



Top Stories

Prison riot breaks out in Haiti

A riot has broken out at Haiti's main prison. The Associated Press reports at least 100 prisoners are on the roof of the prison and that some prisoners are holding 2 dead bodies.

Exiled Chagos islanders win right to return home

The islanders of the Chagos Archipelago have won a High Court battle which may allow them to return to the islands they were exiled from in 1971.

Featured story

Giorgio Napolitano elected Italian president

Italian Parliament in unified session elected Giorgio Napolitano the new President of the Italian Republic on May 10th. Napolitano, 80, was elected on the fourth ballot with 543 valid votes (the threshold to win the election was 505).

Wikipedia Current Events

•Ahmat Mahamat Bachir, the president of the Chadian Independent National Election Commission, announces that incumbent President of Chad Idriss Déby won the 2006 Chadian presidential election held on May 3 with 77.5 percent of the vote. The official turnout was 61 percent, though international observers estimated turnout at 4-10 percent.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Organized crime led by the group Primeiro Comando da Capital causes rioting in Brazil and claims over 50 lives
- Mount Merapi in Central Java, Indonesia, which has been rumbling for about a month, is shooting out black smoke, volcanic ash and lava, and a volcanic eruption appears to be imminent. Mandatory evacuations are under way.
- Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, signs a petition in support of vivisection and condemns the acts of animal-rights extremists.
- Seven people are wounded as two bombs explode in the Iranian city of Kermanshah. A local branch of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) claimed responsibility.

Fitzgerald to announce new evidence against Libby

Federal prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald announced on Friday that he would introduce new evidence in the perjury and obstruction of justice case against former Vice Presidential chief of staff Lewis "Scooter" Libby.

One of the new pieces of evidence consists of hand-written notes that Vice President Dick Cheney left on the margins of ambassador Joseph Wilson's OpEd column questioning the administration's handling of WMD evidence in the run-up to the Iraq war. Fitzgerald charged that "Those annotations support the

proposition that publication of the Wilson Op Ed acutely focused the attention of the Vice President and the defendant - his chief of staff - on Mr. Wilson, on the assertions made in his article, and on responding to those assertions." Fitzgerald describes the notes as reflecting "the contemporaneous reaction of the Vice President to Mr. Wilson's Op Ed article "and views the relevance of these notes to "establishing some of the facts that were viewed as important by the defendant's immediate superior".

In the margins of Wilson's article Cheney wrote a series of questions about the legitimacy of Wilson's CIA-sponsored trip to Niger: "Have they done this sort of thing before? Send an Amb. [sic] to answer a question? Do we ordinarily send people out pro bono to work for us? Or did his wife send him on a junket?"

Spokesperson for the Vice President Lea Ann McBride declined to comment on the publishing of the notes, but stressed that the Office of the Vice President continues to cooperate with the investigation.

Mohamed ElBaradei: Highly enriched uranium found in Iran is "of little significance"

Back in 2003, inspectors had discovered several sites in Iran that tested positive for highly enriched uranium, but the uranium was believed to have come from equipment that was previously from Pakistan.

On Friday, Reuters published a report quoting UN diplomats from Vienna who wish to remain anonymous alleging that preliminary analysis of microscopic dust collected from equipment at the now razed Lavizan-Shiyan research center in Iran in January of 2005, contained traces of "highly enriched uranium". "It's no smoking gun. There could be many explanations. But it increases pressure on Iran to come clean about Lavizan," Reuters reported the European diplomat as stating.

According to the Islamic Republic News Agency, the head of the IAEA, Mohamed ElBaradei said today that the finding of the highly enriched uranium is "of little significance at the current juncture." ElBaradei also pointed out that the investigation into where it came from is continuing and that the uranium could have come from equipment that was imported to Iran, but that "time is still needed to reach a conclusion in this respect."

ElBaradei also highlighted that he is aware of the right for Iran to use nuclear material for "peaceful purposes" and that "a balance between Iran's nuclear rights and concerns of the international community would not be created through verbal disputes, but rather dialogue would be the solution."

Speaking on Friday about the allegation, former UN weapons inspector and former head of the Institute for Science and International Security, David Albright said, "even if it is the same contamination, this is a significant finding because it indicates something was going on at Lavizan. It could be part of

Iran's known centrifuge program or a parallel program."

In response, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi asserted, "these comments lack any importance and do not come from a real source". Denying that his country had carried out any work at the Lavizan-Shiyan facility, Asefi added that the UN claims were "baseless and without importance".

On Friday Iran's President, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad responded to the UN allegations saying, "they are trying to frighten our country by waging a propaganda campaign using strong words. The people of Iran and the country are not afraid of them" and that "this whole thing is just psychological propaganda, but they know the Islamic republic nation of Iran is a strong nation. I think they have better sense than to have a war with Iran. Every country has the right to defend its right in accordance with the agreed way."

Iran started to enrich uranium at its Natanz nuclear facility April 11, but continues to claim its program is for "peaceful purposes."

Alonso wins Spanish GP: fans are rejoicing

May 14, 2006

Fernando Alonso became the first Spaniard to win the FIA Formula-1 Spanish Gran Prix. Unlike in the previous race, this time, Michael Schumacher placed third after the qualification on Saturday. Giancarlo Fisicella, Alonso's teammate, started second, thus completing the front row by Renault. Two Ferrari cars occupied the second row.

In the race, which took place on Barcelona, Montmello circuit de Catalunya, Schumacher struck

hard to overtake Renault drivers, but finished with this goal half done. Unable to compete with Alonso's speed, he easily overtook Fisico after the first pit stop.

As said by the winner about his own speed, he "controlled the second part of the race" and slowed down because of the huge gap between him and his closest competitor, Michael Schumacher.

Although he set the fastest lap in the race, this time, Felipe Massa did not have enough pace to overtake Fisicella, thus completing the race on the fourth place. Kimi Räikkönen did not struggle as much with the other drivers as he did with his own car and finished fifth. All the other competitors, except for the sixth place Jenson Button, finished with a gap more than a lap.

In the drivers' championship, Fernando Alonso won back 2 points from Michael Schumacher and now has a 15-point lead.

Word 2007 will include blogging tools

Lead programmer of Microsoft Word, Joe Friend, wrote on his blog that new version of Microsoft Word (which will be a part of Microsoft Office 2007 suite) will have blog editing and publishing functions.

Friend said: "When I write a blog post using my blog providers web-based editor I miss some of the familiar Word features that I've come to rely on, specifically background spelling (those little red squiggles) and autocorrect. These features keep me from making stupid mistakes."

Friend also said, that new Word will not generate unnecessary HTML code. "Bold become

, Italic becomes , Heading 1 become <h1>, Quotes become <blockquote> and on it goes."

Previously, critics of Microsoft Word's HTML generation capabilities held that the application generated unneeded and bulky HTML code.

Graphic files that users would use in blog entries will be converted to the PNG format, which includes support for alpha channel (i.e. partial) transparency.

To create new or publish post, there will be three mouse-clicks: to create File → New... → New Blog Post); to publish File → Publish → Blog.

Prison riot breaks out in Haiti

A riot is in progress at the main prison in Haiti and gunshots have been heard inside. The prison is located within a few miles of the Parliament building.

United Nations Peacekeepers are on scene and have surrounded the prison.

According to the Associated Press (AP), at least 100 prisoners are on the roof of the prison and are holding what looks to be 2 dead bodies, however; no casualties have been officially reported. The AP also reports that prisoners are saying "freedom or death" and are holding a banner saying "Justice."

US continues to deny Red Cross access to all detainees

In a statement released on Thursday, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said that ICRC President Jacob Kellenberger "deplored the fact that the U.S. authorities had not moved closer to granting the ICRC access to persons held in

undisclosed locations."

The ICRC started making requests to get access to all U.S. detainees, including the ones held in alleged secret prisons, over two years ago. After Kellenberger met with senior officials, including Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, he was again refused access to terrorist suspects held in secret detention centers, chief ICRC spokesperson Antonella Notari said on Friday.

Kellenberger said that "No matter how legitimate the grounds for detention, there exists no right to conceal a person's whereabouts or to deny that he or she is being detained".

In response, U.S. State Department spokesman Sean McCormack said that the ICRC has access to the vast majority of U.S. detainees, but said that "There is a certain subcategory of individuals who have forfeited their protections under the Geneva Conventions and there is not an obligation to allow access to those individuals."

Australian govt announces proposals for copyright update, allows private recording and transfer between media

In a move designed to both clarify existing copyright law, and extend existing provisions to digital media users, the Australian Attorney-General has announced a proposed update of copyright law.

The new law, described as "commonsense amendments", will clarify provisions allowing individuals to legally record programs and transfer recordings between media such as CD and MP3 for private use, whilst at the

same time ensuring that unauthorised copying and usage remains illegal.

These provisions have broadly existed to date and in previous analogue media, but over the past few years have been eroded by stricter laws and licensing agreements, and by measures intended to prevent piracy, which have made it harder for legitimate users to undertake actions they see as part of reasonable ownership rights, such as backups and private use of purchased materials.

Bulls clinch position in Super 14 rugby semi-finals

The Bulls rugby team has managed to reach the semi-finals of the Southern Hemisphere provincial rugby union competition, the Super 14. Despite entering the match with the burden of having to score 32 points and receiving a bonus point (by scoring four tries). The Bulls managed to overcome fellow South African team, the Stormers, at Newlands Stadium in Cape Town on Saturday May 13, winning the match 43 points to 10 in the final round of the regular season.

Entering the final round of the regular season, the Bulls and fellow South African Durban-based Sharks, as well as the Australian Canberra-based Brumbies were the only sides in contention for the fourth and last finals position. After the Brumbies, who unlike the Sharks were actually ahead on the number of points, were soundly defeated by the Canterbury-based Crusaders, 33 points to 3, the result meant that either the Sharks or Bulls could mathematically take fourth position on the ladder. The Sharks stormed to victory over Perth-based Western Force, winning 41

points to 25, meaning that the Bulls would have to score at least four tries to be ensured of a bonus point, to move ahead of the Sharks, who were now sitting in front of them on points difference.

Despite the set back of both prop Danie Thiart and captain Victor Matfield to the sin-bin in the first half, the Pretoria-based Bulls entered halftime leading 26 points to 3. A try to the Stormers happened in the opening minute of the second half, though the Bulls held on to the victory. Bryan Habana scored the last try, which was subsequently converted and pushed the Bulls into fourth place on the table on points difference. The Bulls will now faced the Crusaders in New Zealand next week for a spot in the final, the other spot is to be contested also in New Zealand, between the Wellington-based Hurricanes and the New South Wales Waratahs.

More SKY TV problems, NZ

SKY TV had problems earlier with some viewers unable to tune into certain channels.

It was caused by a streamlining issue not related to satellite problems.

The problem caused the following channels unable to be seen: Sky Movies, J2, Cartoon Network, Sky News, pay-per-view movie channels, radio channels including; National Radio, Concert FM and George FM. Most of the free-to-air channels, however, were working, along with the sport channels, some channels did affect from picture pixelation.

Today in History

1252 - Pope Innocent IV issued the papal bull *ad exstirpanda*, authorizing the use of torture on heretics during the Medieval Inquisition.

1756 - Seven Years' War: Britain declared war on France, two years after fighting began in the Ohio Country.

1928 - Cartoon characters Mickey and Minnie Mouse made their movie debut in *Plane Crazy*.

1934 - Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis dissolved the Saeima and established an authoritarian rule in Latvia.

1990 - Vincent van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* was sold for US\$82.5 million, at the time the world's most expensive painting.

May 15 is Independence Day in Paraguay (1811), Teachers' Day in Mexico, South Korea.

Quote of the Day

"The voice of the individual artist may seem perhaps of no more consequence than the whirring of a cricket in the grass, but the arts do live continuously, and they live literally by faith; their names and their shapes and their uses and their basic meanings survive unchanged in all that matters through times of interruption, diminishment, neglect; they outlive governments and creeds and the societies, even the very civilization that produced them.

They cannot be destroyed altogether because they represent the substance of faith and the only reality. They are what we find again when the ruins are cleared away."

~ Katherine Anne Porter

Word of the Day

ignominious; *adj*

Definition

1. Marked by shame or disgrace; humiliating.

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