



Top Stories

Midterm election polls open in United States

With the polls now open throughout most of the United States, voters are reporting long lines as Americans line up to vote in the 2006 midterm election.

Taiwan president speaks to defend himself from corruption charges

Taiwan's president Chen Shui-bian has said that he had not made any money illegally and apologized for a corruption scandal involving him and the first lady, Wu Shu-chen. He added that he would resign from the post if his wife is convicted of the charges filed against her.

Featured story

401st Guy Fawkes celebrated in parts of the Commonwealth

November 5 is Guy Fawkes Night. On this day, 401 years ago there was an attempt to blow up the British parliament. Since that time, Guy Fawkes day is celebrated by bonfires, fireworks and the parading of effigies called "guys".

Wikipedia Current Events

- Daniel Ortega elected as President of Nicaragua with 38 per cent of the vote. His conservative opponent Eduardo Montealegre has conceded defeat.
- The members of the World Trade Organization vote in favour of a resolution inviting Vietnam to

Wikipedia Current Events

become the body's 150th member.

- After 48 rounds of voting, Panama is elected to a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.
- José Montilla becomes the new President of the Generalitat of Catalonia, renewing the left-of-centre tripartite pact between his PSC, the pro-independence ERC and the leftist ICV-EUiA alliance after the election held on 2006-11-01.
- John Bolton, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, claims that United States diplomat Josette Shiner has been selected to head the United Nations World Food Programme.
- Dhiren Barot of London is convicted of conspiracy to murder for developing al-Qaeda plots to kill thousands of people in the United Kingdom and United States in the 2004 Financial buildings plot.

• Voters go to the polls today in the United States.

• Trial of Saddam Hussein:

- The trial of Saddam Hussein for alleged genocide of Kurds during the Anfal campaign resumes today.
- Prime Minister Nouri Maliki states that he expects Hussein to be executed by the end of the year following conviction in his first trial, which Hussein is appealing.

Wikipedia Current Events

• Operation Autumn Clouds: The Israeli Defense Forces began to pull its troops out of the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanun, Palestinian officials said. Fifty-three Palestinians, including 16 civilians, and an IDF soldier have been killed since the operation began on October 31.

• A deadly tornado kills nine and injures twelve in Saroma, Japan

Morning polling causes late students

Polling places opened at 13:00 UTC (8:00 AM EST) this morning in Palm Beach Country, Florida for the United States midterm elections. Early voters wreaked havoc on the city streets, causing backups near polling locations and interrupting traffic flows to area elementary and senior high schools.

Due to the increase in traffic, some area school administrations asked teachers to accept late students without reprimand.

Florida will elect a Federal senator, all of it's House membership, a Governor, various other officers and vote on various questions.

Faith Hill says reaction to Carrie Underwood's CMA win was a joke

When the host was calling up the Country Music Award Female Vocalist Of The Year award, Faith Hill stood up and was in shock after hearing Carrie Underwood's name. "What?!", said Faith Hill

directly into the camera as her smile turned into a look of shock.

"The idea that I would act disrespectful towards a fellow musician is unimaginable to me," Hill said in a statement. "For this to become a focus of attention given the talent gathered is utterly ridiculous. Carrie is a talented and deserving female vocalist of the year."

Underwood, 2005 former American Idol winner, did not take it seriously, according to her publicist, Jessie Schmidt.

"She was just messing around," said spokesman Paul Freundlich. "She didn't realize that the camera was rolling the whole time. ... She just thought they were doing a shot when they read the nominees off."

Gary Borman, Hill's manager, said that it was just "a joke".

Faith Hill had won the Female Vocalist Of The Year award in 2000.

Britney Spears to divorce husband Kevin Federline

In Los Angeles, California singer and actress Britney Spears, 24, has filled papers in Los Angeles County Superior Court to divorce her husband Kevin Federline, 28. A spokeswoman for the court, Kathy Roberts stated that the papers cited "irreconcilable differences" as the reason for the divorce and have, according to the courts, been legally separated as of Monday November 6.

The two were married on October 6, 2004 and currently have two sons the first named Sean Preston, 1, and a recent baby boy named Jayden James Federline who was born on September 12, 2006.

Spears is attempting to gain both full legal and physical custody of both of the children with Federline having visitation rights.

It is also reported that Spears did not accept spousal support and waived her right to receive any, also asking that the legal fees incurred during the divorce be separated.

Neither Spears nor Federline have yet to release a statement.

Bomb plotter gets life

Today, in Woolwich Crown Court, Dhiren Barot was sentenced to life imprisonment having been found guilty of conspiracy to murder.

Evidence was presented that Barot had planned, among other things, to bomb prominent buildings in Britain including the Savoy Hotel, to discharge 'dirty' bombs and to destroy a tube train under the Thames with the intention of flooding the underground system.

Barot was the author of a terrorist's handbook published in Birmingham in which he upheld the IRA as an example to be followed, although he thought that their methods were a bit out of date.

Barot had planned to attack buildings in the United States before 9/11, but, it was thought, he had no prior knowledge of that attack.

In delivering the sentence, the judge, Mr Justice Butterfield, told Barot that he must serve at least 40 years before he would be considered for release.

Bülent Ecevit, former prime minister of Turkey and poet, has died at 81

Bülent Ecevit, former prime

minister of Turkey and poet, has died at 81. Ecevit was in a coma for nearly six months following a stroke.

Ecevit was the prime minister of the government ordering a military intervention on July 20, 1974, to prevent a coup in Cyprus by Greek forces, dividing the island and setting the stage for the foundation of the breakaway Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

Following the September 12, 1980, military coup led by General Kenan Evren, Ecevit was incarcerated and was suspended from active politics for life. A referendum in 1987 lifted his ban from politics, and he became the chairman of the Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party) in 1989, inheriting the position from his wife, Rahşan Ecevit.

He was a deputy prime minister under the last government of Mesut Yılmaz and then was briefly caretaker Prime Minister in the run-up to the 1999 general elections. In those elections, Ecevit's party gained the largest number of seats, leading to Ecevit's final stint as Prime Minister in a coalition with the Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) of Mesut Yılmaz and the Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party).

The short-term economic pain caused rifts within his coalition and party, and eventually forced new elections in 2002. Ecevit, at this time visibly frail, was unsuccessful in leading his party back into the National Assembly. Ecevit subsequently retired from active politics in 2004.

Bülent Ecevit was not only a politician but a poet and writer. He

studied Sanskrit, Bengali, and English and translated works by Rabindranath Tagore, T. S. Eliot, and Bernard Lewis into Turkish.

Ecevit was hospitalized at the Gülhane Military Hospital in Ankara and placed in a medically induced coma after suffering a stroke on May 19, 2006. He died on November 5 without regaining consciousness.

Midterm election polls open in United States

With the polls now open throughout most of the United States (US), voters are reporting long lines as US citizens line up to vote in the 2006 United States general elections, frequently referred to informally in the US as the "2006 midterm election". Predictions of an unusually high level of voter turnout seem to be coming to fruition as voters throughout the country report longer than expected lines. One voter from Kansas City, Missouri reported a 90-minute wait, while voters in southwest Michigan reported that they had to park several blocks from the polls because of the crowds. Typically, fewer than 40% of registered voters go to the polls during non-presidential election years. The highest midterm voter turnout on record occurred in 1970, when 47% of registered voters went to the polls.

Electronic voting gets mixed reviews

A third of the states are using electronic voting systems for the first time. Although it was predicted that the electronic systems would be more efficient, reports are mixed about their effectiveness. Air America Radio reports that electronic voting machines in Delaware County,

Indiana and Cleveland, Ohio have malfunctioned, frustrating voters and election workers. A report published on the USA Today website said election workers in some parts of Florida had resorted to using paper ballots when their electronic voting machines failed to work. National Public Radio reported that some electronic voting machines in Texas had to be turned off when they improperly gave votes to candidates not selected by voters. Problems were also reported in Maine, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

A voting problem of a different type was reported in Kentucky, where a Louisville poll worker is alleged to have physically assaulted a voter. Jefferson County clerk spokesperson Paula McCraney said that the voter wanted to press charges after being allegedly choked and pushed by the election worker. No information was available on what led to the incident.

Congressional control at stake
All seats in the House of Representatives and one-third of the seats in the Senate are up for election. Polls on the eve of the election indicated that the Democrats were likely to take control of the House, with several estimates giving the party a gain of about 30 seats. In the Senate, where the Democrats need six seats to gain a majority, the outcome is less certain. At least five races are considered too close to call.

"Six year itch"

Many political pundits expect Democratic gains during this election. Control of Congress has frequently changed hands during midterm elections held during a president's second term. This trend coincides with recent polls

that show Americans becoming further disillusioned with Republican control in the wake of growing discontentment about the Iraq War and a wave of scandals ranging from the Jack Abramoff corruption scandal to revelations about sexual improprieties involving Republican Congressman Mark Foley and White House confidant Ted Haggard. Many conservative evangelical Christians, the GOP's most reliable voting block, have become disappointed by the scandals and may not vote in great numbers. Pat Buchanan, whose campaigns have often appealed to that voting block, told ABC News, "There's the spending orgy, the arrogance of power The war in Iraq, failure to protect our border, hurting the working class in Ohio, for example, the list goes on and on. We're more dissatisfied with the Republican Party than we've ever been."

Campaigns turn nasty

Political advertisements turned nasty in the closing days of the campaign, with candidates from both parties turning up the heat on their opponents. MSNBC reported that the FBI was investigating calls made to voters in Virginia in an apparent attempt to intimidate and confuse voters. This follows a similar investigation in California, where staff in Republican Congressional candidate Tan D. Nguyen's campaign office sent letters to Latino voters telling them that "You are advised that if your residence in this country is illegal or you are an immigrant, voting in a federal election is a crime that could result in jail time." (Naturalized citizens are allowed to vote in elections.)

Candidates in both New York and Michigan reported that automated telephone calls had been made to

voters in the dead of night, purporting to be from their campaigns. The candidates said their campaigns had nothing to do with the calls, and had been made fraudulently in an attempt to make voters angry at them.

It was unclear whether these calls were related to other calls, financed by the National Republican Congressional Committee, that had been made to voters in several states in the previous week. Those calls had generated complaints by voters from both parties who said they were repeated several times in the same day. In at least one state, the calls were pulled when the attorney general notified the NRCC that the calls violated state law.

A different kind of "robocall" was reported in Iowa, where three Democratic candidates for the state House reported that they had been the target of anonymous attack ad calls. The calls inaccurately claimed that the candidates support free health care and college tuition for illegal aliens.

In Nevada, Republican Gubernatorial Candidate Jim Gibbons referred to his opponent, Dina Titus, as "Dina Taxes".

The negative campaigning even worked its way into local, non-partisan races. In Genesee County, Michigan registered voters received automated telephone calls accusing a candidate for probate judge of arson and fraud.

Traders' one day strike in Indian capital

Angry traders continued to protest against the Supreme Court's order in favour of resuming the sealing drive in New Delhi. They damaged public property and blocked traffic

during the protest.

Police halted over 1,500 traders from various part of the city who were vandalising public transport by blocking and pelting stones on the roads after the SC's order to resume the drive.

According to CNN-IBN, the drive will affect about 5,40,000 shops and 27,00,000 traders across the city. Praveen Khandelwal, secretary general of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), said that the resumption of the drive is a complete breakdown of the government and administration. So, they had to take extreme steps to oppose the drive.

The traders protested from all over the city including Kamla Nagar in North Delhi, Mayur Vihar, Vikas Marg, Seelampur in East Delhi, Green Park, South Extension, Lajpat Nagar in South Delhi, Rajouri Garden, Rohini in West Delhi and Karol Bagh in Central Delhi.

Most of the schools in New Delhi remained closed today, and the sealing drive was halted. The Group of Ministers, headed by Shivraj Patil are planning to meet with SC's monitoring committee to work out the sealing schedule in the capital.

Possible new stadium in Auckland for 2011 rugby world cup

Ministers are considering a new stadium for Auckland's waterfront to replace the current Auckland stadium, Eden Park.

Trevor Mallard, minister for the rugby world cup, said: "Today a Cabinet committee has discussed the options and I hope to be able to announce a decision later this

week or next," he declined to comment any further.

According to the New Zealand Herald, the new stadium will cost around NZ\$700 million compared to a \$320 million upgrade of Eden Park. The herald said that Mr Mallard, the Auckland City Council and Helen Clark, PM of NZ, all prefer a new stadium. "The decision is vital in order to deliver a world-class stadium which complements and enhances the city's conference and major event-hosting potential, and which will also drive Auckland's aspirations to be a world-class city," Mr Mallard said.

Ms Clark said: "A site that is not surrounded by residential housing is an attractive proposition but the critical issue will be practical limitations." She added: "Cabinet would not be hurried into making a decision."

However the Ports of Auckland (POA) said that there will not be a stadium before the 2011 rugby world cup, the POA are the land owners of the waterfront. Geoff Vazey, manager director, said: "It simply can't be constructed in time and the risks of pushing it through would be overwhelming. Before any land could be set aside for a stadium, the port would need an alternative site to conduct its business and it would be 2009 before building could even start. A decision made a couple of years ago would have been needed.

Michael Cullen, finance minister, said that it is possible to built the stadium unlike critics are saying, "a number of sources have told us the stadium could be built by 2011. No decisions have been made on the stadium proposal and he would not speculate on how the project could be financed."

The team analyzing the venues for the 2011 world cup said that it will need its report back date extended at least three weeks, possibly four. The delay is due to assess technical and logistical matters.

Gordon Moller, Auckland architect whose company designed the Auckland Sky Tower, said that he doesn't "believe a waterfront stadium is the way to go for the Rugby World Cup. An Eden Park upgrade makes more sense than a waterfront venue built from scratch and what is planned there is outstanding. New Zealand has a limited ability to fund infrastructure in large projects. Even Australia now has difficulty funding and filling stadiums it built for big events."

Delta Blues wins 2006 Melbourne Cup

The Japanese owned Delta Blues ridden by Iwata Yasunari has won the AU\$5.1 million 2006 Melbourne Cup. Trainer Katsuhiko Sumii also achieved the Quinella winning bet with stablemate Pop Rock, ridden by Damien Oliver, placing second in the race. Maybe Better came in at third, with Zipping posting a fourth place finish. Pre-race favourite Yeates missed the start, finishing seventh.

After the race, jockey Iwata joyfully shouted "Very happy, very happy. My biggest winner ever."

Zabeat was the last finisher in a 23-horse field that was reduced in number after the early morning scratching from the race of Efficient with leg soreness.

Australians bet over \$50 million dollars on the race, with Delta Blues paying \$17.50 for the win, which made it the first horse from Japan to have won the race in the 145 year history of the Melbourne

Cup.

No injuries reported after NASA Orbiter hangars evacuated after hydrazine leak

Two hangars at the Kennedy Space Center in which space shuttles are processed were evacuated when a leak of hydrazine was detected coming from Atlantis's Orbital Maneuvering System. The leak was first discovered in Bay No 1, where Atlantis is being post-flight serviced. Nearly 150 people were evacuated from Bay No. 1 hangar and Bay No 2. Both the space shuttle Atlantis and Endeavour were inside the hangar when the leak was detected.

Hydrazine is a toxic fuel which combines with nitrogen tetroxide to provide power for the shuttle's two maneuvering engines while it is in space.

A concentration of 60 parts per million was detected near Atlantis's engines, which is not a dangerous level.

"That's not what we consider a dangerous level. But with any reading above zero, we would take precautionary measures and evacuate the facility," said Jessica Rye, a spokeswoman for Kennedy Space Center.

NASA said that no workers were exposed to fumes or injured.

"We wanted to make sure to take the employees who were around that area, make sure they were OK and there was no exposure to the hydrazine. Then what they'll do is make sure the bay is ready for people to go back, and I would anticipate if people aren't already back they will be shortly," added Rye.

New Zealand study finds circumcision cuts STD infection rate

A new study released by Christchurch researcher from the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences, David Fergusson, shows that "substantial benefits" come from a circumcision, a baby boy having his foreskin removed.

Mr Fergusson said that the rate of sexually transmitted diseases is halved due to circumcision, even after accounting for the amount of sex partners, unprotected sex and their family background. "Circumcision also reduces the risk of transmitting HIV and the incidence of urinary tract infections."

The report, which was published in the international scientific journal *Pediatrics*, took 25-years to complete as it followed 510 males from birth until they were 25-years-old.

"The public health issues raised by these findings clearly involve weighing the longer-term benefits of routine neonatal circumcision in terms of reducing risks of infection within the population, against the perceived costs of the procedure," Mr Fergusson said.

However the American Academy of Pediatrics has described the current study as "complex and conflicting." The American Academy of Pediatrics opposes the practice, which is why in the US the circumcision rate has been falling since 1999.

In New Zealand, only between ten and twenty percent of all males are circumcised, which is one of the lowest rates in the world. Circumcision is the normal practice in Samoa and Tonga and also

among Jewish and Muslim men.

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians said in 2004, "There is no medical reason for routine circumcision of newborn boys."

The current study has made some health specialists reconsider their stance on the issue. "People feel passionate on both sides, but I'm going to recommend that we take another careful look at this," said Jay Berkelhamer, US Academy of Pediatrics president and professor of pediatrics at the University of Florida.

Edgar Schoen, who has reconsidered his stance on the issue, he said: "The academy's opposition is irresponsible. The benefits of circumcision far outweigh risks, and doctors should be telling parents that."

"Even if it does bring down sexually transmitted disease, cutting normal tissue of an unconsenting minor is a human rights violation," said Marilyn Milos, from anti-circumcision group, National Organization of Circumcision Information Resource Centers (NOCIRC).

Today in History

1519 - Spanish conquest of Mexico: Hernán Cortés entered Tenochtitlan where Aztec tlatoani Moctezuma II welcomed him with great pomp as would befit a returning god.

1793 - In Paris, the Louvre was opened to the public as a museum during the French Revolution.

1895 - Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen discovered x-rays.

1923 - Adolf Hitler, Erich Ludendorff and other members of the Kampfbund started the Beer Hall Putsch, a failed attempt to seize power in Germany.

2002 - The UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1441, forcing Iraq to disarm or face "serious consequences".

November 08 is St. Demetrius' Day in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Quote of the Day

No man knows till he has suffered from the night how sweet and dear to his heart and eye the morning can be. ~ Bram Stoker

Word of the Day

ivory tower; n

1. A sheltered, overly-academic existence or perspective, implying a disconnection or lack of awareness of reality or practical considerations.

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