



Top Stories

New al-Qaeda video shows Osama bin Laden meeting with 9/11 hijackers

Aljazeera has aired a new video featuring Osama bin Laden meeting with who is believed to be the September 11, 2001 hijackers.

Blair will quit as British PM within a year

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."

Featured story

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.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Ralph Bucky Phillips is the most current addition to the FBI Ten Most Wanted Fugitives list following his jail break and suspected shooting of New York State troopers.
- Ukrainian archaeologists claim they have found underground pyramids near Luhansk that predate the pyramids at Giza.

Wikipedia Current Events

BBC news's Helen Fawkes calls the complex the "Ukrainian Stonehenge."

- Police in Belgium make arrests at army barracks and soldiers' homes as part of an investigation into suspected far-right terrorists operating inside the military. The soldiers were reportedly planning attacks aimed at destabilising the country.

- US prohibits cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment for "unlawful combatants" in a sweeping revision of DoD Directive 2310.

- Israel says it will lift its air and sea blockade of Lebanon.

- Tony Blair announces that he will step down as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom within 12 months but declines to give an exact date for his departure.

17 terrorism suspects arrested in Belgium

Following a two-year investigation into far right political activists, the lead suspect of which was a member of the Belgian military, police have made a series of arrests at barracks, soldiers' homes and civilians' homes across Belgium. Those arrested are suspected of plotting terrorists attacks to disrupt the country.

During the raids, police found home-made bombs, large quantities of ammunition, firearms, detonators and other equipment, along with Nazi

symbols and extremist literature. Belgium's federal prosecutors' office has said that those arrested are "soldiers and people with an extreme-right ideology who clearly express themselves through racism, xenophobia, Holocaust denial, anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism". The prime suspect is a member of a Flemish splinter group of Blood and Honour, a militant neo-Nazi network.

Of the 17 arrested, 10 were within the military, and they had been stockpiling "a slew of weapons". The alleged leader is thought to have recruited like-minded fellows since 2004 and to have organised paramilitary trainings, survival weekends and firearms practice for them. Some of the trainings took place on army grounds, without the knowledge of the General Staff. The federal prosecutor said the arrests were set off by an increase in the group's weapons traffic. Police also say they have evidence that the faction was in touch with a similar group in the Netherlands. No plans for a specific attack were uncovered, but detectives say there was a model letter to claim attacks.

The arrests were part of a coordinated campaign and involved raids with over 100 police officers on 18 private addresses plus 5 military locations.

New al-Qaeda video shows Osama bin Laden meeting with 9/11 hijackers

The Qatar-based Arab news channel Aljazeera has aired a new

video featuring Osama bin Laden meeting with two men that the FBI accuse of being September 11 2001 hijackers, Saudi nationals Hamza el-Ramdi and Wael el-Shemari.

Wael el-Shemari was found days after 9/11, alive and well, by a BBC News investigation, which states, "he is protesting his innocence from Casablanca, Morocco." At least four other men accused of hijacking planes on September 11 have also turned up alive.

In the video, Bin Laden is seen meeting with his former lieutenant Mohammed Atef. The video also shows bin Laden meeting with Ramzi Binalshibh who is also believed to be one of the masterminds of the attacks. Atef was killed in an airstrike, by the United States in 2001 located in Afghanistan. Binalshibh has been in U.S. custody for at least four years.

The video, shows the alleged hijackers "preparing for the attacks and practising their execution" in Afghanistan according to BBC News.

It is not known how Aljazeera got the video.

Officers and immigrants get injured in Canary Isles revolt

In Fuerteventura, the Foreigner Internment Center 'La Matorral' was the scene of an incident on Tuesday evening. Five officers of the National Police sustained light injuries, as well as several immigrants. The riot started when a man tried to get a second dinner.

Only eight policemen were guarding the 1400 detained immigrants. Members of the Police

Union attributed the incident to the recent increase in immigration from Africa to the Canary Isles. As a result, custody centres are overcrowded. Guards say there is a different atmosphere, since normally the centers are more tranquil and few guards are needed.

Toronto International Film Festival starts tonight

The 31st annual Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) is starting tonight. The festival, runs until Sept. 16. Hundreds of stars will be there. Including Reese Witherspoon, Brad Pitt, Russell Crowe and more.

"Even if the film isn't bought, it's just the industry [is] seeing your film, recognizing the name," festival director and CEO Piers Handling said. "Financiers, agents are all here. It's amazing the number of filmmakers who will get American agents out of being at the festival. Even a Canadian agent."

The festival has a 352-film lineup, and includes selections from 61 countries, ranging from dramas and horror movies to documentaries, independent features and short films.

"Toronto offers the widest breadth of any of the major festivals," said Tom Ortenberg, president of Lionsgate Films.

Filmmakers like Michael Moore, John Waters and John Cameron Mitchell will be among the participants of the festival's Maverick program, during which filmmakers discuss their latest works.

Winnipeg filmmaker Guy Maddin will also screen his new silent film, *The Brand Upon the Brain*, with

accompaniment from the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, two sound-effects artists, a narrator and a singer.

The world premiere of *Amazing Grace*, based on the story of 18th-century British abolitionist, William Wilberforce, and his campaign to end the slave trade will be shown on the last day.

NASA delays launch of Atlantis

NASA has delayed the launch of space shuttle Atlantis due to a "fuel cell anomaly."

"We want to fly a good mission, we want to fly a safe mission, we want to have a successful mission," said Space Shuttle Program Manager, Wayne Hale.

"We put together a huge amount of data, but it's not complete yet. We have to put all the data on the table and look at it," said deputy manager of the Orbiter Project, Ed Mango. He also stated that "we'll need more time to understand what this signature really means." The issue has never before been seen on the space shuttles.

The issue with the fuel cell was discovered by officials when NASA was preparing to fill up Atlantis's fuel tank. One cell gave a low voltage reading while two other cells gave too high of a reading. All three of the fuel cells must be working properly in order for Atlantis to lift-off successfully.

More tests will be done on Atlantis in the next 24-hours, but so far officials have not yet decided when Atlantis will launch. The next window for launching is on Friday September 8, 2006 at 11:41 a.m.. If Atlantis does not launch on Friday, officials will try for a launch date in October.

A meeting was scheduled for 2:00 p.m. this afternoon between NASA officials, but there is no word on the conclusion of that meeting.

Mary Harney resigns as leader of the Progressive Democrats

Mary Harney, Ireland's first female Tanaiste, resigned as leader of the Progressive Democrats on September 7, 2006.

The resignation was unexpected. It was believe she would lead the party for another year. Mary Harney said, "It is my wish to allow a successor the opportunity to lead our party into the general election next year. In my judgement, this is now the right time, as we prepare for a new Dáil session and after a period of reflection over summer."

Members of her Parliamentary Party were very taken aback by her decision according to Senator John Dardis.

Nominations for the leadership will close at midday on September 18, 2006. If there are more than one nomination, an election contest will begin. All members of the Parliamentary Party can stand for the leadership. The leader is elected by an electoral college, which is compose of the Parliamentary Party, the party's Councillors and ordinary members.

MySpace to take on iTunes

The goliath of social networking services, MySpace, is trying to take on the goliath of legal online music download stores, iTunes. Bands will be able to sell MP3 tracks through their MySpace profiles.

Most MySpace pages for musicians currently feature streaming audio, which allows web users to listen to a small selection of up to four

songs while online. The new feature, currently in development, will allow instant pay-per-downloading of the songs. The downloading has been tested on a few bands MySpace profiles, over the last few weeks. It is expected the service will be available to visitors in the United States by year's end.

Bands will be able to set whatever price they wish, as opposed to the flat rates of services like iTunes; an undisclosed percentage will go to MySpace/Snocap. Snocap claims they are attempting to keep costs as low as possible. Fans of the bands, called "Friends" on MySpace, will be able to add the "storefront" to their own profiles.

MySpace claims to have three million music performers registered on its site. Many of these bands are unsigned or independent, and thus don't currently sell their tracks elsewhere.

Downloaded MP3 files will be copy-protection free, which means users can keep copies on as many playing devices as they wish, unlike on most legal song download sites.

The feature will be powered by a company called Snocap. The corporation processes the songs to make sure users don't attempt to sell tracks they don't own the rights to.

Six Apart acquires Rojo

Six Apart, the owners of the blogging software Movable Type and TypePad, have acquired the RSS reader Rojo, for an undisclosed amount, rumoured to be less than US\$5,000,000.

Six Apart are not planning on continuing to build Rojo, and are

"[intending] to sell a majority interest in Rojo's newsreader services in the coming months", making them a minority stockholder. Rojo founder and CEO Chris Alden and CTO Aaron Emigh will join Six Apart's executive team.

Rojo was founded in June 2003, launched in October 2004. Rojo had a promising start and its userbase is still growing gradually. But the feed reader market is dominated by Ask.com's Bloglines and NewsGator.

Disney Adventures magazine to take on India

Indian teens who love the movie Krrish will have ample reason to celebrate. The first issue of the country's new Disney Adventures magazine will highlight the movie, Bollywood.

An international format adapted for India, the 100-page monthly publication will feature Disney and Bollywood movies, jokes, comic pages, games, tech news and reviews, fashion, and contests.

Early expectations see the magazine being offered on newsstands for Rs 40, or by subscription.

Infomedia India, who has partnered with Walt Disney India, will publish Disney Adventures. The website agencyfaqs! notes that Disney India has recently released extensive Power Rangers merchandise in the region.

The magazine first published in the United States in the early 1990s, and has seen many evolutions in its content mix. The magazine's first issue included semi-educational articles on cowboys, animation, and unexplained phenomena; the

current issues on news-stands is a biannual comic issue contain brief blurbs about pop culture news. An Australian edition also is published.

Daily Guinness attempts to return on talk show Live with Regis and Kelly

The week of 12-15 September, American talk show Live with Regis and Kelly will play host to various attempts to set world records, for Guinness World Records. Announced are attempts involving cartwheels, pirouettes and tango spins, and cutting apples with a sword.

Today the show previewed the week, with a man who set the record for most ice cream eaten in 30 seconds, 12.5 oz.

Last year, Canadian Suresh Joachim set the record for longest continuous time watching television, 69 hours, 48 minutes. Joachim chose to only watch ABC the entire time. Another successful attempt was most watermelons broken by one's head in one minute. Both were nominated for Relly Awards, a self-congratulatory honour that series producers award guests and the show's hosts, to make up for a lack of Emmy wins.

Co-host Regis Philbin was named a Guinness Record holder himself two seasons ago. Philbin has been broadcast on-camera more hours than any other television personality. Philbin's television experience goes back to the late-1960s as the sidekick to Joey Bishop, then continued with a short-lived series with Mary Hart, then the long-running Live, with co-hosts including Kathy Lee Gifford, the popular ABC game show Who Wants to be a Millionaire, the 2005 New Year's

broadcast for FOX, and NBC talent series America's Got Talent.

Live launched its new season on 4 September, after a few weeks of reruns and "best of" specials. This is Kelly Ripa's fifth season as co-host of the series, which has long past the two-decade marker.

The show features a revamped set, containing various art deco elements, and additional plasma televisions to decorate.

Blair will quit as British PM within a year

British Prime Minister Tony Blair bowed to pressure from within his own Labour Party today by publicly confirming he will resign within a year. "I would have preferred to do this in my own way," said Blair who added "the next party conference in the next couple of weeks will be my last party conference as party leader." However, he refused to name the specific date of his resignation, "The precise timetable has to be left to me and has to be done in the proper way," Blair insisted. "I'm not going to set a precise date now. I don't think that's right. I will do that at a future date, and I will do that in the interests of the country."

He apologised for the party's conduct this week saying it "has not been our finest hour, to be frank".

Demands that Blair announce his resignation plans have mounted over the past few months particularly over concerns about the Prime Minister's strong support for Israel during the Israel-Hezbollah war, the perception that he is a loyal follower of United States President George W. Bush and a precipitous slide in Labor's support in public

opinion polls where the party is now at a 16 year low.

Yesterday, eight Labour MPs resigned from their junior government positions over Blair's refusal to announce his retirement. They had previously been considered staunch Blairites. The British press reports of a shouting match yesterday between Blair and his likeliest successor, Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown over the handover date.

"I want to make it absolutely clear today that when I met the prime minister yesterday, I said to him, as I have said on many occasions to him and I repeat today, that it is for him to make the decision," Brown said.

"I said also to him, and I make clear again today, that I will support him in the decisions he makes, that this cannot and should not be about private arrangements but what is in the best interests of our party and, most of all, the best interests of our country."

Despite Blair's announcement, several MPs expressed their dissatisfaction at his refusal to name a precise date and demanded that he leave sooner rather than later.

Manchester Blakeley MP Graham Stringer told the BBC if Blair "thought it was going to take the politics out of the next nine months that simply is not going to happen".

MP Doug Henderson said "It doesn't seem to me that the public knows any more about the PM's retirement plans. People keep saying to me that the Labour party must have a clear direction

forward with clear priorities and a new leader before the May 2007 (regional) elections."

The eight MPs who resigned as junior ministers or parliamentary secretaries, Wednesday, expressed a concern in their resignation letter that Blair needed to go soon in order not to harm the party's prospects in next May's elections to the Scottish parliament, Welsh assembly and English local authorities.

Blair became Prime Minister in 1997 when Labour defeated the Conservative government of John Major. He has led the party to three majority victories and promised before the last election that his third term would be his last.

Germany, India sign defence accord

A defence and security agreement was signed in Berlin today by India and Germany, heralding a new era of cooperation between the two nations. India's Defence Minister Prnab Mukherjee and his German counterpart Franz Josef Jung signed the deal after a meeting at Defence Ministry. The two countries agreed to training and exchanging senior personnel, as well as to the formation of a joint committee to hold annual meetings in either nation.

The two ministers also exchanged views on combatting international terrorism, described by Mukherjee as "the biggest threat to peace and stability". He also stated that the aim of the agreement was to "expand relations from the level of a buyer-and-seller relationship to that of co-production and the transfer of technology". On his part, Jung spoke about the cooperation between German and Indian forces during UN

peacekeeping missions, such as the effort to monitor elections in Congo. He also said that the two countries would, most likely, be involved in overseeing the truce between Israel and the Hezbollah.

Mukherjee had, on Tuesday, visited France, where he had talks with his counterpart in that country Michele Alliot-Marie, about increasing Indo-French defence cooperation. He also met the German Economic Minister Michael Glos and visited a cemetery in Zehrendorf to pay homage to Indian soldiers killed in action in World War I. Mukherjee will conclude his trip on Friday.

New Zealand state house worth \$2 million

A state house, owned by Housing New Zealand, in Glen Innes, Auckland is worth NZ\$2 million, the most expensive state house in New Zealand. There were also three other houses in Auckland worth more than 1.4 million.

Altogether there were 104 houses that were worth more than \$700,000. Other high priced houses includes: A Lower Hutt house at \$580,000, a Christchurch house at \$690,000 and an Invercargill house at \$520,000.

The high price of the \$2 million house is mostly because of the land where it is situated.

Phil Heatley, National Member of Parliament and National's housing spokesman, said: "The properties should be sold to find homes for more than 11,000 families on Housing NZ's waiting list. In Auckland alone, the minister could trade the top four state houses, worth \$6.3 million, and buy 16 state houses at average Auckland prices."

Since 2002 Labour has either sold or disposed of 1,200 state houses, according to Heatley.

Chris Carter told Parliament yesterday: "The tenants of the \$2 million home have been there for eight years. That speaks volumes about the urgency this Minister attaches to the growing waiting list."

"National wants to see a tougher line taken with those who repeatedly vandalise HNZ properties and we want to put an end to the situation where households earning more than \$100,000 continue to qualify for state homes," Heatley said.

Four more members of the Bali Nine to face death penalty

An additional four members of the Bali Nine, convicted of smuggling heroin into Indonesia will face the death penalty. In all, six of the drug smugglers are sentenced to death by firing squad. The Bali Nine is the name given to nine Australian citizens arrested in Indonesia in early 2005.

Zarof Ricar from Jakarta's Supreme Court has confirmed that the previous 20 year sentences given to Tan Duc Thanh Nguyen, Si Yi Chen, Matthew Norman and Scott Rush had been changed to death by firing squad after an appeal by prosecutors. Bali Nine members Andrew Chan and Myran Sukumaran had previous been the only members of the group to be given the death penalty.

Ricar's confirmation ends a day of speculation about the fate of the men. The Australian government is still seeking official confirmation about the decision, believed to have been made on August 16.

Relatives of the Bali Nine have

again attacked the Australian Federal Police for passing intelligence to Indonesian officials which led to their arrest.

Australian Justice Minister Chris Ellison denies any inappropriate actions by the AFP and says authorities merely cooperated with Indonesia.

Macquarie National News's Indonesian correspondent Sujadi Siswo said it was not unusual for Supreme Court decisions to be kept secret in Indonesia.

"It's not the procedure for the Supreme Court to make public their results, so what's happened is one of the lawyers of the defendants has informed the media," he said.

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.

NASA managers have extended their hold on the Space Shuttle Atlantis' launch until at least Friday, due to a problem in the shuttle's electrical power system. At a 6 p.m. briefing on Wednesday, NASA's STS-115 Mission Management Team announced that because of the fuel cell anomaly it would be prudent to spend another 24 hours to research the issue. The management team will meet again at 1 p.m. on Thursday to assess

the data gathered about the fuel cell issue and decide whether the launch will take place on Friday.

Pakistan President Musharraf in Kabul for talks

The President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf is in Kabul for a two-day visit during which he is scheduled to hold talks with his Afghan counterpart, Hamid Karzai. The talks are expected to focus on the continuing militant activity on both sides of the border, with Taliban forces allegedly infiltrating into Afghanistan from across the border in Pakistan.

Economic cooperation and reconstruction in Afghanistan are also on the agenda. President Musharraf is scheduled to meet cabinet ministers and address parliamentarians tomorrow. His delegation includes ministers for foreign and religious affairs and the petroleum sector, and the head of Pakistan's intelligence agency.

"Frank discussions on the war on terror and expanding bilateral cooperation on regional issues," read a statement by President Karzai's office.

Pakistan foreign office spokeswoman Tasnim Aslam told AFP news agency that the Presidents "will exchange views on bilateral relations, economic cooperation, reconstruction activities in Afghanistan and cooperation in the fight against terrorism,"

"Afghanistan is expecting the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to take effective action against terrorism," Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman Sultan Ahmad Baheen said.

Pakistan signs "agreement" with

militants

Pakistan signed a peace agreement with pro-Taliban militants in the North Waziristan region on the eve of the visit. The deal aims to end years of unrest in the border province. Under its terms the Pakistan military forces and militants will stop attacks on each other and the militants have agreed to disarm or expel foreign Al-Qaeda-linked fighters in the area. Pakistan has rejected criticism that the deal will allow pro-Taliban forces to operate freely in the area.

"Pakistan is committed to its policy on war on terror, and Osama caught anywhere in Pakistan would be brought to justice," army spokesman Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan told the Associated Press.

On Wednesday, President Karzai met the NATO General Secretary Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Kabul and signed an accord aimed at boosting security and development in the country. The NATO chief warned that "some of the terrorists, the spoilers, think they can win in the south," adding "They are wrong. Because they cannot win, they will not win, [...]" That is why we are engaged in combat as well at this very moment."

The visit comes amidst an upsurge in violence in Afghanistan, with US forces saying that 60 militants were killed by artillery and air-strikes on Tuesday. Some 700 more are believed to be surrounded by soldiers in an operation in Khandahar province.

NATO and Afghan forces launched an operation in Khandahar's Panjwayi district last weekend, and NATO reports 250 militants as killed in the operations, though a

Taliban commander has disputed the figure and there is no independent confirmation of the toll. Hundreds have been killed in continuing fighting between government and international security forces and insurgents in the last four months.

An estimated 1500 families have been displaced by the fighting in Khandahar.

Suspected Taliban militants shot dead two muslim clerics in Lashkar Gah, capital of the Helmand province in the last two days and raided a district headquarters in the town of Arghandad in Zabul province

Musharraf last visited Afghanistan in 2002. Afghanistan has previously complained that Pakistan is not doing enough to combat Taliban insurgency in its side of the 2,250km (1,400-mile) mountainous border between the two countries. Earlier in the year, allegations by Afghanistan that Taliban and Al-Qaeda leaders were living in Pakistan were dismissed by Musharraf as "nonsense". In February, Afghanistan issued a list of 150 Taliban suspects it said were living in Pakistan. President Musharraf dismissed the information as "old and outdated", but President Karzai reiterated that the list was up-to-date.

Some Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders have been arrested in Pakistan, which has also stationed close to 80,000 troops along the Afghan borders. There is international pressure on Musharraf to deal with Islamist groups in Paksitan who are believed to assist Taliban forces.

"Pakistan has the potential to be the solution to the problems of Afghanistan," Afghan foreign

ministry advisor Ali Muradian said. "We hope that President Musharraf will open a new chapter in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan."

Pakistan was closely associated with the Taliban's rise to power in the 90s one of only three nations that recognised the then Taliban government.

While state run dailies Kabul Times and Hewad expressed hope that two leaders will work together to improve security, The daily Cheragh said that while statements about restoring security can be expected from the meeting, "as experience has shown", previous pledges by Pakistan "have not been fulfilled".

Kabul Times also said Afghanistan was grateful for Pakistan's help to thousands of Afghan refugees.

"The key concern is whether the agreement is going to lead to more insurgents going to and fro across the border or less," A diplomat told AFP, while another questioned Pakistan's peace deal with the militants.

Today in History

1331 - Stefan Uroš IV Dušan of the House of Nemanjić was crowned King of Serbia.

1504 - David, a marble sculpture by Michelangelo, was unveiled in Florence.

1888 - The inaugural season of The Football League in England began.

1900 - The Great Galveston Hurricane, one of the deadliest Atlantic hurricanes, struck Galveston, Texas, killing at least 6,000 people.

1978 - Hundreds of demonstrators in Tehran were killed on Black Friday in the Iranian Revolution. September 08 is Independence

Day in the Republic of Macedonia (1991); Victory Day in Malta; National Day in Andorra.

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

funambulate; v
1. To walk on ropes; to tightrope-walk.

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