



Top Stories

UN calls on international community to increase aid for Iraqi refugees

Jordan and Syria have received "next to nothing" in help from other countries to cope with the two million refugees fleeing the conflict in Iraq, the UN High Commissioner for refugees says.

2007 AFC Asian Cup tournament commences; Thailand and Iraq draw 1-1

The 2007 AFC Asian Cup has begun in South-East Asia, with Thailand drawing 1-1 with Iraq in the opening match of the tournament.

Featured story

Poll of 100 million votes names new Seven Wonders of the World

In 1999, Bernard Weber started the New7Wonders foundation, and eight years, 200 candidates and 100 million votes later, seven man-made structures now have something in common - they all hold the title of 'Wonder'.

Wikipedia Current Events

•The Boeing Company unveils its newest airplane, the Boeing 787 "Dreamliner" at its facility in Everett, Washington, USA. The 787 is an alternative to Airbus's A380.

•Valdis Zatlers is sworn in as the third President of Latvia.

•Polling in the Papua New Guinea election is extended due to

Wikipedia Current Events

weather and transport problems.

•A fierce battle breaks out between the Sri Lankan navy and the Tamil Tigers off the eastern coast of Trincomalee province.

•The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade has warned of an imminent terrorist threat in Indonesia.

•Roger Federer beats Rafael Nadal 7-6, 4-6, 7-6, 2-6, 6-2 to claim his fifth consecutive Wimbledon title, equaling an Open Era record set by Bjorn Borg in 1980.

Tour de France: The race begins in earnest

London, England –For the second time in two days, the sun and the crowds came out to welcome the Tour de France to London.

The show got underway as the Caravane set off from the Mall at half eight. Dance beats, giant cows, and French tinged words of encouragement, momentarily woke the early birds from their patient wait for the main event. As they waited curious by-passers swapped photography tips, and thoughts on cycling as the youngest members wondered what the fuss was all about. Council workmen commented on how easy it was to get work done, with no car traffic on the roads.

Again the policing was low key and friendly with the Gendarme Nationale cutting a dash amongst their British colleagues. British bobbies road in french vehicles,

and French argents in British ones. Riding well in advance of the Tour, French and British motorcycle policemen swapped tips and compared notes as they passed. The Frenchmen bringing more than a little Gallic charm and swagger to the proceedings.

The crowd behind Jubilee Gardens grew as the start time of twenty-five past ten approached, an event presaged by an ever increasing number of press and support vehicles. As Big Ben chimed the hour in the background a quartet of helicopters in the sky above the River Thames began to jostle for position; a dance mirrored on the ground as anticipation grew. Slowly the dribble that was the vanguard of press and support vehicles became a torrent. A wave of cheers rung out, announcing finally the arrival of the riders. Despite their being almost 190 riders the speeding cyclists had come and gone in a matter of minutes, however the show was not yet over. For a quarter of an hour afterwards tour buses, and still yet more support vehicles followed in the wake of the cyclists. As the police began to remove their restrictions on the crowds and traffic, a final rear guard of race fans emulating their heroes brought up the rear. Despite some not being in the best of condition and some riding rather rickety bikes, these fans still managed to get an enthusiastic cheer of encouragement from the remaining onlookers.

With the Tour continuing on its

way and it still not yet eleven, some amongst the myriad of spectators began to make their way to the large outside video screens to continue watching the race, others preferring to sample the shops, sights, smells and tastes of the waking City. With some others choosing to sit in the sun, and lie in the park, no doubt making up for an early start.

Teamsters picket Orange County transit system in contract dispute

In an ongoing labor dispute from May of this year in California, United States, Teamsters Local 952, which represents the Orange County Transportation Authority's 1,200 coach operators, went on strike at 12:35AM (0035 hrs) PDT Saturday morning after a cooling-off period declared by State Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger expired.

Sanctioned picket lines have been formed outside Authority facilities in Garden Grove, Anaheim, and Santa Ana. About 200,000 regular passengers are affected.

Major sticking points in the negotiation appear to be related to cost-of-living increases and pension funding allocations. The strike was declared after the Authority's bargaining agent said he lacked authority to approve a union counter proposal, which he said had to be taken before the OCTA's board of directors, who will not be available to meet until Monday the 9th at the earliest.

Nevada wildfires forces evacuations

1500 people in the town of Winnemucca, Nevada, United States had to be evacuated this weekend as a 8,000-acre 55 square mile wildfire burned dangerously close to the town's

southern end.

The fire threatened homes, businesses and a power substation. Lightning strikes are believed to have started the blaze.

Face-off at Islamabad Mosque

Since last Tuesday, following violent confrontations with Pakistan's army, up to 1800 clerics and students are still holed up in Islamabad's Red Mosque. Clashes began last week following mounting antagonism between the mosques hard-line leaders and the government lead by President Pervez Musharraf.

The mosque has been accused of enforcing it's own Islamic law in the capital, notably the illegal detention of Chinese foreign nationals working in massage parlors.

20 people have been reported killed over the past six days, which have seen multiple gun battles and demolition of the mosques exterior walls. Currently, there seems little chance of a negotiated resolution. A delegation of Islamic leaders were refused access, and the mosques leader Abdul Rashid Ghazi has declared suicide a favourable option to surrender.

The mosques leaders follow the Hanafi school of thought, believing that the Koran is the authority by which justice should be metered. Historically the mosque has had close links with the Pakistan leadership, and members of the current administration have resisted calls for a crackdown on the mosques provocative behaviour.

The stand-off represents a decisive ideological challenge to the president who is walking a fine-line between Islamic extremists at

home and foreign pressure to crack-down on militancy in the lawless tribal regions.

Kimi Räikkönen wins 2007 British Grand Prix

Ferrari driver Kimi Räikkönen won the FIA Formula-1 2007 Santander British Grand Prix on the Silverstone Circuit at Silverstone, Northamptonshire, England.

The triumphant Lewis Hamilton, who won the pole in the qualification yesterday was able to maintain his position on the first part of the race, but lose it on his first pit-stop. Moreover, his teammate for McLaren-Mercedes Fernando Alonso passed Kimi in the same way while Finn was on his first pit-stop and was in the lead before Spaniard's second pit-stop. After McLaren drivers refuel themselves just a few very fast laps became decisive to secure Kimi's podium. Lewis was unable to overtake Fernando thus finishing third.

Another Ferrari driver Felipe Massa had a problem on the start causing him to start from the pit-lane, but broke through to the fifth place, finishing right on the back of Robert Kubica from BMW Sauber. Felipe was pushing on the Poland driver through the whole third part of the race.

With the 6th place of Nick Heidfeld, another BMW driver, the BMW Sauber team once again overtook Renault drivers.

Both Heikki Kovalainen and Giancarlo Fisichella were the first in one lap behind the leaders closing the top eight.

Honda drivers finished 9th and 10th.

This race became the 9th

consecutive podium finish for Lewis Hamilton in his rookie season who is leading the Drivers' Championship with 70 pts, 12 ahead of Alonso.

Venus Williams beats Marion Bartoli to triumph at Wimbledon

Venus Williams triumphed over Marion Bartoli of France 6-4, 6-1 yesterday to win the Women's Singles event at the 2007 Wimbledon Championships.

For the first time, an American and Frenchwoman were matched up to compete for the British women's singles title. A Wimbledon champion in 2000, 2001 and 2005, Williams was not the favorite to win the title again this year. Currently ranked 23rd in the world, she entered the tournament in the shadow of her sister, Serena Williams.

At the beginning of the tennis season, Serena stated her own determination to reclaim the No. 1 ranking. Serena showed better than Venus at the French Open by reaching the quarter finals, and won the Australian Open in January (Venus dropped out due to an injury). In spite of her initial strength, Serena's hopes to dominate the tournament were cut short when she lost to No. 1 seeded Justine Henin in the quarterfinals.

Bartoli, the eighteenth seed for this year's championships, had never progressed past the fourth round of any Grand Slam event. However, she progressed to the final by defeating third seed Jelena Janković in the fourth round and Justine Henin in the semifinals in one of the major upsets of Wimbledon history.

As Henin lost to Bartoli in the

semifinals, Venus Williams was poised to become the lowest seeded player in recorded history to win the Wimbledon singles title. With powerhouse serves and an aggressive ground strokes battle, she did just that. Williams comfortably knocked out Bartoli in two straight sets, with match point accidentally striking Bartoli in the wrist.

Venus was reunited with the Venus Rosewater Dish on Centre Court during the trophy ceremony. Another first, the All England Club is paying men's and women's singles champions equal prize money. Venus was paid \$1.407 million, to which she replied "Thank you, All England Club - we're playing under equal terms."

The men's final takes place later today with first seed and defending champion Roger Federer taking on second seed Rafael Nadal in a repeat of last year's final.

Morocco raises terror threat level to 'maximum'

Police officers and government officials met on Friday in Morocco and say that a "serious threat of a terrorist act" by al-Qaeda exists in the country and has raised their terrorist attack threat level to "maximum."

"[Intelligence] indicates a serious threat of a terrorist act and demands extreme mobilization by the bodies concerned," said a statement by Morocco's interior Ministry. The statement did not cite specific targets or dates. The statement also said that "reliable intelligence information" exists to issue the alert.

"Reliable information relayed in recent days to the interior ministry described the preparation of acts

of terrorism in Morocco. Morocco is cooperating fully with foreign police services," the source said, adding that in the face of the threat, Morocco is putting itself in a situation of extreme vigilance," said an unnamed security official in Morocco.

Prior to raising the level, Nicolas Sarkozy, the newly elected president of France, was scheduled to visit the country, but those plans have since been canceled citing "scheduling reasons," said David Martinon, a spokesman for Sarkozy. Martinon did not state that security concerns played a role in canceling the trip.

Fort Lee, Virginia adopts RAPIDGate for fast civilian access

The U.S. military installation at Fort Lee in Virginia will begin using a program called RAPIDGate that will replace passes issued to non-military persons who regularly require access to the facility. The program will take effect July 10, when the practice of issuing 90-day passes to people who present a valid driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance for the vehicle used for access ends. Those passes will be grandfathered out as they expire.

The RAPIDGate program for fast entry into Fort Lee replaces what was once access privileges performed by the installation itself, which came free of cost. The new outsourced program administered by Portland, Oregon-based Eid Passport, Inc. enhances security to the installation by performing background checks. Their service comes at a price. The screening process makes a 10-year felony background check, performs a check against terrorist and sexual offender watch lists, and does a

social security cross reference to validate a person's identity.

Qualified applicants are issued a pass that enables them to bypass inspection pits and use any of the facility's 7 gates for access. Businesses whose employees would benefit by this are required to contact the program provider and have "point of contact" persons who can validate an applicant's employment. Enrollment in the program costs the business \$199. A pass for each employee of the business costs \$159 annually. The pass for employees expires after a year, when a new background check is required by the program.

The program is a voluntary alternative for civilians to conform with new access policies mandated by the Department of Defense and the U.S. Army, according to an information pamphlet distributed by the base. A kiosk will be set up at Fort Lee to accept applications that process a photograph, social security number, and fingerprint.

Those without a RAPIDGate pass will need to enter the fort at locations where their vehicle can be inspected. A rigorous inspection involves armed guards asking the driver to place keys on the dash board, pop the hood and the trunk, open the glove box, and have all occupants exit the vehicle and open all doors, including the hood and trunk. While the vehicle is inspected inside, another guard uses a mirror attached to a wand to inspect under the chassis of the vehicle's undercarriage.

Eid Passport, Inc. specializes in identity authentication and background screening. Fort Lee will be the 12th military installation out of an estimated 250 military installations on U.S.

soil to implement identity screening as part of new policies mandated by the Department of Defense (DoD).

"The pass contains no personal information," said David Smith, the director of marketing for Eid Passport. It does contain a barcode which is scanned at entry. It also includes a biometric fingerprint that might be checked by the scanning device against the presenter of the pass in times of elevated security. The pass is also embedded with an active RFID transmitter. The pass is scanned on entry to the fort at the gate check point, but not upon exit. If the RFID transmitter works properly, movement into and out of the base will be recorded.

The Fort Lee pamphlet mentions a "a new mandate" by the DoD. That mention appears to be in reference to portion of the language found in an Instruction issued in October last year by the DoD that states, "Implement a verification process, whether through background checks or other similar processes, that enables the U.S. Government to attest to the trustworthiness of DoD contractors and sub-contractors."

The Instruction stems from a Directive signed by President Bush in August of 2004. That Directive, from the Department of Homeland Security, says in part, "Wide variations in the quality and security of forms of identification used to gain access to secure Federal and other facilities where there is potential for terrorist attacks need to be eliminated."

Fort Lewis in Washington state was the first U.S. military installation to adopt the RAPIDGate program as a test in 2004. Since then, Fort Sam Houston, Fort Carson, and Fort

Bragg, among other installations have adopted the program.

"What happened at Fort Dix, [New Jersey], as we look at it, is a Fort Dix issue," Laura Arenschiold reported spokesman for the 18th Airborne, Tom McCollum, as saying in June. "That should not be taken as an invitation for someone to try it here at Fort Bragg, but (security) is a living, breathing entity. You have to constantly change it just to keep those who are trying to penetrate it on their toes." The new security measures will go into effect at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, which is among the largest of domestic military bases, starting July 8.

Poll of 100 million votes names new Seven Wonders of the World

decide what the new seven wonders should be and not some government, not some individuals, not some institutions."

Nominated structures had to be built or discovered before the year 2000, and out of the 200 nominations, only twenty-one were left by the early part of last year. Voting had been taking place for six months, but only recently did voting result in server crashes, causing the foundation to encourage text message voting.

The results were announced at a ceremony hosted by Hilary Swank, Ben Kingsley and Bollywood star Bipasha Basu in Lisbon, Portugal. Out of the twenty-one, the following seven were announced as the new 'Wonders of the World':

- Great Wall of China, in northern China. It was created in the 5th century BC to protect the northern borders of the Chinese Empire. The Wall is the world's longest human-

- made structure, stretching over 6,400 km (4,000 mi).
- Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The giant statue of Jesus Christ is 38 m (105 ft) tall and weighs 700 tonnes. The statue is located at the peak of the 700 m (2296 ft) Corcovado mountain, overlooking the city of Rio.
- Machu Picchu, above the Urubamba Valley, Peru. It is a city created by the Inca Empire, located on a mountain ridge. Machu Picchu was forgotten for centuries by the outside world, however not by the locals. It was brought to international attention by archaeologist Hiram Bingham in 1911.
- Petra, in Jordan. It is famous for having many giant stone structures carved into the rock. The site was revealed to the Western world by the Swiss explorer Johann Ludwig Burckhardt in 1812, but remained accessible only to Europeans until after World War I.
- Chichen Itza, on the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico. It is a large archaeological site originally built by the Maya civilization. Chichen Itza was a major regional center in the northern Maya lowlands. Archaeological data suggest that Chichen Itza's collapse was violent.
- Taj Mahal, in Agra, India. It is a white marble mausoleum generally considered the finest example of Mughal architecture. Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan commissioned it for his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, and it was

- constructed between 1632 and 1648.
- Colosseum, in Rome, Italy. It is a giant amphitheatre located in the centre of the city, and was capable of seating around 50,000 spectators. It was constructed between 70 AD and 80 AD, and used for nearly 500 years for a variety of events.

Although the foundation had large amounts of public support, UNESCO, the United Nations cultural program distanced themselves from the project, saying it had "no link whatsoever" to the project. UNESCO currently keeps tabs on 851 places in its 'World Heritage Sites' program.

Left out of the Seven are the Pyramids of Giza, to which a respected Egyptian antiquities expert replied that the pyramids are a "symbol of the genius of the ancient people." The foundation announced that the pyramids would have "honorary status" with the seven. The pyramids were the only remaining of the original Seven Wonders.

Weber claims that now that the man-made wonders have been chosen he has a new task: choosing the seven natural wonders of the world. He says he will start his new project immediately.

UN calls on international community to increase aid for Iraqi refugees

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) called on the international community to increase aid and assistance to the two countries shouldering the bulk of displaced Iraqis. Syria and Jordan have received the largest

number of Iraqi refugees and are having difficulty coping with the numbers.

The appeal was made by UNHCR spokesman Ron Redmond at a press conference on Friday at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. He criticized governments for earlier expressing concern and pledging support for the refugees but not following through on promises. "Syria and Jordan have still received next to nothing in bilateral help from the world community," said Redmond.

There are an estimated 2 million Iraqi refugees total in Syria and Jordan with the numbers increasing daily. Each day, Syria receives approximately 2,000 Iraqis and, of those, about 1,000 will stay for an extended time. There are a further 2 million displaced Iraqis who move and settle in safer areas within Iraq.

The large numbers of refugees is putting pressure on the infrastructure of the host countries, resulting in difficult living conditions for the inhabitants. Ron Redmond acknowledges that some US\$70 million in donations have been received by the UNHCR, and a further \$10 million promised since the Iraq displacement conference in April, 2007. He points out, however, that much more is required. "We stressed then and we say it again, donors must provide direct bilateral support to these host countries whose schools, hospitals, public services and infrastructure are seriously overstretched because of the presence of millions of Iraqis they have so generously welcomed," said Redmond.

"It is unconscionable that generous host countries be left on

their own to deal with such a huge crisis. We strongly urge governments to step forward now to support them in dealing with this situation."

—Ron Redmond, UNHCR

Schools are particularly difficult to set up and staff in a refugee situation. Syria has currently hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugee children, but only has resources for 32,000 students. Syria offers free access to public schools for refugees, but doesn't have the infrastructure to cope. Some 14,000 Iraqi refugee children in Jordan attend school, out of the possible 250,000. The refugee children in Jordan don't have access to public schools and instead go to private schools. UNHCR is partnering with UNICEF to provide 150,000 classroom spots in Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, but the coordination of the required resources, such as buildings, teachers, and school supplies is proving difficult.

Health issues for the refugees is also a concern. UNHCR has set up three primary care medical facilities in Syria, with two more in the works. But approximately 10,000 Iraqis per month require a doctor's attention, 3,000 of which require serious medical treatment.

Refugee situation in numbers
2,000,000 in Jordan and Syria
2,000,000 internally displaced
750 in the United States
14,000 out of 250,000 children in Jordan attend school

"It is unconscionable that generous host countries be left on their own to deal with such a huge crisis," said Ron Redmond at the press conference. "We strongly urge governments to step forward now to support them in dealing

with this situation and renew our call for international solidarity and burden sharing."

The president of Refugees International, Ken Bacon, agrees that a more comprehensive approach to the situation is required and believes that it would be good investment for the United States to increase its aid to the region. "The United States ought to be pumping money into Jordan and Syria," Bacon suggests. He feels that the sheer numbers of refugees can have a destabilizing influence in the Middle East. However, the complicated diplomatic relationship between the U.S. and Syria has resulted in slow progress, according to Bacon, as bilateral discussions have not taken place and the UN is forced to mediate.

Both Jordan and Syria have put in place new entry and residency conditions, which has resulted in thousands of refugees being stranded on Iraq's borders. Families have been separated based on a person's age and type of passport held. Jordan and Syria have not signed on to the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

The non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch has been critical of Jordan and Syria on their policy of returning refugees, saying they "are violating on a daily basis the most fundamental principle of refugee protection – nonrefoulement, which prohibits the return of refugees to persecution or serious harm."

To gain access to Jordan, Iraqi refugees must be over 40 or under 20, and must prove they have sufficient funds to support

themselves in the country. They must also be in possession of a new generation passport.

Nasser Hikmat Jaafar drove 900 km from Baghdad with his family to reach Jordan in mid-June, 2007. Half of his family was refused entry to Jordan. "They allowed entry just for my wife and two daughters and denied me and my three sons. They didn't tell us the reasons, but just said they are fed up with men of such ages [between 20 and 40 years old]," said Jaafar. He changed plans and traveled with all his family to the Syrian border, a distance of approximately 500 km from Iraq's Jordanian border.

Syria has less restrictions on gaining entry, but has imposed residency conditions. Refugees can only stay up to three months and must then leave Syria and re-enter to be eligible to stay for another period.

The United States government has a program set up for Iraqi asylum seekers in Jordan who meet specific criteria. If they meet the requirements, listed below, they may be eligible for resettlement under the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP).

Interested asylum seekers are encouraged to apply directly with the U.S. Overseas Processing Entity (OPE) in Amman, Jordan, which is operated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Individual Iraqis and their immediate family that meet one of the conditions below may seek access through the direct program:
Individuals who worked on a full-time basis as interpreters/translators for the U.S. Government or Multi-National Forces (MNF-I);

Locally Employed Staff (LES) engaged by the U.S. Government under the authority of the Chief of Mission or the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA); or Surviving immediate family members of interpreters/translators or LES.

According to the U.S. government information on the process, those individuals initiating a case with the OPE will not be guaranteed an interview for resettlement in the United States. Applicants would be screened for eligibility as per the requirements listed above and are subject to approval.

In a February 14, 2007 press briefing, U.S. Under Secretary for Democracy and Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky addressed the Iraq refugee crisis. "Our key immediate objectives are to assist internally displaced Iraqis and Iraqi refugees by building up the capacities of UN agencies and NGOs," said Dobriansky. "This includes increasing opportunities for permanent resettlement for the most vulnerable Iraqis, to establish specialized programs to assist Iraqis who are at risk because of their employment or close association with the United States Government, to work diplomatically with regional governments through bilateral and multilateral channels to uphold the principle of first asylum," she continued.

In the February press briefing, the U.S. committed to receive 7,000 Iraqi refugees by fiscal year end, September 30, but clarified that perhaps only half that number would be "travel-ready" subsequent to the interview process as described above. The U.S. could accommodate 20,000 to 30,000 Iraqi refugees per year without difficulty, according to Ken

Bacon of Refugees International. To date, the U.S. has allowed 750 Iraqi refugees into the country.

2007 AFC Asian Cup tournament commences; Thailand and Iraq draw 1-1

The 2007 AFC Asian Cup has begun in South-East Asia, with Thailand drawing 1-1 with Iraq in the opening match of the tournament.

The Asian Cup is the premier international competition for the Asian Football Confederation (AFC). The 2007 tournament will run from July 7 to July 29, featuring a group stage and then four progressive knock-out rounds.

The 2007 Asian Cup is the first in its' 43-year history to be co-hosted by four nations. Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam will each host one of the four groups, and will take two games each in the knockout rounds. The final is scheduled for Bung Karno Stadium in Jakarta, Indonesia on July 29.

Heavy rain caused the opening ceremony of the Cup, held at the Rajamangala Stadium in Bangkok prior to the Group A match, to be delayed.

Hosts Thailand took the lead in the sixth minute when referee Kwon Jung-Chul awarded them a penalty kick. Striker Kiatisuk Senamuang was deemed to have been fouled when brought to ground by Iraqi defender Ali Rehema.

Iraq nearly equalised in the sixteenth minute after a spectacular overhead 'bicycle kick' by Salir Sadwn was saved by Thailand goalkeeper Kosin Hathairattanakool, who pushed the ball onto the post and eventually

cleared.

Iraq equalised in the thirty-second minute when captain Younis Mahmoud headed a ball over 'keeper Kosin and into the net from a free kick by Sadwn. Despite dominating the first half, Iraq went into half-time level at 1-1.

Both teams tired in the second half, but the three best chances to take the lead fell to the hosts. Therdsak Chaiman and Datsakorn Thonglao both shot just wide either side of the hour mark, and substitute Teeratep Winothai forced a save out of Iraqi goalkeeper Noor Hassan with an effort from outside the penalty box five minutes from the end.

The game ended at 1-1, however, and means both Thailand and Iraq move to one point each in the Group A ladder after one match played. Oman and Australia are the other two teams in the group. Australia will make their Asian Cup debut later today after moving from the Oceania Confederation to the AFC at the start of 2006.

The Australians are considered favourites, along with defending champions Japan, to win the tournament in their first outing, following their impressive show in the 2006 FIFA World Cup. They reached the second round after qualifying from Group F, including a 3-1 win over Japan, before losing by the single goal - an injury time penalty - to eventual champions Italy.

Surveillance cameras in New South Wales schools cause alarm

Installations of closed-circuit television (CCTV) security cameras into schools in the Australian state of New South Wales has alarmed teachers.

Over 50 schools in New South Wales already have surveillance cameras in playgrounds and outside dining areas. The concern from teachers arises from the pending installation of further cameras inside classrooms and also corridors.

Teachers have expressed concerns about privacy and misuse of the equipment. Senior vice-president of the New South Wales Teachers Federation, Bob Lipscombe, said that teachers are worried about the footage being used improperly, as well as the fact that both teachers and students would be filmed at work by the cameras.

The increase in security cameras being used in schools is an attempt to protect valuable schooling equipment from theft and damage, in particular computers in computer rooms. Lipscombe said that installations in computer rooms will potentially affect many teachers, as all subjects can be taught with the integration of technology.

CCTV surveillance is preferred by some schools over fitting alarm systems and physical bars on entrances to the room, as it is cheaper to install.

"[Teachers] are concerned about its improper use and that it may be taken out of context"
—Bob Lipscombe

Lipscombe said that the Teachers Federation isn't against CCTV systems provided they are operated properly and with appropriate consent. A solution proposed is to only have the surveillance system record during times when the room is unattended.

A spokesperson for the New South

Wales Department of Education and Training has said that the footage obtained is confidential and used to assist police in investigating criminal activity.

Today in History

1357 – The foundation stone of Charles Bridge in Prague was laid by Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV.

1816 – The Congress of Tucumán declared the independence of Argentina, then known as the United Provinces of the River Plate, from Spain.

1922 – Johnny Weissmuller swam the 100-meter freestyle in 58.6 seconds, breaking a world swimming record and the "minute barrier."

1955 – The Russell-Einstein Manifesto was issued in the midst of the Cold War, calling for a conference where scientists would "appraise the perils that have arisen as a result of the development of weapons of mass destruction."

2002 – The African Union was launched in Durban, South Africa, with President of South Africa Thabo Mbeki as its first chairman. July 09 is Independence Day in Argentina (1816).

Quote of the Day

There lies before us, if we choose, continual progress in happiness, knowledge, and wisdom. Shall we, instead, choose death, because we cannot forget our quarrels? We appeal as human beings to human beings: Remember your humanity, and forget the rest. If you can do so, the way lies open to a new Paradise; if you cannot, there lies before you the risk of universal death. ~ Bertrand Russell in the Russell-Einstein Manifesto

Word of the Day

pertinaciously; adv

1. In a stubbornly resolute

manner; tenaciously holding one's opinion or course of action.

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