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Guatemalan ministers killed in helicopter crash

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US Supreme Court rules DC gun ban unconstitutional

The US Supreme Court ruled Thursday in a 5-4 decision that a Washington, D.C. ban of personal firearms possession is unconstitutional. The court found that the Constitution "protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home."

Mugabe says he's open to talks with Zimbabwe opposition

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe says he is open to discussion with the Movement for Democratic Change, the opposition party that has decided to boycott what they have called a "sham election". Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai says he

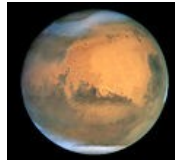


Top Stories

will not participate in talks held after the election, as he doesn't want to negotiate with an "illegitimate leader".

Asteroid slammed into Mars' northern hemisphere

An asteroid the size of Pluto slammed into the Northern hemisphere of Mars creating the Borealis basin, based on the latest survey of NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter and Mars Global Surveyor.



Wikipedia Current Events

Thousands of people rally in Paris in support of the European Union removing the People's Mujahedin of Iran from its list of terrorist organisations.

- Police in South Korea use water cannons to disperse thousands of people protesting in Seoul about the resumption of beef imports from the United States.
- Serbs in Kosovo establish their own Assembly in defiance of the Government of Kosovo and the United Nations.
- Médecins Sans Frontières claims that South Africa has expelled 450 Zimbabwean refugees.
- Wendy Alexander resigns as the leader of the Scottish Labour Party following a ruling from the Scottish Parliament's ethics committee over political donations.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Pakistan commences a military operation against Taliban militants in the Khyber Agency near Peshawar.

Jindal Signs Intelligent Design Law

Louisiana Republican Governor Bobby Jindal signed a controversial bill hailed by intelligent design supporters, such as the Discovery Institute, and Louisiana Family Forum, a creationist group. Critics of the bill, including several major science organizations, say it allows for the teaching of "creationism" in public schools.

The law, Louisiana Science Education Act, allows teachers to use "supplemental materials" when discussing evolution, but it does not state what the materials would be.

Citing the 1987 Supreme Court ruling in *Edwards v. Aguillard*, "Louisiana has a long and unfortunate history of trying to substitute dogma for science in classrooms," said Reverend Barry W. Lynn, an executive director for Americans United for Separation of Church and State. In addition, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, National Center for Science Education, and the Louisiana Coalition for Science opposed the bill arguing it would cause detriment to students' education by letting in unapproved curriculum.

According to Reuters, Jindal's

office declined to comment on Friday.

Similar Academic Freedom bills have been promoted by the Discovery Institute in other states, but so far they have failed.

Montel Williams Show breached standards with 'psychic' Sylvia Browne

This week the United Kingdom's Ofcom ruled that ITV2 "breached standards" with a repeat of The Montel Williams Show in which Pam and Craig Akers asked "psychic" Sylvia Browne where their son, Shawn Hornbeck, was. Browne told the Askers their son was dead and his body "was in a wooded area near two boulders," but he was later found alive in January 2007.

As a result, Browne and Montel Williams not only received heavy criticism for the failed prediction, but the airing of the show in the U.K. concerned "breaching rule 2.1 of the Broadcasting Code, which relates to protecting viewers against offensive material." The program distributors removed the episode from their stock and apologized for any offense to the public.

Ofcom also concluded "that a demonstration of the paranormal in this case could result in participants acting on information that could be harmful to them and the Hornbecks could have stopped searching for their child, for example."

Excellent crafts from indigenous peoples showcased in Taipei, Taiwan

To promote the craft design of indigenous peoples in Taiwan, the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Executive Yuan, the show organizer, made an inception on

crafts of indigenous peoples with the "2008 Taiwan Indigenous Peoples Craft Exhibition" in the Ketagalan Culture Center in Taipei, Taiwan.

As of the organizer, this exhibition was set to discover more excellent artisans from indigenous peoples and promote the excellent crafts of indigenous peoples in Taiwan to bring on the sustainability of the traditional indigenous tribes.

"Crafts of indigenous peoples, with features on innovations, creations, and fashions, showed a varied culture different from the past. It symbolized the culture of indigenous peoples in Taiwan not to be very simple."

—Dongi Alin, Director of Indigenous Peoples Commission, Taipei City Government.

"Crafts [of indigenous peoples] with innovations will not only demonstrate a great power of Taiwanese culture, but also bring on opportunities and profits for traditional indigenous tribes in the future." —Tony Chang, Chief Executive Officer of Taiwan Design Center.

Not only this show until June 29, but the 2008 Taiwan Designers' Week from tomorrow (June 28), in addition to 2008 Taipei In Style from July 10, will bring on the other opportunities for cultural, creative, and the fashion-related industries.

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yesterday, and as a result, this is believed to be the time that the accident occurred.

A spokesperson for the Guatemalan government said that the accident was caused by bad weather. They also stated, one their official website, that the incident occurred at a point 42 miles away from La Aurora International Airport, the country's major international airport.

A spokesperson for the Guatemalan government highlighted the official response to the events. "The government is distraught and regrets the death of a key minister, who had done good work in a few months in office," he said.

"The Mexican government is already lending its support. It has put a plane at the president's disposal to take him from Villahermosa to Guatemala tomorrow," continued Fernando Barrillas, the spokesperson.

The North Pole may possibly be ice free by summer

The National Snow and Ice Data Center based in Boulder, Colorado said that there will be a 50% chance that the already thin ice on the North Pole will melt away this September as a result of the on-going global warming.

The center's senior researcher Mark Serreze said that in September of 2007, ice on the north pole retreated to record levels, opening the Northwest Passage for the first time in shipping history.

Serreze added that every year, ice in the North pole has been thinning year after year. The scenario where the pole will be ice free will depend on this year's

weather and climatic conditions.

The center observed that the last year's weather conditions in the north were sufficient to clear the lanes of the Northwest passage and for this year, the situation will be depending on what the weather will be.

He also assured the public that the lack of ice in that region should not concern everyone since it won't be bringing any immediate consequences. He said, "the North Pole is just another point in the globe, but it does have this symbolic meaning. There's supposed to be ice at the North Pole. The fact that we may not have any by the end of this summer could be quite a symbolic change."

The scenario of an ice-less Arctic has been seen as far back as five years ago but the rate of melting was not expected to happen in a matter of five years.

Serreze also corrected those saying that the melting of Arctic ice is just part of a "historic cycle."

He adds that as far back as 30 years ago, their earliest climate models have suggested that the very first sign of an impact from global warming would have been the melting of Arctic ice.

Their studies also reveal that the ice could return given conditions wherein the planet will cool down.

Today in History

1613 – The original Globe Theatre in London burned to the ground after a cannon employed for special effects misfired during a performance of William Shakespeare's Henry VIII and ignited the theatre's roof.

1880 – Pomare V, King of Tahiti, was forced to cede the sovereignty of Tahiti and its dependencies to France.

1956 – U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, officially creating the U.S. Interstate Highway System, one of the largest public works projects in history.

1995 – Shuttle-Mir Program: During the STS-71 mission, Space Shuttle Atlantis became the first space shuttle to dock with the Russian space station Mir.

2006 – The U.S. Supreme Court delivered its decision in Hamdan v. Rumsfeld, ruling that military commissions set up by the Bush administration to try detainees at Guantanamo Bay violated both U.S. and international law.

June 29 is Feast of Saints Peter and Paul (Roman Catholicism)

Quote of the Day

Here is my secret. It is very simple. It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; What is essential is invisible to the eye.
~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Word of the Day

pollard n

1. A tree that has been pruned heavily, with branches cut back to the trunk so that it produces dense new growth.
2. An animal, such as cattle or deer, whose horns have been removed or lost.

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