



Top Stories

Hurricane Dean now a Category 3 storm



The National Hurricane Center in Miami now says that the Atlantic's first hurricane has reached

Category 3 status.

Exclusive report on New Zealand's digital TV service

An exclusive, and special report by freelance journalist, Gabriel Pollard, has compiled the views from various politicians on New Zealand's latest digital television service, Freeview.



Featured story

Wikinews interviews World Wide Web co-inventor Robert Cailliau



Wikinews interviewed Robert Cailliau, co-inventor of the WWW, on the history and future of the Web.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Texas oil executive David B. Chalmers, Jr pleads guilty to wire fraud connected with the United Nations oil-for-food program associated with the United Nations.
- Russia, China and four Central

Wikipedia Current Events

Asian members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation conduct war games in the southern Ural Mountains area of Russia with Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, proposing that they be held regularly.

- A Nile boat sinks off the south Egyptian town of Beni Suef with dozens feared missing.
- 172 coal miners are trapped in a flooded mine in Shandong province in eastern China.
- The search for six miners trapped in the Crandall Canyon mine in Utah is suspended indefinitely after the death of three rescue workers.
- Vladimir Putin announces that Russia will resume patrols over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans by its nuclear-capable Tu-160 and Tu-95 bombers after a 15-year hiatus.

- Ashley Mote, a Member of the European Parliament for South East England, is convicted on 21 counts of fraud.
- Hurricane Dean intensifies into a Category 4 hurricane after hitting the Lesser Antilles. Prime Minister of Jamaica Portia Simpson-Miller convenes an emergency cabinet meeting as it is likely to cross Jamaica on Sunday.
- Stock prices in the United States and Europe rally after the Federal Reserve cuts its discount lending rate to restore confidence in the banking sector after the subprime mortgage financial crisis.

Two German scientists claim to have broken the speed of light

Two physicists in Germany claim they have broken the speed of light, an accomplishment which, according to Albert Einstein's special theory of relativity, is impossible. The claim is made by Gunter Nimtz and Alfons Stahlhofen, both of the University of Koblenz.

The pair claim that in an experiment they set up, microwave photons travelled "instantaneously" between two prisms that had been moved apart to distances ranging from a few millimetres to three feet. According to Einstein's calculations, to propel an object faster than the speed of light - which is about 186,000 miles per second - would require an infinite amount of energy.

The scientists originally began experimenting with the prisms placed against each other to form a 40 cm cube. They then passed microwaves of wavelength 30 cm through the prisms. As they moved the prisms apart, some of them were refracted, and some, as predicted, began quantum tunnelling across the gap. The scientists say that both the refracted and the tunneling particles reached the detectors set up for each at the same time, suggesting the tunnelling photons had jumped the gap at significantly beyond the speed of light.

The duo were conducting various

experiments in quantum tunnelling, a bizarre phenomenon which allows sub-atomic particles to behave in manners that are apparently impossible. Quantum tunnelling occurs when photons cross over a seemingly uncrossable barrier. However, Nimtz said of his discovery to the New Scientist magazine "For the time being, this is the only violation of special relativity that I know of."

Some sources believe the pair misinterpreted their results, citing another phenomenon, known as the Hartman Effect. This effect predicts that "the tunnelling (sic) time becomes independent of barrier length for thick enough barriers, ultimately resulting in unbounded tunnelling (sic) velocities", i.e. an individual photon may appear to be travelling at significantly beyond the speed of light. And research published by Herbert G Winful of the University of Michigan casts further doubt on the claim, stating that unusually brief delays in tunneling "should not be linked to a velocity since evanescent waves do not propagate".

Hurricane Dean now a Category 3 storm

The National Hurricane Center in Miami now says that the Atlantic's first hurricane has reached Category 4 status, with winds up to 140 mph. Dean is now being called a "major hurricane."

While the storm is currently moving west through the Caribbean, additional strengthening is forecast within the next 24 hours.

A hurricane watch has now been issued for Haiti from the Haiti/Dominican Republic border to Port-au-Prince. The Dominican

Republic government has changed the tropical storm watch to a tropical storm warning from Cabo Engano to Haiti. Also, a hurricane watch has now been issued from Cabo Beata to the Haiti.

At 1:45 p.m. EDT, the eye of the Hurricane Dean was 175 miles west of Martinique and 300 miles southeast of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Tropical storm warnings continue to be in effect for the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico as the storm is moving west at 22 mph and could intensify over the warmer waters toward Jamaica.

Dean is currently forecast to dump two inches of rain on Haiti and the Dominican Republic, with a few isolated areas receiving a possible five inches.

The National Hurricane Center says it is too early to project whether the storm poses a threat to the U.S..

The storm moved through St. Lucia and Martinique today, causing structural damage, knocking out power, and flooding roads. Also, a 62-year-old man drowned today, being the storm's first death.

Russia to resume bomber patrols

Russia is planning to resume a Soviet-era practice of sending its bomber aircraft on long-range flights, the Russian president Vladimir Putin has said. Mr Putin said the move to resume the flights after a 15 year suspension was in response to security threats posed by other military powers.

"I made a decision to restore flights of Russian strategic bombers on a permanent basis,

and at 00:00 today, August 17, 14 strategic bombers, support aircraft and aerial tankers were deployed. Combat duty has begun, involving 20 aircraft."

Mr. Putin said, speaking on the final day of military exercises involving Russia, China, and four Central Asian countries in the south Urals, said that on the first day of patrol flight, bomber planes would spend about 20 hours in the air, with midair refueling, and would interact with naval forces.

The Russian president added that although the country stopped strategic flights to remote regions in 1992, "Unfortunately, not everyone followed our example." Other states' long-distance strategic patrol flights have created certain problems for national security, he said.

Two die from overdoses and 83 arrested at New Jersey Ozzfest

Two men died and 83 were arrested at the New Jersey PNC Arts center, Holmdel the scene of this year's New Jersey Ozzfest, an annual travelling hard rock and heavy metal show. This year's Ozzfest includes Lordi, Static-X, Lamb of God and the show's namesake, Ozzy Osbourne.

Raymond Guarino, 26, of Forked River, New Jersey collapsed at around 3:15pm and went into cardiac arrest, following which he was resuscitated. He later died in a local hospital. It is believed his death was the result of his consumption of cocaine, marijuana and alcohol. An autopsy will be conducted to confirm the cause of death.

Patrick Norris, 24 of Coram collapsed around 10:00pm and was transported to the same hospital in cardiac arrest; he was

pronounced dead on arrival. Police believe he too had consumed a combination of cocaine, marijuana and alcohol.

In addition, New Jersey police arrested 83 people on various drugs and alcohol charges, including underage drinking, as well as charges of drug possession, assault, resisting arrest, defiant trespass and lewd behavior. The arrests are the result of a crackdown started after 13 youths were hospitalised at the venue, the youngest being 11 years old. The crowd at today's event was too large for the 17,000 seat venue to accommodate, due mainly to the decision to make Ozzfest a free event this year.

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority, who own the venue, have imposed a permanent ban on consuming alcohol in the car park of the site. Previously, patrons had been allowed to bring their own alcohol and consume it there.

Police arrested over ninety people on Saturday at an O.A.R concert, and 54 on Friday during an Incubus show. A Velvet Revolver concert is scheduled for later tonight. Over 300 people have been arrested at the site this week.

Airplane crash in Alaska kills five

A small airplane crashed yesterday in southeast Alaska, killing five and injuring four. Alaska State Troopers spokeswoman Megan Peters said that among the survivors is a two-year-old girl. Ketchikan Public Safety Director Rich Leipfert told the Ketchikan Daily News that three of the injured were transported to hospitals.

Leipfert also said that the plane,

belonging to SeaWind Aviation, crashed into a tree at Traitors Cove, an area about 25 miles north of Ketchikan. SeaWind Aviation's web site lists the aircraft as a deHavilland Beaver floatplane

Identifications of those killed or of those injured were not currently available. The bodies are to be recovered today due to inclement weather and darkness on Thursday.

The cause is under investigation. However, there were reportedly very high winds in the area at the time of the crash.

The aircraft involved in this accident is understood to be N345KA which was also involved in a crash in July 2000 whilst with a different owner. According to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) report of the incident, the aircraft suffered substantial damage after its left wing struck a tree whilst attempting to take-off. The pilot, the only person on-board, was not injured. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of the accident was pilot error in inadequately compensating for the wind conditions.

Three killed in Utah coal mine rescue

Three rescue workers at the Crandall Canyon Mine in Utah were killed trying to rescue six trapped miners who have been missing for over a week.

Utah's governor, Jon Huntsman, honored the dead rescuers by saying, "There's nothing more selfless than someone giving their life in pursuit of saving someone else."

Six other workers were injured in what is being called a seismic

"bump." Seismologists said a similar incident happened on the day of the original August 6 cave in. A "bump" is caused by coal shooting out from the walls of a mine due to extreme pressure.

No further details were available about the official cause of the rescuers' deaths. Their identities also were not released.

All rescue efforts to find the remaining six missing miners have been called off for now. It is not known at this time if the six miners are alive or dead.

Nauru to hold parliamentary elections

The tiny island nation of Nauru is to hold parliamentary elections next week, on August 25. The current government, which has been stable since 2004 after much political turbulence early in the early 2000s, wants to make changes in the way the parliamentary republic is governed, but wants to be elected for a new period before it goes ahead.

As of August 17, 83 candidates have expressed their intention to run in the election, according to Radio Australia. The voting system is a preferential system directly electing representatives. There is only one formal political party in Nauru, Naoero Amo ("Nauru First").

The elections were supposed to be held in October, but have been moved ahead two months. The last parliamentary elections were held on October 23, 2004.

Presidential elections in Nauru were supposed to be held in June, but have been postponed until the end of 2007 due to discussion on whether to use indirect voting

(which is currently used) or direct voting.

Richard Stallman, founder of GNU Project confirmed safe after earthquake

Wikinews has learned that Richard Stallman, the founder of the GNU Project, is confirmed to be safe in Peru after a massive 8.0 earthquake struck the country on August 15. It was earlier reported that he may have been missing.

According to e-mails and forum posts obtained by Wikinews, Stallman was traveling from Lima to Chimbote with a man named Mario Ramos on August 15, when the quake struck and was expected to arrive in Chimbote on Monday August 20. He later arrived in Trujillo, Peru where he 'checked-in.'

"Richard Stallman is now in Trujillo, this I confirm it and tomorrow he will be [at the] conference," said Edward Vega Gavidia in an e-mail obtained by Wikinews.

The possibility of Stallman missing was first announced at approximately 6:43 p.m. (eastern time) when a user by the name of RichiH posted a 'wallop' to users on the Freenode IRC network stating "hi all. As you will surely have heard, there was a major earthquake in Peru. It seems Richard 'RMS' Stallmann [sic] was traveling from Lima to Chimbote with Mario Ramos on August 15th and no one has heard from him since."

Wikinews contacted the GNU Project and Stallman by e-mail, and Stallman confirmed that he is indeed safe.

"I was in Lima, where there was little damage. I was at the

Universidad Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, in the office of COSOLIG, the university's free software group.

When the building started to shake, I realized it was an earthquake, and also that it wasn't strong enough to be dangerous. The other people were much more worried, and urged me to go outside with them, so I did. The shaking continued for surprisingly long, but there was no damage," said Stallman in an e-mail to Wikinews.

Exclusive report on New Zealand's digital TV service

Wikinews has compiled the views from various politicians on New Zealand's latest digital television service, Freeview. Those interviewed were Sue Kedgley, Jonathan Coleman, and Steve Maharey, the broadcasting spokespeople for their respective parties; the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand, the New Zealand National Party, and the New Zealand Labour Party.

Freeview, modelled after UK's Freeview, is competing directly with New Zealand's only other digital pay TV provider, Sky Network Television. Sky reaches around 44.5% of New Zealand households. However, unlike Sky, Freeview has no on-going subscription fees, and only has a one-off fee for a set-top box and, if needed, a satellite dish.

The Labour-led Government has provided Freeview with around NZ\$25 million over a five-year period to help New Zealand change from the old analogue technology and align itself "as the rest of the world moves to digital television broadcasting," Mr Maharey said. The funding use is monitored by the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Dr Coleman also described the same reasons why

Freeview was necessary for New Zealand and is supported by the National Party.

However, Ms Kedgley takes a different approach and describes the Freeview service as "a belated and inadequate response to the digital challenge", but does state that digital TV is the "growth area." She also said that the Government is now trying to catch up after they scrapped TVNZ's (Television New Zealand) digital plan, which she describes as far more ambitious.

National, despite being supportive of Freeview, think that the Government has not done a good job with Freeview, describing it as a "white elephant". Firstly because Dr Coleman says there isn't enough good programming currently available to get people interested in switching, and, secondly, there hasn't been a definite date when analogue transmission will be cut off.

Mr Maharey said that the Government is engaging various broadcasters and interested parties to get a definite analogue switch off date, and talk about other various regulatory factors. He expects the date to be within the next six to ten years.

While the Greens do welcome the new government-funded TVNZ channels, a news and current affairs channel and a family-related channel (TVNZ 7 and TVNZ 6 respectively), "The whole exercise however, smacks of too little, too late." They also say that the amount of funding allocated to new programming cannot pose a threat to Sky. But do support "packaging and marketing [...] existing TVNZ content on the emerging digital platforms" MediaWorks, which runs TV3 and

C4, will announce their two new channels in around 18-months. And Triangle TV will add their own channel, Stratos TV, in October, 2007.

National are questioning Mr Maharey why he hadn't released the viewer number figures. Dr Coleman said that Mr Maharey was trying to distance himself away from the "reality" of what was going on. So Wikinews requested, under the Official Information Act, the amount of set-top boxes sold. The request was denied as Freeview was to release the information themselves in a months time. On August 13 the figures were released, with a total over 21,000. General Manager Steve Browning said that "we're tracking well ahead of forecast". Mr Maharey concurred with what Mr Browning said, saying it exceeds their first year expectations.

Ms Kedgley, Dr Coleman, and Mr Maharey all say that they don't have Freeview, nor know anyone who has the service. Though, Mr Maharey will consider getting it when more channels and the 2008 terrestrial service is launched in eight major New Zealand cities.

US President George W. Bush's daughter announces engagement

One of United States President George W. Bush's twin daughters, Jenna Bush, announced her engagement today, according to the White House. Bush, 25, became engaged to long-time boyfriend Henry Hager. Hager reportedly proposed to Bush in Maine on Wednesday.

The Washington Post reports the two have been dating for two years.

Sally McDonough, the press

secretary for first lady Laura Bush said no official wedding date has been set.

Hager, 28, is currently enrolled at the University of Virginia School of Business, and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Hager of Richmond, Va. Hager's father was a lieutenant governor in Virginia and the former director of Virginia's Office of Commonwealth Preparedness.

In 2004, Bush earned an English degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

2007 World Deaf Swimming Championships Day 5: A fantastic ending

In the final matchday (August 16) of 2007 World Deaf Swimming Championships, finals of two groups (Men 400m Freestyle and Women 200m Backstroke) had 4 athletes fouling at the first start and disqualified by referees, that never happened before at finales section from 1st to 4th matchday.

There is surely a controversy at Women 200m Backstroke Final, because when a starter didn't finish a starting process, Swedish swimmer Anna Polivanchuk started before the starting, Belarus athlete Maryia Rudzko and Japanese athlete Rika Takagishi started afterward. Due to this serious situation, the referees finally disqualified Polivanchuk, Rudzko, and Takagishi so that there was only 4 athletes participating this final.

Even though an unbelievable situation happened, but still, a new record was still rewritten. In the Women 4x100 Freestyle Relay Group Final, Russian National Team broke their old record, established in Melbourne, Australia two years ago, with 4 minute and 4.72 seconds.

After 5 days main event, the organizer held a closing ceremony for participants and VIPS, Taipei City Mayor Lung-pin Hau not only awarded acknowledgment to participated national teams, but also claimed that the "Deaf Culture" in Taipei will still be improved.

International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD) Technical Director Reed Gershwind said that he satisfied this holding of the swimming championships and believed Taipei City Government will provide a complete service and devices to deaf athletes for 2009 the 21st Summer Deaflympics.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The death toll from the 2007 Peru earthquake rises to 510 with another 1,500 people being injured. Aid reaches affected areas with President Alan García appealing for calm after reports of looting.
- A powerful aftershock earthquake of 5.9 magnitude hits the Huancavelica region.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency and the United States Government advises that North Korea is co-operating with plans to shut down its nuclear program.
- Four people die as a United States Marine Corps helicopter crashes on a training flight north of Yuma, Arizona.
- Australian Prime Minister John Howard says the country has decided to export Uranium to India.
- Adriaan Vlok, South African Police Minister during the apartheid era, pleads guilty to one charge of attempted murder

Wikipedia Current Events

of black activist priest Frank Chikane by poisoning his underwear. He is given a suspended sentence of ten years in jail.

- The Parliament of Australia passes the Northern Territory Indigenous Bill making changes to the Australian welfare system and land rights.
- Southeast China and Taiwan prepare for typhoon Sepat.
- Six Islamic militants involved in planning the 2002 Bali bombings have their sentences reduced by five months due to good behaviour.

Today in History

- 293 BC – The oldest known Roman temple to Venus was founded, starting the institution of Vinalia Rustica.
- 1572 – French Wars of Religion: Marguerite de Valois was married to Huguenot King Henry of Navarre, in a supposed attempt to reconcile Protestants and Catholics in France.
- 1868 – Pierre Janssen discovered helium while analyzing the chromosphere during a total eclipse of the sun. This was the first element detected in space before being found on Earth.
- 1941 – The T-4 Euthanasia Program in Nazi Germany was temporarily halted due to public resistance.
- 1966 – Vietnam War: A company of the Royal Australian Regiment fought a much larger North Vietnamese unit in the Battle of Long Tan.

Quote of the Day

What we say is the truth is what everybody accepts ... Psychiatry: it's the latest religion. We decide what's right and wrong. We decide

who's crazy or not. I'm in trouble here. I'm losing my faith.
 ~ Madeleine Stowe as "Dr. Kathryn Raily" in Twelve Monkeys

Word of the Day

astronomical; adj

1. Of or relating to astronomy.
2. Very large; of vast measure.

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