



Top Stories

Large earthquake shakes Greece

According to the United States



Geological Survey (USGS), an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.1 has struck Greece, killing at least two people and injuring dozens. Many

buildings are reported to be collapsed or severely

NASA's Phoenix spacecraft having trouble analyzing soil samples

NASA has stated that the Mars Phoenix lander is having trouble analyzing soil samples that its robotic arm is collecting.



According to NASA, the soil appears

to be too clodded to pass through screens on the way to Phoenix's Thermal and Evolved-Gas Analyzer (TEGA).

UN summit results in pledge to mitigate food crisis

A three-day United Nations (UN) summit, bringing together leaders from 181 countries, has wrapped up with a pledge by all attending countries to address the global food shortage crisis. Key actions cited include doubling the world's food production by 2030, providing resources for



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farmers in poor countries and increasing humanitarian aid in times of crisis.

Buildings destroyed to slow flooding in China lake

Chinese troops today destroyed a variety of debris, including wooden houses, as part of an effort to slow the flooding of a lake.



Wikipedia Current Events

Robert Kubica wins the 2008 Canadian Grand Prix while driving for the BMW Sauber team, becoming the first Pole to win a Formula 1 Grand Prix auto race, and giving BMW its first win as a constructor.

- At least two people have been killed as an earthquake rocked southern Greece, collapsing buildings and causing panic.
- The government of Southern Sudan withdraws its mediation efforts at the Juba talks between Uganda and the rebel Lord's Resistance Army.
- At least 37 miners go missing after an underground gas explosion in Ukraine.
- At least 7 people are killed in a stabbing frenzy in Tokyo on the 7th anniversary of the Osaka school massacre.
- In tennis, Rafael Nadal wins the men's singles title at the 2008 French Open.

Wikipedia Current Events

•A day of mourning is declared in Russia's Kaliningrad Region as the death toll from Thursday's ship explosion and fire reaches eight, with two missing.

Asbestos map of Eastern Australia published

An article published online in Environmental Geology, an international journal of earth sciences, identifies parts of eastern Australia underlain by rocks with the right geological conditions to host asbestos. According to the author, Macquarie University researcher Marc Hendrickx, there is good news and bad news.

"The good news is that potential asbestos bearing rocks account for only 0.2% of the land area of eastern Australia and most of the outcrops are in remote areas."

The main occurrence of potential asbestos bearing rocks in eastern Australia is in serpentinite that occurs in narrow outcrop belts in all the eastern states. Other potential hosts include altered ultramafic rocks in central New South Wales (NSW), and metamorphic rocks in northern Tasmania, western NSW and western Queensland (QLD). The article also documents 78 occurrences of asbestos in eastern Australia. Most of these are of chrysotile asbestos but a small number are of amphibole asbestos including tremolite asbestos. According to Mr Hendrickx exposure to low levels of

amphibole asbestos from disturbance of natural sources has been linked with mesothelioma elsewhere in the world.

The article also documents some reported cases of disturbance of asbestos bearing rocks in eastern Australia. Mr Hendrickx indicates "The bad news is that some of the areas have been unwittingly disturbed, mainly by using asbestos bearing rocks as a source of material for road construction. In two cases, in QLD and NSW this has resulted in affected roads undergoing remediation costing millions of dollars. Another example in Orange in central NSW involved 60,000 m3 of rock being crushed for aggregate during the development of a new business park before the asbestos content was realised. Air quality monitoring undertaken in similar situations elsewhere indicates exposure to low levels of respirable asbestos fibres is possible from disturbance of asbestos in rocks and soils in such circumstances."

Mr Hendrickx suggests the specialised geological maps published as part of the study will help planning authorities and land owners avoid future "accidental" or unplanned disturbance of asbestos bearing rocks. "Understanding the geology of asbestos in Australia is an important step in preventing disturbance of asbestos bearing rocks, particularly those containing amphibole asbestos, that could lead to future health problems. With the publication of the map in this article planning authorities can no longer claim they were ignorant of the locations of potential asbestos bearing rocks in eastern Australia".

Mr Hendrickx's research, in the Graduate School of the Environment at Macquarie

University in Australia, hopes to ascertain the geology of Naturally Occurring Asbestos in eastern and South Australia and aims to discover if it has caused cases of the cancer mesothelioma in Australia. The project suffered a recent set back when historical medical records intended to be used to establish a link between NOA and mesothelioma cases could not be located by the Australian government authority responsible. Mr Hendrickx indicates that current reporting of mesothelioma cases to cancer registries does not provide sufficient information about past residential and occupational histories of patients to be of use in linking mesothelioma to NOA and that new epidemiological studies are required if this link is to be further explored.

The article "Naturally occurring asbestos in eastern Australia: a review of geological occurrence, disturbance and mesothelioma risk" can be accessed online from Environmental Geology, a Springer publication.

Robert Kubica wins 2008 Canadian Grand Prix

Pole Robert Kubica won the FIA Formula One 2008 Grand Prix du Canada at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Ile Notre Dame, Montreal, Canada. He and his teammate Nick Heidfeld made a double for BMW Sauber team for the first time in history of this sport.

Peter Sauber first started building sport cars in 1970. His team made it's Formula-1 debut in 1993. The team was handed over to BMW after 2005 and now it's team principal is Mario Theissen.

Nick Heidfeld also came second in the previous year race won by Lewis Hamilton. It was a race

when Kubica suffered a violent crash. David Coulthard was the best of Renault-engined cars finishing third for Red Bull.

The race was thrilled after Adrian Sutil suffered his Force India car failure and caused a safety car to appear. This happened right before the scheduled first pit-stops and 5 drivers who were in the lead rushed to refuel themselves after the pit lane became open. Still, the pit lane exit remained closed and Robert Kubica with Kimi Räikkönen (Ferrari) stopped in front of the red sign. But Lewis Hamilton did not. He crashed hard into the back of Räikkönen and jammed the exit for the drivers behind. This cleared the cards for BMW team to win the race.

The pace car also gave the lucky chance for Toyota drivers, who were not very competitive in qualifying on Saturday, starting 11th and 14th. Timo Glock made up 4th after holding Felipe Massa (Ferrari) pushed him from behind. Jarno Trulli could also finished in front of Massa, but Timo braked hard on his teammate and Jarno was forced to let Massa pass him.

Rubens Barrichello (Honda) finished 7th. Heikki Kovalainen (Vodafone McLaren Mercedes) pushed hard on Sebastian Vettel but German kept his position and scored 1 point for Toro Rosso.

It should be noted that Kubica won the race after he finished second in the previous Monaco GP won by Hamilton. Kubica now leads the drivers' championship with 42 points, chased by Hamilton and Massa with 38 points both, Räikkönen with 35 points and Heidfeld with 28. BMW Sauber now stayed close to Ferrari in constructors' standings with 70 points, gap of 3 to Ferrari. Team

McLaren is now a distant third with 53 points.

Dani Pedrosa wins 2008 Catalan MotoGP

Spanish rider Dani Pedrosa (Repsol Honda) wins a 2008 MotoGP round on the Catalunya Circuit, Spain. This became his second victory of the season.

He was chased by both Valentino Rossi (Yamaha) and Casey Stoner (Ducati), battling each other, allowing the Spaniard to make a comfort gap.

250cc winner became the Italian Marco Simoncelli (Gilera), who overtook the pole-sitter Alvaro Bautista (Aprilia).

Mike Di Meglio (Derbi) became the winner in the 125cc class. Podium was concluded by the other Derbi rider Pol Espargaro and the Hungarian Gabor Talmacsi on Aprilia.

Eight dead and two missing after cargo ship fire in Kaliningrad, Russia

Eight people are dead and two more are missing and presumed dead after an explosion and fire on a cargo ship undergoing repairs at a naval dockyard in Kaliningrad, Russia.

The container ship MV Yenisey was the scene of an explosion while in drydock at about 3:00 p.m. Moscow time (11:00 GMT). Ten people were missing after the explosion. It was confirmed today that the eighth body has been recovered, and the remaining two are thought to be dead as well. Three more were injured.

Captain 1st Rank Igor Dygalo, acting as a navy spokesperson, said "Each family of the victims of the fire on the Yenisey civilian

vessel will be paid more than a million rubles." This makes their compensation roughly equivalent to US\$43,000.

Dygalo said that the dockyard, in the closed military town of Baltiysk, near Kaliningrad, had been leased to the Yenisey's St Petersburg owner, a private company, who were conducting the work themselves. He said an investigation has been launched by the navy led by top admiral Vladimir Vysotsky.

Vysotski himself has indicated that serious safety legislation breaches concerning welding regulations by both the vessel's owner and the naval dockyard's bosses. He did not go into details, but RIA Novosti claimed that a source at the dockyard said a gas burner applied to the roof of a fuel tank to heat and therefore loosen its bolts had triggered the disaster.

Today is an official day of mourning for Kaliningrad Region to mark the deaths.

Large earthquake shakes Greece

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.1 has struck Greece. The epicenter was recorded 20 miles away from the city of Patras, and 125 miles away from Athens, the Greek capital. The earthquake occurred soon after 12:00 UTC today, according to the Athens Geodynamic Institute. The USGS originally reported the quake as a magnitude 6.5.

There have been reports of at least two people killed and 37 injured. There has also been damage to property and mobile phone networks which are being overloaded. There are also reports

of families trapped inside the rubble of homes and businesses.

The control tower at Andravida airport is reported to have sustained serious damage and has been abandoned. Many buildings and homes are said to be severely damaged or collapsed.

The tremors from the earthquake were noticeable in large parts of Greece, including Athens, but the shaking could be felt as far away as Italy.

A nationwide mobilisation of civil defence and fire brigade units commenced after the natural disaster.

Finally, schools were also ordered closed on Monday in the affected areas.

Buildings destroyed to slow flooding in China lake

Chinese troops today destroyed a variety of debris, including wooden houses, as part of an effort to slow the flooding of a lake. A lake had formed after the large earthquake that hit Jiangyou, and troops are now trying to subside the water flow to contain flooding. They are doing this with the intention of forming a spillway, which aims to divert the continuing flow of water from the heavily populated areas.

The Tangjiashan Lake formed when a large earthquake hit China last month and it has continued to expand despite efforts to halt its growth.

Police have remained on high alert since China was hit by the Sichuan earthquake, which has resulted in thousands of deaths.

Argentina defeat Scotland 21-15 in rugby test match

The Argentine national rugby team

has defeated the Scottish equivalent 21-15 in a home rugby test match.

Chris Patterson scored three penalties in the first half, but an Alvaro Tejada try on his debut left Argentina's Pumas 10-9 at the end of the first half. Paterson, who won his 87th cap at the match, then put Scotland in front with two more penalties, but Argentina's Gonzalo Todeschini followed up with the same for Argentina to put them back in the lead. The final points were also for Argentina, with London Irish centre Gonzalo Tiesi scoring a try in injury time.

The teams will play a second test at Buenos Aires next weekend.

New Zealand defeat Ireland 21-11 in rugby test match

The New Zealand national rugby team has defeated the Irish equivalent 21-11 in a home rugby test match at Wellington's Westpac Stadium. New Zealand has not lost to Ireland for 103 years, with one draw being the closest Ireland have come to a victory.

The score was tied at 11-11 with 20 minutes remaining in what was New Zealand's first match since exiting the World Cup. However, New Zealand's All Blacks were able to break through Ireland's defences to score a victory.

Conditions at Westpac were unusually bitter for the match. "I don't know if I've played in much colder than that," said Irish captain Brian O'Driscoll, and similar thoughts were echoed from All Black counterpart Richie McCaw. "It's probably the coldest game I've ever played in. I've never got cold out on the field but after half-time I was shivering. It was nasty."

New Zealand centre Conrad Smith commented that "There was one point there are the end when one of the Irishmen went down that both teams were running around in circles doing their own thing (to keep warm). I just looked around and thought 'this is stupid'."

Graham Henry, All Black coach, said that he felt the match had been "a lottery."

South Africa defeat Wales 43-17 in rugby test match

The South African national rugby team has defeated the Welsh equivalent 43-17 in a home rugby test match at Bloemfontein.

South Africa scored four tries to defeat current Six Nations champion Wales. Conrad Jantjes, Jean de Villiers, Pierre Spies and Percy Montgomery all scored tries, Montgomery having been substituted on in the second half. Welsh tries were scored by Jamie Roberts and Shane Williams and all remaining points came from conversions and penalties.

Stephen Jones converted a try for Wales, while Butch James converted all of South Africa's. After CJ van der Linde and Richard Hibbard got into a fight, both men were sent off. It was the first match in charge for new South Africa coach Peter de Villiers.

Wales captain Ryan Jones later explained his team's defeat. "We made too many mistakes. South Africa capitalized whenever we lost possession, but we have no excuses," he said.

ITRI to challenge the infrastructure of WiMAX on High Speed Rails of Taiwan

To challenge the possibility of WiMAX connection on high speed rails, Industrial Technology

Research Institute (ITRI) and Taiwan High Speed Rail Corporation (THSRC) started an experiment on Mobile WiMAX technology for the THSR. It's the first-ever WiMAX experiment on high speed rails in the world. Industrial companies including Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Broadband Platform Inc., Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, Corning Incorporated, and ZyXEL are confirmed to provide solutions in this first-ever experiment.

"THSR is a must-have transportation way for the public besides of inter-city buses and railways in Taiwan." stated THSRC. "There are three critical difficulties that this experiment should be overcome: 'Speed of the THSR', 'Base station construction inside the rails', and the most important one - 'Internet connection on tunnels'." stated ITRI.

"If this [difficult] experiment can be succeeded, Taiwan will become the first nation to provide the Internet connection on high speed rails in the world." said by Moses Yen, Director of Exhibition Department of Taiwan External Trade Development Council.

Woman robs pawn shop by swallowing stolen goods

On May 27, 2008, in Salt Lake City, Utah, a woman stole two 14-karat gold bracelets from a pawn shop by swallowing them, as shown by a surveillance tape. The bracelets were worth US\$2000 each according to the pawn shop.

The clerk noticed the bracelets were missing minutes after she had swallowed them and asked the woman for an explanation. She responded, "You can search me." The bracelets were not found. It was only clear who the thief was after the shop reviewed the

surveillance footage.

Norma Porchas-Robles, 41, who had been a regular customer at the shop for over four years, has been charged with retail theft and will appear in court June 19. The pawn shop, however, must continue to do business with her, as she had pawned several items which have not yet been sold.

NASA's Phoenix spacecraft having trouble analyzing soil samples

NASA has stated that the Mars Phoenix lander is having trouble analyzing soil samples that its robotic arm is collecting. According to NASA, the soil appears to be too clodded to pass through screens on the way to Phoenix's Thermal and Evolved-Gas Analyzer (TEGA).

Images taken by the lander's camera shows that the robotic arm has dumped a large portion of soil over the TEGA, but it failed to register any soil which might have passed through the screens leading into the analyzer. The screen is designed to let through particles up to one-millimeter (0.04 inch) across while keeping out larger particles, in order to prevent clogging a funnel pathway to a tiny oven inside. An infrared beam crossing the pathway checks whether particles are entering the instrument and breaking the beam. It is now believed that the particles are either too large to pass through the screen, or the soil is too clumpy.

"I think it's the cloddiness of the soil and not having enough fine granular material. In the future, we may prepare the soil by pushing down on the surface with the arm before scooping up the material to break it up, then sprinkle a smaller amount over the door," said Ray Arvidson of

Washington University located in St. Louis, Missouri. Arvidson is the Phoenix team's science lead researcher for Saturday and digging czar for Phoenix's mission.

NASA also plans to use a shaker inside the TEGA to shake any material or samples longer than previously planned in an attempt to break up the larger particles and clumps. Phoenix already utilized this method on Friday June 6, shaking the soil for five minutes before dumping it onto the screen. NASA plans to tell Phoenix to shake the material a little longer in order for the soil to be tested.

While scientists ponder ways to fix the issue, TEGA will not be analyzing any samples. Instead Phoenix is expected to have completed tasks today such as horizontally extending a trench where the lander dug two practice scoops earlier this week, and taking additional images of a small pile of soil that was scooped up and dropped onto the surface during the second of those practice digs.

Today in History

68 – Roman Emperor Nero committed suicide after he was deposed by the Senate.

1310 – Italian artist Duccio's *Maestà* with *Twenty Angels and Nineteen Saints*, a seminal artwork of the early Italian Renaissance, was unveiled and installed in Siena Cathedral in Siena, Italy.

1772 – In an act of defiance against the Navigation Acts, American patriots led by Abraham Whipple attacked and burned the British schooner *HMS Gaspée*.

1856 – Mormon pioneers began leaving Iowa City, Iowa and headed west for Salt Lake City, Utah, carrying all their possessions in two-wheeled handcarts.

1928 – Australian aviator Charles

Kingsford Smith and his crew landed their Southern Cross aircraft in Brisbane, completing the first ever trans-Pacific flight from the United States mainland to Australia.

June 09 is Shavuot (Judaism, 2008); St. Colmcille's Day in Ireland

Quote of the Day

Be a clown, be a clown,
All the world loves a clown.
Act the fool, play the calf,
And you'll always have the last laugh.
~ Cole Porter ~

Word of the Day

iota n

1. Name for the ninth, and smallest, letter of the Greek alphabet.
2. A jot; a very small, inconsiderable, quantity.

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