



Top Stories



Claims from British quake may run into "low tens of millions of pounds" - Insurance association reps

One day after a 5.2 earthquake hit Great Britain, representatives from the British insurance industry have said that the cost of the earthquake which hit Britain early yesterday could be over 10 million GBP from damage due to tiles falling off roofs, breakages inside the homes and brick walls collapsing.

Sports-heavy broadcast day for BBC One receives complaints

The BBC has responded to complaints that the BBC One schedule for February 23 contained too much sport by saying in a statement that they "are sorry that some viewers felt the BBC One schedule on 23 February contained too much sport." The schedule, which the British newspaper The Guardian defines as "sports dominated," covered sport for eleven and a half hours of Saturday afternoon..



Former PM Shinawatra returns to Thailand

Thaksin Shinawatra, the former Prime Minister of Thailand, has returned to his country after being deposed 17 months ago in a military coup d'état. Within minutes of landing in Bangkok, he was arrested on corruption charges by immigration police, though Shinawatra proclaims his innocence, stating that the charges against him are politically motivated. He has been granted bail for 8m baht (£132,000/\$261,000/€173,000) and was ordered not to leave the country.



Biological Encyclopedia website too popular on first day, crashes

While it has taken almost a year, the non-profit Encyclopedia of Life project launched yesterday. It gained so much attention, that the site quickly crashed. It went back online Tuesday afternoon (EST), but went down again the next morning. The site has limited information on 30,000 species, and full profiles of 25 species.



Wikipedia Current Events

Ecuador suspends oil exports after a landslide cuts off its main pipeline.

- International media report that Prince Henry of Wales has been

Wikipedia Current Events

serving in the Helmand province of Afghanistan.

- The Federal Bureau of Investigation will review a denial by baseball star Roger Clemens that he ever used steroids or human growth hormone.
- A large explosion hits a shopping centre in Waukegan, Illinois.
- At least ten militants are killed in a rocket attack on a house in the Pakistani village of Kalosha in South Waziristan near the Afghanistan border.
- The former Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Shinawatra returns to Thailand to face corruption charges.
- Kofi Annan announces that Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga have agreed to form a coalition government to resolve the political crisis.

Kenyan government and opposition agree on power sharing

The heads of the government and opposition in Kenya have signed a power sharing agreement aimed at ending the crisis over December's disputed elections. The agreement was reached after a day of talks mediated by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and the Chairman of the African Union Jakaya Kikwete.

Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and opposition leader Raila Odinga signed the agreement before

international diplomats and representatives of the Kenyan government and opposition.

Chief mediator Kofi Annan said that the two leaders had agreed on a government structure after five hours of intensive talks.

"I am pleased to be able to tell you and all the citizens of Kenya that the two parties this afternoon completed the work on agenda item three, how to overcome the political crisis," he said.

The two sides agreed to the creation of the posts of prime minister and two deputy prime ministers. The prime minister is accorded authority over the ministries. The prime minister is to be nominated by the largest party or coalition in parliament and can only be removed by a majority vote of the national assembly. The accord also calls for distribution of the ministerial posts according to the relative strength of each party in parliament. And it calls for the changes to be enacted by constitutional amendment, a major demand of the opposition.

Mr. Kibaki and Mr. Odinga pledged to ensure that the accord is implemented and called for unity among all Kenyans. Mr. Annan commended the two parties, saying they reached a common position for the good of the nation. And he had a message for the citizens of Kenya.

"Compromise was necessary for the survival of this country," he said. "Support this agreement, for it is the key to the unity of Kenya. It is the foundation for national reconciliation and it is the springboard for national recovery."

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown released a statement calling

the signing of the power-sharing agreement a "a triumph for peace and diplomacy."

"Kenya's leaders have reached a power-sharing agreement that represents a triumph for peace and diplomacy, and a renunciation of the violence that has scarred a country of such enormous potential. Common sense has prevailed, and the Kenyan people have the outcome for which they have hoped and prayed," the statement said

"Support this agreement, for it is the key to the unity of Kenya. It is the foundation for national reconciliation and it is the springboard for national recovery" —Former UN secretary general, Kofi Annan

Brown also thanked Kofi Annan for his work and urged the international community to play their part and support Kenya's new government. Brown also noted that "Real leadership, patience and tolerance is necessary to ensure that the agreement sticks."

Kenyans are viewing the deal skeptically, such as 56-year old refugee Paul Waweru, "The deal between Raila and Kibaki will help to cool down the situation but I doubt if it will enable us to get back to our homes."

Diana Murugi, 72, lost her two sons in the violent fighting that has plagued Kenya since the end of the disputed elections at the close of last year.

"The coalition is about Kibaki, Raila and the big men, what about those of us here in the camp? How will I reconcile with people who killed my sons? It is impossible, even if Kibaki and Raila are in the same government," she said.

Parliament is to convene next week to enact the measures. Mr. Annan said the negotiations would resume Friday on long-term issues such as constitutional reform and ways to end inequalities in land and wealth distribution.

The two sides have been meeting for nearly five weeks in an effort to find a political solution to the Kenya crisis. One thousand people were killed and several hundred thousand were displaced in the violence that erupted after Mr. Kibaki was declared the winner of a presidential election that the opposition says was rigged.

Rights groups: Forcing Wikileaks.org offline raises 'serious First Amendment concerns'

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) have sided with Wikileaks.org and will defend them against a lawsuit which took the site off line in the United States. Wikileaks is a website dedicated to hosting leaked documents that are "anonymous, untraceable, uncensorable."

On February 18, 2008, a permanent court injunction issued in the California Northern District Court in San Francisco by judge Jeffrey White, California to Bank Julius Baer (BJB), a Swiss Bank took the domain name offline. However the site remained online via its IP address and alternative domain names. Wikileaks previously published hundreds of documents obtained from a whistleblower of the Swiss Bank, "purportedly showing offshore tax evasion and money laundering by extremely wealthy and in some cases, politically sensitive, clients from the US, Europe, China and Peru."

"Blocking access to the entire site in response to a few documents posted there completely disregards the public's right to know," said Ann Brick a lawyer for the ACLU. At least 18 other organizations have signed documents in defense of Wikileaks. Those documents have been forged into a 'joint Amici Curiae ("friends of the Court") brief; which will be submitted to the court and used as defense evidence in a hearing scheduled for Friday February 29.

Despite the attempts by the ACLU and others, Bank Julius Baer says that their lawsuit has nothing to do with the rights of free speech.

"This action has been brought solely to prevent the unlawful dissemination of stolen bank records and personal account information of its customers. Many of those documents have also been altered and forged," said the Bank.

Recently the Bank has made allegations that they have been "unable to negotiate with Wikileaks" at all before or during legal proceedings. Wikileaks, in a press release denies the allegations.

"Wikileaks at all times responded with grace and dignity to BJBs highly irregular demands and left communication open," said Wikileaks which also adds that the correspondents with the Bank are available on their website on servers in Denmark. "BJB did not submit the correspondence to the court, although it must be absolutely central to the issues held there. We wonder why?"

Garuda Indonesia Flight 200 pilot forced to resign

The pilot of the Boeing 737 that crashed on March 7 upon landing

at Yogyakarta Airport after a domestic Indonesian flight has been forced by his airline to resign. The crash of Garuda Indonesia Flight 200 killed twenty-one people, most being Indonesian nationals and five being Australians following a visit by then Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer.

Garuda sent the pilot, Marwoto Komar, an ultimatum requesting his resignation, which he complied with. Had he failed to do so, his employment would have been terminated. The news coincides with police officials forwarding to prosecutors some documents recommending that Komar be charged with negligent manslaughter over the crash, which carries a maximum sentence of seven years imprisonment.

The final report into the disaster found that Mr Komar ignored fifteen activations of the Ground Proximity Warning System informing him he was attempting to land too fast. After touching down at double the maximum safe speed, the aircraft overshot the runway and caught fire.

Kamal Firdaus, legal representative of Mr Komar, said "We regret Garuda so soon giving Marwoto the option of being fired or resigning."

Mr Komar was arrested early this month, but subsequently released on bail on February 15. He is thought to be the first pilot to face prosecution for an aviation accident or incident in Indonesia.

Former PM Shinawatra returns to Thailand

Thaksin Shinawatra, the former Prime Minister of Thailand, has returned to his country after being deposed 17 months ago in a

military coup d'état. Within minutes of landing in Bangkok, he was arrested on corruption charges by immigration police, though Shinawatra proclaims his innocence, stating that the charges against him are politically motivated. He has been granted bail for 8m baht (£132,000/\$261,000/€173,000) and was ordered not to leave the country.

Thousands of his supporters gathered at the airport to welcome him back to Thailand.

"When the game is over, we must come together and settle our differences, forgive everything and help each other push the country forward," the Guardian have reported him as saying. "I can prove my innocence. The allegations are empty."

In 2006 Shinawatra was forcefully removed from office by the military who "cancelled the upcoming elections, suspended the Constitution, dissolved Parliament, banned protests and all political activities, suppressed and censored the media, declared martial law, and arrested Cabinet members," according to Wikipedia.

During the coup, Shinawatra's Thai Rak Thai party was outlawed and senior members were banned from politics for 5 years. However, his political opponents in Thailand fear that, now he has returned, he may influence politics from behind-the-scenes.

Claims from British quake may run into "low tens of millions of pounds" - Insurance association reps

Representatives from the British insurance industry have said that the cost of the earthquake which hit Britain early yesterday could be

over 10 million GBP. The Association of British Insurers has said in a statement that the cost for the earthquake is "likely to run into the low tens of millions of pounds."

The Senior claims manager at the UK bank Norwich Union has described the damage by saying that at the moment most insurance claims regarding the earthquake describe "minor damage such as tiles off roofs, breakages inside the homes and brick walls collapsing." It has also been reported that approximately 1,200 insurance claims were made in the first twelve hours after the earthquake hit Britain.

These reports come one day after the United Kingdom was hit by a 5.2 earthquake. Tremors were reported as wide spread as Edinburgh, Manchester, Sheffield, Middlesbrough, Cambridge, London, Birmingham and Southampton .

National Hockey League news: February 28, 2008

There were 6 games played in the National Hockey League on February 27, 2008. Colorado finishes their three-game road trip in eastern Canada against the Canucks, Minnesota tries to break a 4 game losing streak in an out-of-conference game against the Lightning, and the Maple Leafs try to pick up their fifth win in 6 games.

Nashville Predators @ Buffalo Sabres

Steve Bernier made his debut for the Sabres, scoring the first two goals of the game in the first period. In the second period, Daniel Paille put Buffalo ahead by 3. Jan Hlavac put Nashville on the board 45 seconds later. Nashville came within one goal 34 seconds

later when Jason Arnott scored his 23rd goal of the year. Andrew Peters got that one back for Buffalo, when he scored his first goal of the season. Arnott made it a 1 goal game again with his second goal of the game on a Predators power play. Jason Pominville scored his 19th goal of the season at 14:50 in the second period. Derek Roy put the Sabres up by 3 going into the second intermission. In the third period, David Legwand scored Nashville's second power play goal. Tim Connelly and Ales Kotalik each scored for Buffalo in the third period, giving the Sabres their first win in three games. Ryan Miller left the game in the second period after a puck hit his mask and bent the guard, giving him a bloody nose. He returned 8 minutes later. Miller made 24 saves.

San Jose Sharks @ Columbus Blue Jackets

Jonathan Cheechoo scored on the Sharks' first power play to give them the first lead of the game. Columbus tied the game before the end of the first period when David Vyborny scored his 4th goal of the season. In the second period, Vyborny scored his second goal of the night to give Columbus their first lead of the game. It wouldn't last though, as San Jose put three goals past the Blue Jackets goaltender Pascal Leclaire. First, Torrey Mitchell tied the score at 10:51. Jeremy Roenick put the Sharks back in the lead with a power play goal. Joe Pavelski put San Jose up by two goals before the second period ended. Evgeni Nabokov stopped all but two of Columbus's 19 shots on the night, picking up his 35th win of the season.

Minnesota Wild @ Tampa Bay Lightning

After a scoreless first period, Todd

Fedoruk put the Wild up by 1 early in the second period with a short handed goal. That was closely followed by Pavol Demitra's 13th goal of the season. Michel Ouellet put the Lightning on the scoreboard 12:22 into the second period. Brian Rolston scored his 22nd goal of the season on a Minnesota power play to put Minnesota up by 2 in the third period. Jeff Halpern would put the Lightning within 1 goal, but despite a late third period power play, plus the extra skater on for the pulled goaltender, they couldn't tie the score. Minnesota breaks a 4 game losing streak. The Lightning have now lost 5 straight. Niklas Backstrom made 31 saves for Minnesota, earning his 25th win of the season.

Toronto Maple Leafs @ Florida Panthers

Jassen Cullimore scored first for the Panthers at 9:27 in the first period. Brett McLean would give Florida a 2 goal lead going into the first intermission. Jeremy Williams, who had a goal in each of his other two NHL appearances, scored his first goal of this season 6:56 into the second period to put Toronto within one goal. In the third period, Toronto captain Mats Sundin scored to tie the game at 2-2. Rostislav Olesz would retake the lead for Florida 11:45 into the third, but Sundin scored his second of the night with 1:08 left in regulation to send the game to a shootout. Tomas Kaberle scored the only shootout goal, when his wrist shot beat Tomas Vokoun through the five-hole. Vesa Toskala made 37 saves for the Leafs.

Phoenix Coyotes @ Chicago Blackhawks

Chicago's Jason Williams scored the only goal of the game, a shot that deflected off of Coyotes center

Joel Perrault's skate, 7:58 into the first period. Patrick Lalime stopped all of Phoenix's 32 shots, earning his first shutout since February 7, 2007. Ilya Bryzgalov only allowed 1 of Chicago's 24 shots, but the one allowed turned out to be the game winner.

Colorado Avalanche @ Vancouver Canucks

Mason Raymond put Vancouver on the board after a scoreless 1st period. Later in the second period, Andrew Brunette scored his 13th goal of the season to tie the score 1-1. In the third period, Alex Burrows scored on a goal with 1:45 left in regulation, a goal that was allowed after a video review was done to verify that the puck completely crossed the goal line. Joe Sakic tied the score with 15 seconds left to send the game into a shootout. Sakic and Marek Svatos each scored on the shootout, giving Colorado their second consecutive win. Jose Theodore stopped 29 of Vancouver's 31 shots. Roberto Luongo stopped 24 of Colorado's 26 shots.

Wikinews Player of the Day

Today's Wikinews Player of the Day is Joe Sakic, captain of the Colorado Avalanche, who returned to the Avs roster on February 24 after missing 36 games due to a hernia. Sakic scored the tying goal to force overtime, and the decisive shootout goal, in the Avalanche's 3-2 shootout win against the Vancouver Canucks.



Other news

The General Manager of the Ottawa Senators, Bryan Murray, fired head coach John Paddock,

and assistant coach Ron Low, for "performance issues". Paddock, who had been head coach of the Senators for less than a season, lead the team to a 13-1-0 start, but has since gone 11-12-2 since the beginning of 2008. Murray, who was head coach of the Senators from 2005-2007, will take over the responsibilities of head coach.

Today in History

1704 – Joint French and Native American forces destroyed Deerfield, Massachusetts during Queen Anne's War, killing over fifty colonists.

1720 – Unable to establish a joint sovereignty similar to England's William and Mary, Queen Ulrika Eleonora of Sweden abdicated in favour of her husband, who became Frederick I.

1940 – At the 12th Academy Awards ceremony, Hattie McDaniel became the first African American to be awarded an Oscar, winning Best Supporting Actress for her role as Mammy in *Gone with the Wind*.

1944 – The Admiralty Islands campaign during the Pacific War of World War II began when American forces assaulted Los Negros Island, the third largest of the Admiralty Islands off the coast of the Papua New Guinea mainland.

1960 – Playboy Enterprises founder Hugh Hefner opened his first Playboy Club in Chicago, featuring the first service uniform registered with the United States Patent and Trademark Office. February 29 is A leap day in the Gregorian calendar.

Quote of the Day

God bless the King! (I mean our faith's defender!)
 God bless! (No harm in blessing) the Pretender.
 But who Pretender is, and who is

King,
 God bless us all! That's quite another thing!
 ~ John Byrom ~

Word of the Day

aforethought adj

1. Premeditated; planned ahead of time.

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