damage.

•Lenovo recalls 526,000 Sony laptop batteries due to fire risk.

•A general strike is being observed in Indian-administered Kashmir to protest the planned execution of Jaish-e-Mohammed militant, Mohd Afzal, set for October 20.

•The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission submits its report to the government and the LTTE rebels. The report accuses both sides of human rights violations and breaking the terms of the cease-fire, citing over 200 civilians killed and over 200,000 displaced

Wikipedia Current Events

in the last two months.

Ex-Liberal president declares for Toronto mayoralty

The field of candidates running to lead the City of Toronto became more larger today as former Liberal Party of Canada president Stephen LeDrew threw his hat in the contest for mayor of Canada's largest city. LeDrew is running against incumbent Mayor of Toronto David Miller who is seeking a second term and city councillor Jane Pitfield who was considered Miller's main challenger until today. With LeDrew entering the race there are a total of 38 candidates running for the position. The election takes place on November 13, 2006.

Miller is a centre-left politician with links to the New Democratic Party though he also has support from some Liberals and Conservatives. His opponents have been looking for a candidate to challenge him in light of what has been perceived as Jane Pitfield's faltering candidacy. LeDrew considered supporting Pitfield but, calling her "Calamity Jane" because of the mistakes she's made in her campaign, concluded she could not unseat the mayor. After other high-profile figures such as former Members of Parliament Dennis Mills and Sergio Marchi and former police chief Julian Fantino declined to enter the contest as a centre or centre-right, LeDrew decided to enter the race. Today was the last day to register as a candidate.

LeDrew has never run for public office though he has many years of experience as a "back room" operative in the Liberal Party and in municipal politics. In 2005, he declared bankruptcy and was ordered to pay 74% of the \$364,000 he owed in back taxes.

"The evidence is that LeDrew consciously and continually neglected to pay income tax installments when due and appeared to regard his obligation to pay income tax as subordinate to all other personal obligations," wrote Justice John Ground of the Superior Court of Justice.

LeDrew says he was trying to pay off his tax debt but also had to pay personal expenses such as school fees for his children.

"I'd gone through a divorce. I was in a law firm ... that broke up and I lost money in that. I had four children to put into schools."

"I was also working 2,000 hours a year (as a) volunteer as Liberal Party president. I said , `I owe taxes. The taxpayer can wait. My children can not.'

"I was proud of my choices, my priorities," he told the Toronto Star. "I'd do it again. Any father knows his children are the most important thing."

Indian Air Chief Marshal warns of impending Pakistani air superiority

The top-brass of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has sent a three-page letter to Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee, warning him that the IAF is in danger of losing its long-standing air-superiority over Pakistan. In the letter, Air Chief Marshal Tyagi writes,

Pakistan Air Force (PAF) is being

beefed up with 44 F16s from America. They have a clearly defined goal of attaining parity with the IAF. With China supplying J 10 and JF 17 aircraft (fitted with Russian engines), PAF force levels of combat squadron will increase. Unless steps are taken to move ahead with procurement, the IAF's combat strength will deplete to a level, which would entirely neutralise the conventional superiority held by IAF since our Independence. PAF will have 19 to 26 squadrons by 2011-12, while the IAF could reduce to 26.5 by 2015.

Additional Director of Air Power Studies, Kapil Kak said, "This aircraft induction will take at least 10 years from today and in those 10 years, the MiG 21's will progress if they get wound down. Their total technical life and design life will end and we will have the Air Force combat force strength winding down, worryingly fast."

Several inductions planned by the IAF, such as the HAL Tejas and the proposed Multirole Medium Range Combat Aircraft, have been delayed. In his letter, the Air Chief Marshal has asked the Government to acquire 40 Su-30 MKIs from Russia as soon as possible, induct the 126 Multirole Medium Range Combat Aircraft at the earliest and also urge Russia to honour their commitment of not allowing China to sell planes with Russian engines to Pakistan.

Soldier gets killed by bomb in Afghanistan

A Canadian NATO soldier was killed today in Afghanistan by a bomb while on patrol in Panjwaii district, west of Kandahar on foot. He died around 1 p.m. local time (UTC+4:30).

Military officials have not yet

released the name of the soldier. The soldier is from CFB Petawawa located in Ottawa.

His remains were taken by a helicopter to the Kandahar Airfield. One soldier from Hamilton, Ontario was reported to have suffered minor hearing loss as a result of the blast.

Earlier today at 12 pm, there was a rally called Red Friday for the Canadian troops in Afghanistan held in the Younge-Dundas Square in Toronto, Ontario. All of Toronto wore red in support for the troops. It was announced at the rally that the Canadian soldier was killed by a bomb.

Ten Canadian soldiers have died in September. Thirty-seven Canadians have died in Afghanistan since 2002.

Sony plans global replacement of laptop batteries

After several laptop producers recalled a total of about 7 million products containing Sony batteries, the Sony Corporation said it will "initiate a global replacement program... in order to address concern related to recent over-heating incidents."

Sony previously admitted the recalls announced by Apple and Dell would cost up to 30 billion yen, which is a quarter of Sony's profits in 2005. Several news sources expect this to reflect badly on the company, as it adds to problems with the PlayStation 3 and Blu-Ray DVD. Since Dell announced recalls in August, Sony's stock has lost almost 9% of it's value.

Keeping up with competitors like Apple and Dell, Toshiba and Lenovo have started recalling laptops with the lithium ion batteries. Dell expanded it's

program to include about 4.2 million portables. Following Sony's statement, Fujitsu too declared it would replace the batteries involved. A spokesperson for Toshiba added that the company doesn't expect there to be any problems with personal computers, but it will replace their Sony batteries anyway, over customer concerns. However, the company doesn't expect to pick up the tab for it.

A Lenovo laptop with the problem battery caught fire in Los Angeles Airport earlier this month. Consequently, Virgin Atlantic added them to a blacklist of prohibited laptops on their flights. According to Sony, microscopic metal particles are to blame for overheating and potentially catching fire "under certain rare conditions".

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission advised ThinkPad users who want to continue using their portable to switch it off, remove the battery and continue with the AC adapter and power cord.

5-year old American girl dies after visiting the dentist

Diamond Brownridge, a 5-year old girl from Chicago, Illinois, has died after a visit to the dentist. Children's Memorial Hospital officials say that the girl was rushed to the hospital when she never woke up after being sedated for a dental procedure. She had been in a coma, on life support, since being admitted to the hospital early in the weekend.

"She passed very peacefully and beautifully," said the hospital in a statement that the family issued.

Ommettress Travis, the mother of the girl, was asked not to remain

inside the room while dentists were operating on the girl to repair two cavities and to have at least two caps replaced. Travis says after thirty minutes she was asked to come back in and found Brownridge not breathing, in the dentist chair.

Hicham Riba, a specialist and professional in anesthesia, who was also licensed, was the dentist in charge of the procedure.

"My family and I are so sad. May God bless Diamond and her family. Every time you have a tragedy like this, you pray more. I don't think I will ever go back to a normal life after an experience like this," Riba said in a statement on Wednesday September 28.

According to the family, the girl had been given at least a triple dose of medicine that sedated her. Those drugs include: nitrous oxide gas, a single dose of an "oral agent" and an IV.

A judge has ordered that all equipment and materials used during the operation be protected and examined. The girl's medical records have also been ordered to be examined.

There is no word on whether or not any charges will be filed against Riba or any of the dentist's staff.

Protesters block day-care centres in Denmark

A standoff is forming in Aarhus, Denmark's second largest city, located mainly in the Region Central Jutland, with politicians seeking to make budgetary cuts for 2007 on one side, and parents, paedagogs and elderly-care professionals on the other.

The dispute broke out on Friday,

September 22, when day-care centres across the city were blockaded by parents, teachers and other city council employees. At one point, the city council asked the police to intervene to break the blockades of the day-centres, although a last-minute change of heart by the council averted direct confrontation.

The parents feel that the quality of day-care centers has declined, which they attribute to budget cuts. Further ire was seen when Mayor Henning G. Jensen "magically" found an additional 60 million DKK for his budget. The protesters saw this as evidence that he had tried to hide money.

Denmark's Interior Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen has also voiced concern that the mayor knew that the money was there all-the-while.

The strike is ongoing and has now spread widely in Denmark and even some some localities near Copenhagen, the Danish capital, have been experiencing strikes by public sector employees.

Filmmaker Peter Jackson to make Xbox games

New Zealand filmmaker, Peter Jackson and screenwriter wife, Fran Walsh announced at the X06 convention, Wednesday, that they are teaming up with Microsoft to create Xbox and Xbox 360 games with their new company, Wingnut Interactive.

Wingnut Interactive will initially create another video game based on sci-fi series Halo with help from Microsoft and Bungie Studios, but staffed locally in Wellington. His second project can be whatever he likes, while trying to bring new people into the world of gaming.

Peter Jackson spoke to New

Zealand news broadcaster, 3 News and said: "I want to be able to experiment with ways of telling stories that's not using the structure of a movie. It's immersive and interactive, but it goes beyond (today's) games. It's what we've been looking forward to for 10 years. I'm sure it will start small and if things go well it will expand to fit whatever this turns into."

Simon McCallum, computer scientist from the University of Otago, said: "For the new company to succeed it would probably need to employ a mix of industry veterans and about 20 or 30 top computer science graduates. However, at the moment New Zealand would struggle to fill any new jobs. In the past two years demand for computer science graduates had tripled while supply had halved."

The New Zealand Game Developers Association said around 140 people work in the development of video games in New Zealand. They say the industry is worth between NZ\$8 million and \$10 million each year. "There is a lot of potential to do something very very big and something very revolutionary. We'll just have to see what happens when the game comes out in a few years time, whether they deliver on that," said Mario Wynands, from the New Zealand Game Developers Association.

David Mclean, director of Australia and New Zealand Xbox, said: "The whole ten billion dollar video games business will be looking at New Zealand and what Peter Jackson produces. There is no release date yet, because Jackson will take as long as necessary to ensure the games meet his exacting standards."

Kerry Prendergast, mayor of Wellington said: "The venture's potential boost to Wellington's economy is enormous. Certainly the early advice I have is that it is worth millions of dollars and more jobs in our city."

Peter Jackson is the producer for the movie version of Halo which is to be shot next year, in Wellington. Jackson also worked with Ubisoft to produce the King Kong video game.

Jackson said: "Xbox has fundamentally changed how people think about games. My vision, together with Microsoft Game Studios, is to push the boundaries of game development and the future of interactive entertainment."

Microsoft also announced at X06 that it is releasing a HD-DVD addon for the Xbox 360, which will come bundled with a free HD-DVD version of King Kong for a limited time only.

2008 GOP convention to be in Minnesota

The Republican National Committee Site Selection Committee will recommend Minneapolis-St. Paul to host the 2008 Republican National Convention, on September 1-4, 2008. RNC confirmation will be done in January, 2007. Cleveland, New York City, and Tampa-St. Petersburg had also submitted bids.

"We are thrilled to accept the bid from Minneapolis-St. Paul to host our 2008 convention . The host committee put together a tremendous bid and we are confident that we will partner for a successful event. Minneapolis-St. Paul has outstanding assets

including state-of-the-art facilities, exciting and vibrant downtowns, and a clear enthusiasm from the community to host our convention," said RNC Chairman Ken Mehlman.

Details have not been announced, but the Xcel Energy Center is likely to be the main venue. The convention is expected to fill most hotel rooms in the area, and rank among the largest events ever held in the area. The last major national convention in the area was when 1892 Republican National Convention was held in Minneapolis.

The Twin Cities area was also under consideration for the 2008 Democratic National Convention four days earlier. The first day of the Republican convention will be Labor Day, the last day of the Minnesota State Fair.

Today in History

1399 - The Duke of Lancaster deposed Richard II to become Henry IV of England, merging the Duchy of Lancaster with the crown.

1939 - General Władysław Sikorski became Prime Minister of the Polish government in exile.

1966 - Seretse Khama became the first President of Botswana when the Bechuanaland Protectorate gained independence from the United Kingdom.

1980 - Ethernet specifications were first published by Xerox, Intel and Digital Equipment Corporation.

1991 - Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was overthrown in a coup d'état and replaced by General Raoul Cédras. A large-scale exodus of boat people ensued.

Quote of the Day

"Mankind must remember that

peace is not God's gift to his creatures, it is our gift to each other."
~ Elie Wiesel

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Word of the Day

southpaw; n

1. A left-handed person, especially in sports.

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