June 29, 2005

The free-content news source that you can write!

Top Stories

**Israeli soldier convicted in killing of British activist in Gaza Strip**
An Israeli ex-soldier has been found guilty of the manslaughter of a British student acting as a human shield in Palestine.

**Marines accused of assaulting Australian freed by US military court**
Two U.S. marines were recently cleared of charges in the brutal assault of an Australian youth in a Townsville nightclub February 2004. The alleged assault occurred within Australian jurisdiction, however permission was given by the victim and Attorney-general Phillip Ruddock for the matter to be transferred to a military court in the US.

**U.S. Supreme Court rules on government display of Ten Commandments**
The United States Supreme Court has ruled that "non-neutral" displays of the Ten Commandments in courthouses violate the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment guarantee of religious neutrality, but that "historical" displays are permitted.

Wikipedia Current Events

**In the Solent, Queen Elizabeth II conducts a fleet review of 167 naval, merchant and tall ships from Britain and 35 other nations to commemorate the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar. Ironically, the largest ship in attendance is the French aircraft carrier, Charles de Gaulle. Naval vessels from as far away as Japan and South Korea are in attendance. The tall ships will conduct a re-enactment of a Napoleonic War naval battle later in the day.**

**In France, police search offices of specialty chemicals company Rhodia and finance ministry in the investigation of accounting irregularities and inside trading. Finance minister Thierry Breton was a member of the Rhodia board.**

**Countries backing the ITER fusion reactor meet in Moscow to decide and the experimental fusion reactor will be built in Cadarache, Southern France, instead of Japan.**

**Emperor Akihito of Japan and empress Michiko pay an unannounced visit to the memorial of Korean war dead during his visit in Saipan.**

**A team of US and Canadian scientists announces that they may have found a way of vaccination against lassa fever.**

**Guinea-Bissau's former president Kumba Yala declares that he accepts the results of presidential elections in the country "in the interest of peace and democracy" but still insists that he actually won. No candidate has won 50% of the vote and the next round of elections commences in July.**

**Bill C-38 passes through the Canadian House of Commons, placing Canada on track to become the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, likely by July.**

**AMD files an antitrust lawsuit against rival chipmaker Intel.**

**Pakistan's Supreme Court suspends the acquittal of five men accused of raping Mukhtaran Bibi.**

**Italian police detain Angelo Sacco after a shooting spree in Bogogno, near Milan. Three people are dead.**

Wikipedia Current Events

**Bill C-38 passes through the Canadian House of Commons, placing Canada on track to become the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage, likely by July.**

**AMD files an antitrust lawsuit against rival chipmaker Intel.**

**Pakistan's Supreme Court suspends the acquittal of five men accused of raping Mukhtaran Bibi.**

**Italian police detain Angelo Sacco after a shooting spree in Bogogno, near Milan. Three people are dead.**

Mayberry, still in Iraq, testified by video from questions prepared by the committee. He said that KBR routinely sold expired food rations to the Army. The interviewer asked, "Are you saying that Halliburton deliberately falsified the number of meals they prepared and then submitted false claims for reimbursement and that they did this to make up for past amounts auditors had disallowed?" Mayberry firmly answered "Yes." He said that serving expired food ration was "an everyday occurrence, sometimes every meal." He explained that
Halliburton systematically overcharged for the number of meals as well, saying, "they were charging for 20,000 meals and they were only serving 10,000 meals." Dorgan later commented, "obviously there's no honor here, by a company that would serve outdated food to our troops in Iraq."

Mayberry also claimed would-be whistleblowers were threatened "to be sent to Falluja" and other "places under fire" if they talked to media or governmental oversight officials. In 2003 and 2004, Falluja had been well known as dangerous for foreign troops and civilians. "I personally was sent to Falluja for three weeks. The manager told me that I was being sent away until the auditors were gone, because I had talked to the auditors," Mayberry said.

"The threat of being sent to a camp under fire was their way of keeping us quiet. The employees who talked to auditors were sent to camps under more fire than other camps, and Anaconda." This report led Dorgan and others to voice considerable outrage that U.S. citizens would be personally threatened with harm for talking to oversight officials or media.

Allan Waller testified to specific examples of how KBR officials had conspired in blocking Lloyd-Owen fuel transports, and using other coercive means against its competitor. The British Lloyd-Owen has a direct contract with the Iraq government to provide fuel to various parts of the country.

In his introductory remarks, Dorgan explained that Senate Republicans had blocked or ignored any requests by Democrats to have a formal bipartisan hearing, resulting in the need for an independent committee.

**Scenario for impeachment of Lula raised in Brazil**

São Paulo, Brazil – The government of the Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and his party, the Workers Party are the target of several serious accusations of corruption.

This is the most severe political crisis since Brazilians first attained their right to vote for a President in 1989, the former President Fernando Collor de Mello was elected.

The ruling Workers' Party has not succeeded in its defense against the accusations. The Brazilian deputy Roberto Jefferson said that the ruling party bought the support of some Brazilian deputies, paying 30 thousand Brazilian Reals (US$12 thousand) each, every month. Although Jefferson said that he had no proof of this, he gave a very detailed description of the alleged corruption scheme.

One important question is whether President Lula knew about the alleged scandals in his government or not. If he knew and he did nothing he was conniving or he participated, it is the worst. If he didn't know, someone can say that he was very incompetent because he didn't see something so big under his nose.

Today, the authority and the efficiency of the President is being questioned. Some people say that it was the former Minister José Dirceu who actually took great part of the decisions in Lula's government. The politicians say that President Lula must take control of his government, that he should do a major reform of his government and that he should get away from the people who are involved in the scandals.

Besides the corruption denouncement, the government of President Lula is being criticized by his weak social agenda. The programme called "Zero Hunger" has showed little results and many people accuse it of being just a marketing strategy.

The management of the economy has being praised by some analysts. However, critics, even inside the government like the Vice-President José Alencar have already criticized it, because of the high interest rates. There is not severe inflation, but unemployment is high, and salaries are low.

The next days or the next month may be decisive to the future of Lula. He must show that he is not involved in the corruption scandals, he must reform the government and he must prove that he is competent. The positive factor are that the Brazilian economy is not seriously contaminated by the political crisis until now, the population is perplexed but calm and the politicians are not envolving the President in the denunciations, although they demand the investigation of all corruption allegations. However, nobody knows how much this situation will remain or if it will remain until the end of the government of President Lula in 2006.

*This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter*.
France has won a years-long battle to host ITER, the 'next step' in nuclear fusion research. Nuclear fusion is the process that powers our sun, and could potentially lead to almost unlimited energy available on Earth.

The six partners in the international project — the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), the People's Republic of China, Japan, Korea, Russia and the United States - declared today in Moscow that the device will be constructed at Cadarache, in France. The other contender for the project was Japan.

The two countries had fought a long and hard battle to secure the site of the experiment, seen as the next step towards nuclear fusion, until Japan finally withdrew its bid today.

Under the terms of the agreement, France will pay 50% of the construction costs of the 10 billion euro (£6.6bn) program costs, while Japan will gain 20% of the 200 research jobs that will be part of the project, but pay only 10% of the costs.

"We believe that the Iter project should start as soon as possible for the sake of mankind's future," said Nariaki Nakayama, Japan's science minister.

Professor Sir Chris Llewellyn Smith, head of the of UK Atomic Energy Authority's (UKAEA) Culham division, responsible for the UK's thermonuclear fusion programme, said that "rapid construction of Iter will be a major step in the development of fusion as a potential large-scale source of electricity that will not contribute to climate change."

ITER will follow on from the work of such experiments as the European JET, the Japanese JT-60u, and the American TFTR and DIII-D. It is not designed to produce electricity, but to research technologies that will allow a prototype nuclear fusion power plant — 'DEMO' — by around 2060. The ITER program itself will last for thirty years — ten for construction, and at least 20 years of operation.

Nuclear fusion works by forcing the atomic nuclei — in this case isotopes of hydrogen, namely deuterium and/or tritium — to combine under great heat and pressure. The products of the reaction have a lower mass than the original reactants — releasing energy according to Einstein's famous equation of E = mc².

The fuel is derived from sea water, meaning fusion is an almost limitless source of energy.

Nuclear fusion produces no waste products other than helium, and does not contribute to global warming in anyway. Little radiation is produced by the reaction; a nuclear fusion power plant will take less than 100 years to become completely safe after decommissioning. Further more, fusion reactors have very little fuel inside them at any one moment — so therefore no chance of a 'meltdown' — and can shut down in seconds if the fuel supply is cut off.

Lukashenko accuscs foreign donators of ideological expansion

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, accused foreign funds and donators of ideological expansion in
Belarus during his meeting with talented youth today.

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko

"In recent years, activities of foreign donators, who were carrying out ideological expansion on Belarus disguised as humanitarian aid, and really stealing State's intellectual possession, was curbed," Lukashenko said.

Students, which Lukashenko met, were receivers of Belarusian presidential stipendies. He said, that the idea of domestic funds was created "in uneasy times" to keep talented students in Belarus.

Lukashenko requested last year that each trip abroad for sake of education be limited.

Wal-Mart heir John Walton killed in plane crash

John Walton, son of Wal-Mart founder Sam Walton and the 11th richest person in the world, has been killed in a plane crash on June 27 in Wyoming. He was 58 years old. The crash occurred shortly after takeoff from Jackson Hole Airport in Grand Teton National Park at about 1:20 p.m. CDT. Walton was the only person killed in the crash.

"We're sad that John Walton, who was well-known and much-loved in this valley, died doing something that he loved to do, which was fly aircraft," said Joan Anzelmo, a spokeswoman for Grand Teton National Park.

Walton was killed while flying an experimental ultra-light aircraft with small gasoline engine and wings made of material similar to sail-cloth.

Because the aircraft was unregistered and experimental, officials at the National Park indicate that there will not be an NTSB investigation. Officials at Grand Teton National Park will, however, conduct their own internal investigation.

Walton was named to the board of directors of Wal-Mart in 1992 -- he never worked for the company. He had served as a Green Beret during the Vietnam War and was awarded the Silver Star for saving the lives of several members of his unit while under fire. Walton was involved in several business interests over the years, including crop-dusting and boat construction.

Israeli soldier convicted of killing British activist in Gaza Strip

A former Israeli soldier has been convicted by an Israeli court of the manslaughter of a British student who was acting as a human shield in the Gaza Strip in April 2003.

Ex-sergeant Wahid Taysir, serving with the Beduin Unit in Rafah, hit Tom Hurndall with a single shot to the head from an army watchtower, using a sniper rifle with a telescopic sight. Hurndall had been guiding children away from an area of shooting in the Palestinian town of Rafah.

Twenty-two year old Hurndall fell into a coma and died of his injuries nine months later in a London hospital. Taysir's defence lawyers had tried to claim during the trial that Hurndall's death was due to malpractice by British doctors.

The Israeli army had initially declined to carry out an investigation into the shooting. After the British government started their own enquiry and cited Taysir as having fired the fatal shot, the Israeli army made the decision to prosecute Taysir, who is no longer serving in the army.

The verdict took more than an hour to read out in a small courtroom in southern Israel. As well as being found guilty of manslaughter, Taysir was found guilty of obtaining false testimony, submitting false testimony, obstruction of justice, and improper conduct.

Taysir's sentence will be decided next week. Another soldier was also jailed for lying to protect Taysir.

Hurndall's father Anthony was one of 50 people in the courtroom. Afterwards he welcomed the verdict, but claimed that the Israeli army acted with impunity too often. The Israeli government insist that there is no policy that tolerates shooting civilians.

Taysir is an Israeli Arab of the Beduin tribe. He served in the Israeli army as a volunteer.
Today in History
1613 - Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre burned to the ground.
1880 - Tahiti became a French territory.
1922 - France granted 100 hectares at Vimy Ridge "freely, and for all time, to the Government of Canada, the free use of the land exempt from all taxes".
1933 - Italian boxer Primo Carnera knocked out American Jack Sharkey to become the heavyweight boxing champion of the world.
1995 - During the STS-71 mission the Space Shuttle Atlantis became the first Space Shuttle to dock with the Russian Mir space station.
1995 - The Sampoong Department Store collapsed in the Seocho-gu district of Seoul, South Korea, killing 501 and injuring 937.

Quote of the Day
"Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away." — Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

About Wikinews
We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including you) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. If you would like to write, publish or edit articles, visit en.wikinews.org.

All stories on Wikinews are in the public domain. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons. Wikinews also aims to write stories from a neutral point of view.

Audio Wikinews
Audio Wikinews is a public domain, non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily. News Briefs are short, on-the-hours breaking news updates; while Full Reports are a thorough review of the day’s news.
http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio_Wikinews

About Wikinews Print Edition
For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit: