



Top Stories

British PM Tony Blair pressured by resignations



Government members resign as Tony Blair comes under new pressure over his leadership. One member said he believes it is no longer in the "best interests of the country for Blair to continue as prime minister."

Israel to end Lebanon blockade



Israel's air and sea blockade of Lebanon is to end Thursday evening according to a statement issued by the office of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

Featured story

Crocodile Hunter's Steve Irwin dies at 44



Steve Irwin, the environmentalist and star of The Crocodile Hunter, died Monday after an accident with a stingray near Cairns, Australia, according to local Australian media. He was 44.

Wikipedia Current Events

• The United States government announces that fourteen suspected terrorists are to be transferred to the Guantanamo Bay detainment camp and admits that these suspects have been

Wikipedia Current Events

held in CIA black sites. These people include Khalid Sheik Mohammed, believed to be the No. 3 al-Qaida leader before he was captured in Pakistan in 2003; Ramzi Binalshibh, an alleged would-be Sept. 11, 2001, hijacker; and Abu Zubaydah, who was believed to be a link between Osama bin Laden and many al-Qaida cells before he was also captured in Pakistan, in March 2002.

•The Singaporean economy tops a list of 175 economies as the most business-friendly economy in the world in a survey conducted by the World Bank's International Finance Corporation.

•In the United Kingdom junior defence minister Tom Watson and six Parliamentary Private Secretaries (Khalid Mahmood, Wayne David, Ian Lucas, Mark Tami, Chris Mole and David Wright) resign over Tony Blair's continuing refusal to declare when he will step down as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

•Japan's Princess Kiko gives birth to a son by caesarean section. The as-yet unnamed boy is the first male heir born into the Japanese Imperial Family for more than 40 years, and will ultimately become Emperor if the current succession laws are unchanged. The child's father, Prince Akishino is the second son of Emperor Akihito.

•The government of the Ivory Coast has offered to stand down

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after toxic waste was dumped in the city of Abidjan, making several hundred people ill and killing two.

American Academy of Pediatrics supports dairy for lactose intolerant children

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), in the September 2006 issue of its journal Pediatrics, supports the use of dairy by lactose intolerant children.

Dr. Melvin B. Heyman, author of the article, says that just because a child is lactose intolerant, does not mean that they should avoid dairy altogether. Many lactose intolerant people can consume small amounts of dairy.

Heyman says that dairy consumption is important, especially for children, because of its high calcium content. The calcium is, in turn, important for strengthening growing bones. "If dairy products are eliminated," the article says, "other dietary sources of calcium or calcium supplements need to be provided."

Lactose intolerance is a condition, present in the majority of human population above the age of infancy, due to which the body cannot tolerate lactose, a sugar present in milk and other dairy products. Lactose intolerance causes a range of unpleasant abdominal symptoms, including stomach cramps, bloating, flatulence and diarrhea.

As lactose intolerance is inherent, its prevalence varies by ethnic group. For example, while only 12% of American Caucasians have it, its prevalence is 75% among African Americans, 93% among Chinese, and 100% among American Indians. Many people do not realize that they have this condition simply because they have eaten dairy all their lives and view the symptoms of lactose intolerance as "normal".

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM), an organization that promotes a strictly vegetarian diet for medical reasons, has long stated that the risks of consuming dairy far outweigh the benefits. According to the organization's fact sheet, called "Parents' Guide to Building Better Bones", there are many healthy ways of getting enough calcium and promoting bone health. Many foods contain calcium, not just dairy. Also, it is important to consider the amount of calcium absorbed, not just the amount of calcium present in a food. For example, about three times as much calcium is absorbed from one serving of Total Plus cereal as from one serving of 2% milk.

The report in News-Medical.Net says that Ann Marie Krautheim, with the National Dairy Council, a dairy lobbying group, says

" she hopes the report will educate parents on how to continue to include dairy in the diets of children sensitive to lactose and also help improve their nutrient intake. Krautheim says calcium-fortified beverages and other foods which seek to provide an alternative source of calcium, do not provide an equivalent nutrient package to dairy foods such as milk, cheese and yogurt. "

— News-Medical.Net

This last statement, however, that dairy products are superior to calcium-fortified foods, is not supported by the article in Pediatrics.

President Bush admits secret CIA detention centres

President Bush today confirmed that the CIA has held up to 100 terrorism suspects in secret overseas prisons. Speaking in a televised announcement, he said the CIA no longer held any prisoners and was disclosing information on the men's detention because the interrogation was complete. 14 of the men have been moved from CIA custody to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba under military commission and will now face trial.

The 14 suspects are thought to include Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York.

President Bush said that the CIA interrogations had been vital in tracking down and capturing further suspects; such as Mohammed. He denied that the men were tortured: "The US does not torture. I have not authorised it and I will not." Despite the frank disclosure the President would not confirm exactly where the secret prisons had been located, although last year The Washington Post reported on the possible existence of detention centers in Eastern Europe causing deep concern in the EU. The European Parliament also protested against so called 'rendition' flights across Europe to transport prisoners to the secret centers.

This announcement comes shortly after the American justice system

rejected a president has now proposed a new bill to set up military commissions which would allow the US to try prisoners held in the Cuban base. Mr Bush, speaking alongside family member of 9/11 victims, said it was now up to Congress to authorize the commissions so that, "the men our intelligence officials believe orchestrated the deaths of nearly 3,000 Americans on September 11, 2001, can face justice." The new policy is more like a military tribunal than the previous proposals.

The president said he would submit the legislation today for consideration. It is reportedly causing controversy on Capitol Hill leaving Bush facing a potential rebellion from his own party, something he will be keen to avoid with his mid-term elections approaching. A spokesman for the Senate subcommittee that will consider the bill said there were "some sticking points with the administration" over the exact content.

A major part of the bill marks a role reversal by the Pentagon; previously the administration had argued that many of the detainees were illegal combatants and so not subject to the Geneva convention. The military commissions will now cover all Guantanamo Bay suspects with the convention, which, among other things, expressly forbids the use of torture. President said that the bill would also ensure that individual US soldiers could not be sued by detainees in US courts.

The announcements coincide with a renewed crack down on terrorism by Bush's Republican administration and comes as the party faces a tough mid-term election later this year.

The president concluded that the interrogation program had helped to prevent terrorism in America: "Were it not for this program, our intelligence community believes that al Qaeda and its allies would have succeeded in launching another attack against the American homeland. By giving us information about terrorist plans we could not get anywhere else, this program has saved innocent lives."

Israel to end Lebanon blockade

Israel's air and sea blockade of Lebanon is to end Thursday evening according to a statement issued by the office of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. The blockade has been in place since the beginning of the Israel-Hezbollah war on July 12 and will end tomorrow at 1800 local time (1500 UTC). It continued despite the declaration of a ceasefire three weeks ago with Israel declaring the blockade necessary to prevent arms shipments to Hezbollah. International forces are to take up command positions at Lebanese seaports and airports in order to block future smuggling of arms.

German experts are to take up positions monitoring Beirut's airport on Wednesday while German naval vessels will be deployed off the Lebanese coast. There are currently over 3,000 international troops in Lebanon, a figure expected to rise to 5,000 by next week. Under UN Resolution 1701 15,000 international peacekeepers are to police the border with Israel along with approximately the same number of Lebanese government troops.

Lifting the blockade will make it easier for Lebanon to rebuild after the devastating 38 day war and allow the country to resume use of its normal trading and travel

routes.

Sport - Materazzi admits Zidane comment

Marco Materazzi has told 'Gazzetta dello Sport' exactly what comment he made to Zinedine Zidane that caused him to headbutt the player during the 2006 world cup final. Materazzi said "I was tugging his shirt; he said to me 'if you want my shirt so much I'll give it to you afterwards,' I answered that I'd prefer his sister." Zidane, who was sent off for the incident, has previously refused to go into detail over what had been said, referring to it as a personal comment about his mother and sister.

Materazzi has been banned for 2 matches by FIFA (the world football governing body) whilst Zidane, who is now retired from the sport, was given a 3 match ban and fined £3,260.

India - Conservative leader's convoy hits and injures Mumbai woman

Yesterday a convoy carrying the UK Conservative party leader David Cameron (from a slum literacy project in Mumbai to a lunch meeting at the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel) hit Prema Naik, a factory worker in the city. Cameron's car was ahead of the minibus that was involved in the accident and he was not aware of the incident till later.

Naik's condition was described as "serious" last night as she underwent treatment at the King Edward Memorial Hospital. Cameron said he was in shocked by the incident and promised that "the High Commission will also do all that it can to assist the victim and her family." The driver of the minibus was pulled out and beaten by a mob after the incident - a common occurrence in India.

Northern Ireland - Omagh bomb suspect goes to trial

Sean Gerard Hoey, a 37 year old electrician, will stand trial in Northern Ireland for the 1998 Omagh bombing. Hoey is accused of killing 29 people in the car bomb explosion on the 15 August 1998. In total he faces 58 charges of (some for separate bombings and conspiracies). Hoey is the only suspect to have been charged in connection with the bombings and has been in custody for 3 years.

The trial, in Belfast, will be seen by Mr Justice Weir and is expected to last 14 weeks. It is likely to be the last non-jury trial in Northern Ireland.

UK - NHS must "cut back" on old treatments

The National Institute for health and Clinical Excellence is to encourage British doctors to stop using older treatments if newer ones are available. It has been reported that unneeded tonsillectomies and hysterectomies (that could be treated with drugs) are costing the health service £21 million year.

Sony's PS3 on display at the E3

Andy Burnham, a government spokesman said that the health authorities would still keep the money just be asked to review its processes; "New drugs and treats are continuously emerging and trusts have to make difficult decisions about how to invest funding."

Sony have announced that they will delay the launch of the Playstation 3 from November 2006 to March 2007. A spokesperson cited supply issues for a key component. The delay, the second this year after Sony earlier moved the date from spring to November, means the PS3 will not be on sale

for the christmas rush (traditionally the best selling time for games consoles).

The delay is due to problems over the supply of a blue laser used in the PS3's Blu-ray drive. The planned American launch date remains unchanged and Sony say they still aim to sell 6 million units by March.

Princess Kiko gives birth to imperial baby boy

Princess Kiko has given birth to a 2,558 kg (2.558 kg, or 5.639 pounds) baby boy, on 6 September at 8 h 27 (Japan Standard Time). He is the first male baby born in the Japanese imperial family since his father in 1965. The baby was delivered with a Caesarean section, and will not be named until a ceremony seven days after his birth.

Emperor Akihito, currently on a tour of Hokkaido, welcomed the birth. A number of traditional rites will take place, including the baby boy being symbolically presented with a sabre.

The boy will be the third in line to succeed to the Japanese throne after the Crown Prince Naruhito and Prince Akishino, father of the child.

The fact that Crown Princess Masako wasn't able to have a boy to succeed the throne is thought to have provoked her depression and subsequent withdrawal from public activity.

Pressure from the Imperial Household Agency for another child was ineffective and therefore Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi appointed a panel to find an alternative succession system. The panel's recommendation to allow women to inherit the throne was

met with fierce criticism from conservatives.

The birth of the baby boy eases the pressure for the reform which about 70% of Japanese favoured but which was postponed sine die when the news of the pregnancy came to the public.

Prince Akishiro has previously criticized his elder brother for not trying to sire a boy. According to Crown Prince Naruhito this was in order to protect Crown Princess Masako. At the same time, Princess Kiko has become the darling of the media while the Crown Princess has been accused of being "selfish" by some newspapers.

British PM Tony Blair pressured by resignations

Demands that the British Prime Minister Tony Blair set a date for his departure as leader of the British Labour Party reached a new level today as seven government members resigned to protest his continued leadership.

Junior Minister Tom Watson and six Parliamentary Private Secretaries had previously been considered loyal Blair supporters. Wayne David, Ian Lucas, Mark Tami and David Wright, the resigning PPSs, signed a letter stating their concern that the ongoing leadership crisis would hurt Labour at next year's elections to the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and English Local Authorities. Two others, David Mole and Khalid Mahmood have also resigned as PPSs. Parliamentary Private Secretaries are Members of Parliament appointed to assist Cabinet ministers. Blair responded by calling Watson "disloyal, discourteous and wrong."

Watson told BBC News he no longer believes it is in the best interests of the country for Blair to continue as prime minister.

The resignations come in spite of a report in The Sun newspaper quoting unnamed friends of the prime minister saying he would resign as Labour leader on May 31, 2007. The report has not been confirmed by Blair or his office.

Earlier this week at least 14 MPs who were first elected in 2001 and were previously thought loyal to Blair, including Watson and the 6 PPSs, signed a confidential letter to Blair calling on him to publically announce a date for his resignation. The letter was leaked to the press.

Conservative Leader of the Opposition David Cameron responded to the resignations by saying the government was "divided and in meltdown". Liberal Democrat leader Sir Menzies Campbell said that the national interest was "not being served by the continuing uncertainty over Mr Blair" and that the prime minister "should either resign or set a date."

The mounting crisis comes two weeks before the party's annual conference being held this year in Manchester.

Calderón declared Mexican president-elect

After more than two months of wrangling following the July 2 election, Felipe Calderón of the conservative National Action Party (PAN) has been declared president-elect of Mexico by the country's electoral court. His six year term will begin December 1st. The court's 7 judges unanimously affirmed that Calderón defeated left-wing

candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador by a margin of less than 0.6% of the vote rejecting Lopez Obrador's claims of electoral fraud and undue influence by outgoing president Vicente Fox and dismissing the option of annulling the election and holding a new vote. Tens of thousands of Lopez Obrador's supporters have been rallying in Mexico City for weeks demanding a full recount. The court allowed only a partial recount of 9% of the ballots - the recount narrowed the margin by 0.03%, which the court decided was not enough to justify a wider recount.

Calderón has responded to the court's ruling with an attempt to placate the left with a call for unity to defeat poverty, unemployment and crime.

"I want to again express my recognition of my adversaries," said Calderon in a Tuesday evening broadcast to the nation.

"Their proposals, the most worthwhile ones, which are the most legitimate and representative, will be incorporated into my government programme."

"From my side, there will always be an extended hand and an open door to dialogue," he added.

Lopez Obrador, a former mayor of Mexico City, has rejected the electoral court's ruling.

"I do not recognize someone who tries to act as the chief federal executive without having a legitimate and democratic representation," he said in a rally in Mexico City's Zócalo plaza.

Lopez Obrador referred to his rival as a "usurper". He has spoken of

the possibility of declaring a parallel government "of the people to rival that of the political mafia and white-collar criminals", and said he would continue to lead street protesters.

Under Mexican law the court's decision is final and cannot be appealed.

Rumour of Kola Nuclear accident appear to be false

Rumours of an accident at the Russian Kola Nuclear Plant appear to be false. The rumours have been circulating after an emergency shutdown of the reactor—known as a SCRAM—at unit 3 of the plant. According to the Swedish Nuclear Power Inspectorate, they have been in contact with the management of the Kola plant and they confirm a SCRAM at unit 3 of the plant that is now under investigation.

STS-115 launch delayed

The launch of the Space Shuttle Atlantis, on mission STS-115 has been delayed by at least 24 hours due to a short in number one of the Orbiter's three Fuel cells. NASA expects to have more information available at 1pm EDT when they will have a meeting followed by a press conference.

The delay could result in a rollback, as the problem cannot be resolved on the pad.

The flight has been delayed multiple times since August 27th.

Turkish Parliament approves sending troops to Lebanon

The Turkish parliament approved the government's proposal for sending troops to Lebanon to take part in the UN-led peacekeeping operation. 533 MPs attended the voting session where 340 of them approved the proposal and 192

rejected. The troops are expected to departure by the end of this month or early October.

The Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey commented that "The required has been done. May it be good for the nation.". Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said "The framework of the proposal is planned to minimize the possible risks Turkish troops may face. After this parliamentary decision, it is our duty to support our soldiers to be sent and pray for them. I hope these discussions [regarding risks] will end after this decision".

Main opposition party leader Deniz Baykal and his party has opposed the decision. He said "This[discussion] has been beneficial as a chance to reflect opposition's understanding to the society". The other opposition party leader Erkan Mumcu emphasized the public reluctance about the mission and said "In the surveys, an average of 86%, in the least attended surveys around 74.6% of the participants have rejected the idea to send troops.".

A well known Turkish international relations expert Prof. Huseyin Bagci, Lecturer at Middle East Technical University said "The approval of the proposal was the only chance". He also sees the risk for Turkish soldiers as "minute". However Derya Sazak, left wing columnist from daily Milliyet newspaper, is regarding the mission as risky.

The proposal's approval has been welcomed by US.

The proposal voted yesterday night will be passed to Turkish General Staff. Then the mission details including the number of soldiers to be sent will be clarified.

This week, Turkish Foreign Ministry and General Staff personel will meet to discuss technical details.

According to sources, Turkish army will send not more than 1000 soldiers to the region by the end of this month or first week of October.

Teenager sentenced to four years for manslaughter

15-year-old teenager, Ngatai Reweti was sentenced and jailed today at Auckland's High Court for four years after killing Christopher Currie by throwing an eight kilogram chunk of concrete at Auckland's Southern Motorway.

Currie, from Taupo, was driving along the Auckland Southern Motorway with his friends when the concrete smashed through his windscreen from the Princes Street, Otahuhu over-bridge, killing Currie instantly.

Reweti was originally convicted of the murder of Currie on August 19, 2005 but in July, 2006 a jury overturned this conviction and instead of murder charged him with manslaughter.

Justice Winkelmann, during the sentencing, said: "Reweti's actions were serious and of breathtaking stupidity worthy of condemnation." She said it was a mindless act that killed Mr Currie and irreparably damaged the lives of others.

Winkelmann has suggested that he should serve his sentence at a youth justice residence and said that it was not premeditated unlike what the crown said.

Currie's family are outraged at the sentence. "We feel let down by the justice system. I feel the judge has disrespected us as good people and good people all over

New Zealand," said Wayne Currie, father of Christopher Currie.

Reweti's family had said that Ngatai was gentle and loving but the deputy principal from his school said that he was often absent and very challenging. Reweti had taken full responsibility for the killing even though he had been smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol the day before Currie died.

Aaron Perkins, crown prosecutor, said: "The sentence should deter others from committing such acts and people should be able to travel on the roads without the fear of a missile being thrown and the consequences of that."

Liberal leadership hopeful Ken Dryden outlines vision for Canada

Liberal leadership hopeful Ken Dryden outlined his vision of the country today. He wants Canada to be a fair, global, environmental and learning society.

"What I'm trying to focus on is the educational systems as part of a whole piece of what I call a learning society," Dryden told CTV's Canada AM this morning.

"We learn from the day we are born and we learn until the day we die."

"The challenge is finding ways of enhancing learning through a national system of early childcare and a proper mix of scholarships and government help, such as grants and tax incentives," said Dryden.

Dryden admitted during a news conference that he doesn't know whether Canadian troops should withdraw or stay in Afghanistan or whether a carbon tax should be part of any climate change plan.

He has now called for a thorough debate and examination of the issue.

Other leadership hopefuls are planning big policy announcements this week as they head into the few weeks before delegates are chosen to attend to leadership convention in December.

President of Iran warns universities to stay out of politics

The president of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, at a meeting today, advised the heads of Iranian universities to restrain from political involvement.

On the occasion of the National Youth Day, the president met with university students. He declared that "Today, students have the right to strongly criticize their president for the continued presence of liberal and secular professors in the country's universities." He complained of how difficult the reforming process at the universities, affected by secularism, progressed, but added: "Such a change has begun."

The president is also the head of the Council of Cultural Revolution, thus having the power to institute such changes. Last November, the regime appointed a cleric as head of the Teheran University, against the will of student protesters. The current events are in line with previous reports of the Iranian regime interfering with university activities.

Ahmadinejad also praised the students by saying that they have spectacular talents and intelligence compared to students elsewhere in the world.

Today in History

1191 - Ayyubid forces under Saladin were defeated in the Battle of Arsuf during the Third Crusade.

1821 - The Republic of Colombia , a federation covering much of present-day Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador, was established, with Simón Bolívar as the founding President and Francisco de Paula Santander as vice president.

1901 - With Peking occupied by foreign troops after the Boxer Rebellion, Qing China was forced to sign the Boxer Protocol, an unequal treaty with the Eight-Nation Alliance.

1940 - The Blitz began when Nazi Germany's bombs landed on London, the first of 57 consecutive nights of bombing.

1986 - Desmond Tutu became the first black to lead the Anglican Church in South Africa.
September 07 is Independence Day in Brazil (1822).

Quote of the Day

"My personal feeling is that this is how any further improvement of the world will be done: by individuals making Quality decisions and that's all."

~ Robert M. Pirsig

Word of the Day

caesura; n

1. A pause or interruption in a poem, music, building or other work of art.
2. In Classical prosody, using two words to divide a metrical foot.

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