



Top Stories

Rescue workers search wreckage of Brazilian air crash



Brazil's National Civil Aviation Agency has confirmed that flight 1907 crashed on Friday, just over 1,000 miles north-west of Rio de Janeiro killing all on board. Rescue workers and air force personnel are searching the wreckage for bodies.

2006 Nobel Prize in physics awarded for microwave map of the universe

John C. Mather of NASA and George F. Smoot of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory shared the 2006 Nobel Prize for Physics for "their discovery of the blackbody form and anisotropy of the cosmic microwave background radiation."

Featured story

Contract to buy properties on site of Buffalo, N.Y. hotel proposal extended



Sam Savarino, CEO of Savarino Companies, the development company to be in charge of building

the Elmwood Village Hotel at Forest and Elmwood Avenues in Buffalo, New York has told Wikinews in an exclusive interview that the contract to buy the properties from 1109-1121 on Elmwood Avenue in Buffalo has been "extended."

Wikipedia Current Events

- Viktor Khristenko, the Russian Industry and Energy Minister, and Baktykozha Izmukhambetov, the Kazakh Energy and Mineral Resources' Minister, sign an intergovernmental agreement creating a joint venture to process gas from the Karachaganak field in West Kazakhstan. Russian President Vladimir Putin said the agreement was the solution to "the energy problems of key partners, including those in Western Europe."
- The United States National Labor Relations Board determines that workers normally assigned as shift supervisors should not be covered by a federal law ensuring a right to union membership.
- EADS delays delivery of the Airbus A380 jet for the third time in 16 months, due to wiring problems, with the first plane now expected in late 2007.
- North Korea announces plans to conduct a nuclear test.
- United States scientists John C. Mather and George Smoot win the Nobel Prize in physics for research into cosmic microwave background radiation that helps explain the origins of galaxies and stars.
- Deposed Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Shinawatra has resigned as head of his Thai Rak Thai party due to "changing circumstances".
- Turkish Airlines Flight 1476, a

Wikipedia Current Events

Turkish Airlines plane carrying 113 people from Tirana, Albania to Istanbul, Turkey, was hijacked, but lands at Italy's Brindisi Airport. The hijackers surrendered and were arrested by Italian police.

Rescue workers search wreckage of Brazilian air crash

Gol Transportes Aéreos Flight 1907 crashed 1,750km (1,100 miles) north-west of Rio de Janeiro killing all people onboard, on Friday September 29. National Civil Aviation Agency (ANAC) has confirmed that the crashed Brazilian airplane did crash into a smaller aircraft. Rescue workers and air force personnel are searching the wreckage for bodies

Search and rescue teams rappelled down ropes or hacked a way through the rainforest, led by local Indians to reach the wreckage.

The first people at the scene had to abseil down to clear away trees to allow helicopters to land.

"It's extremely difficult to get there," said Ademir Ribeiro, a foreman on the nearby Jarina ranch, the centre for rescue operations.

About 80 air force personnel were at the site during the day and about thirty stayed during the night.

An air force statement says that the first two bodies were recovered

on the afternoon of Sunday, October 1. The bodies were taken to an air force base by helicopter.

Officials say that the investigation would take at least three months. Milton Zuanazzi, director of the National Civil Aviation Agency, says that he does not know how long the removal of bodies would take.

A Embraer Legacy 600 owned by ExcelAire, a charter company based in Long Island, New York clipped the Boeing 737-800 SFP. The Legacy made an emergency landing at Cachimbo air force base with five passengers and two crew on board, none of whom were hurt. The Boeing plunged nose first into the rainforest and disintegrated.

When interviewed by the police, the passengers on the Legacy reported feeling a bump at the time of the collision. The pilot landed the plane manually.

An Air Force statement said that a search of the site showed no signs that the 149 passengers and six crew on board the Boeing 737 could have survived the crash.

"Neither of the pilots can understand how a 737 could have hit us without them seeing it," said Joe Sharkey, a journalist for the New York Times, in an email to his wife.

Mr. Zuanazzi says it's possible as they were traveling at hundreds of miles an hour.

"They said they didn't see anything. But this is absolutely normal. ... In these conditions, you can only see a shadow and a noise," said Zuanazzi.

Investigators are trying to

determine why two new aircraft equipped with the latest anti-collision technology could have collided. The Brazilian air force says that both planes were equipped with a Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) which sounds an alarm when planes get too close.

"It locks on the other plane's transponders and tells the pilot whether to go up or down," John Hansman, aeronautics professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said by telephone.

"The 737 should have been warned to take evasive action."

Hansman said that in air traffic in Brazil is complicated in some parts and vast areas are not covered by radar especially over the ocean on the Amazon Rainforest. Pilots often propose a route and at certain points check with controllers who verify the plane's location, altitude and bearing.

"Apparently that process broke down somehow," Hansman said. "When you get to the jungles of Brazil, you have people going in all directions."

The Brazilian media are suggesting that a lapse in communication caused the crash. Rio de Janeiro daily, O Globo, reported that air traffic controllers in the city of Manaus cleared the Boeing to fly at 37,000 feet and Brasília authorised the Legacy to climb from 35,000 feet to 39,000 feet. Agencia Estado reports Legacy pilot, Joseph Lepore, and co-pilot Jan Palladino, telling police in Mato Grosso that they had authorisation from Brasilia to fly at 37,000 feet and that the anti-collision equipment never sounded a warning.

The cockpit voice recorder and the digital flight data recorder of both planes have been recovered. The blackbox of the Legacy was taken to Embraer's headquarters at Sao Jose dos Campos, Sao Paulo.

Brazil's Civil Aviation Agency said the cause of the crash was impossible to say until the Boeing 737's two recorders, found by search teams, were examined.

Dale Oderman, associate professor of aviation technology at Purdue University said investigators will be paying close attention to the conversations between the pilots and air traffic controllers said.

"It might indicate they were flying an altitude they weren't cleared to fly," Mr. Oderman said.

Bill Waldock, aviation safety professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona, says that the Legacy may have clipped the bigger jet's horizontal stabiliser - fins that prevent the airplane from pitching up or down.

"A likely reason why the 737 would depart continuous flight and go vertically into the jungle at that speed would be damage or loss of the horizontal stabiliser," Mr. Waldock said.

Relatives of the passengers have complained that they were not being informed about the ongoing search for bodies or the investigation. The air force has flown them in groups of six over to the crash site. The air force says that it was to show them how difficult it is to reach the crash site.

"They will be able to see the difficulties of the operation ... The place is difficult [to access], there

are trees of up to 40 meters (130 feet) tall," a spokesman said. "The debris is scattered so rescue work is even more complicated."

This is the worst air disaster in Brazilian history surpassing the June 1982 crash of a Vasp flight which hit a mountain near Fortaleza in northeastern Brazil, killing 137 people.

President Lula has declared three days of national mourning.

North Korea says it will test a nuclear weapon in the future

The North Korean foreign ministry has published a statement on the state news agency KCNA on Tuesday that, as a result of international pressure, the state would "in the future conduct a nuclear test under the condition where safety is firmly guaranteed".

The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea's official state name, declared itself in possession of nuclear weapons in 2005, but has not yet tested a nuclear weapon, the typical way that nuclear states announced their capability to the world.

The text of the statement emphasized that the government required the weapons for the purposes of deterrence, citing a threat from the United States in particular, and that DPRK would never use such weapons first or encourage their proliferation.

Western governments have however feared the idea of a nuclear North Korea, citing a history of weapons proliferation, and the United States claims that North Korea is a "state sponsor of terrorism".

Since February 2005 there have been numerous reports that North Korea was planning a nuclear test, though none of them have yet been shown to be true. While North Korea is believed to have reprocessed plutonium for a bomb, some experts had questioned whether the state had yet actually produced a nuclear weapon.

Ban Ki-Moon leads contest for next UN Secretary-General

South Korean foreign minister Ban Ki-Moon emerged as the likely successor to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan yesterday when an unofficial poll of Security Council members resulted in Ban being the only candidate to avoid a possible veto by one of the five permanent members of the council.

A formal ballot to choose the next Secretary-General has been scheduled for October 9. The Security Council's recommendation will then go to the UN General Assembly for ratification which is usually a formality. Annan's term ends on December 31, 2006.

The 15 members of the council voted "encourage", "discourage" or "no opinion" beside each candidate's name on Monday's straw vote. The ballot was secret, however the five permanent members of the council who have veto rights, the United Kingdom, United States, France, China and Russia, voted on a blue ballot paper in order to demonstrate which candidates, if any, could escape a veto in the formal vote.

Ban received 14 "encourage" votes, 1 "no opinion" and no "discourage" or veto votes. Every other candidate received a veto from one of the five permanent members. Ban, 62, has won all

four Security Council straw votes which have been held over the past several months but Monday's vote was the first straw poll which distinguished votes by veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council from votes cast by the other ten members.

Following the release of the vote results, India's Shashi Tharoor announced his withdrawal as a candidate saying of Ban "It is clear that he will be our next secretary general."

"It is a great honour and a huge responsibility to be secretary-general, and I wish Mr Ban every success in that task," said Tharoor.

Tharoor had placed second in the race receiving 10 "encourage" votes and three "discourages", one of which was from a country with a veto.

"It is quite clear that from today's straw poll that Minister Ban Ki-Moon is the candidate that the Security Council will recommend to the General Assembly," said Chinese ambassador Wang Guangya.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister Surakiart Sathirathai and former Afghan Finance Minister Ashraf Ghani each received four votes in favour. Ghani had three vetoes against him and Surakiart two.

The fifth candidate, Prince Zeid al-Hussein of Jordan had only two votes in favour and eight against, with one veto.

Monday's vote was not binding.

2006 Nobel Prize in physics awarded for microwave map of the universe

John C. Mather of NASA and George F. Smoot of Lawrence

Berkeley National Laboratory shared the 2006 Nobel Prize for Physics for "their discovery of the blackbody form and anisotropy of the cosmic microwave background radiation."

The Nobel Prize Committee cited the physicists for their work on the Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE) project. COBE revealed fluctuations in faint microwave signals from space that are thought to be remnants of the Big Bang.

Although the precise origin of the fluctuations in the cosmic microwave background is not yet clear, they may represent clumps in the very early universe that led to the galaxies seen today.

Prior to the COBE map of the universe, it was unclear why the universe contained stars and galaxies rather than an evenly distributed dust cloud. Theorists had predicted that a sensitive measurement of microwaves from the sky would reveal minute temperature fluctuations, which represent variations in the density of matter in the early universe. The denser portions served as seeds for galaxies that formed later. COBE was the first experiment sensitive enough to confirm the predicted temperature variations encoded in the map of the microwave background.

The initial discovery of the Cosmic Microwave Background by Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson led to their award of the 1978 Nobel Prize in physics. Although they measured the approximate temperature of the universe to be about 3.5 degrees Kelvin, their ground-based microwave telescope could not pick out the detail available to COBE.

Tropical Storm Isaac hits Newfoundland

Hurricane Isaac was downgraded to a tropical storm as it hit Newfoundland today. Isaac was located about 120 miles south of Cape Race, Newfoundland, at 2 p.m. AST, and moving to the north-northeast at 40 mph. Isaac had top sustained winds near 60 mph with higher gusts. Tropical Storm Isaac swirled away from the island and weakened quickly.

"Isaac has weakened from a hurricane to a tropical storm this morning," the National Hurricane Center in Florida announced in a storm bulletin posted at 11 a.m. "The tropical storm continues racing towards Newfoundland and should cross the Avalon Peninsula, the southeastern region of Newfoundland this afternoon, where a tropical storm warning remains in effect.

"Isaac is a very small storm and its effects may not be felt across the entire Avalon. Accordingly, we no longer expect tropical storm force winds in regions beyond the Avalon Peninsula. Once a Category 1 hurricane as it formed in the Atlantic Ocean, Isaac has weakened considerably," said the Canadian Hurricane Centre based in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Isaac's rain was heavy in the Atlantic province but minor damage was made.

New Zealand man stopped at border because of unpaid fines

The first person to be stopped at an international airport because of unpaid fines happened yesterday afternoon (NZDT) at the Auckland International Airport, New Zealand.

The person, who wasn't named, was stopped because of the new

legislation called the 'Collection of Fines at Airports' or more simply: Pay or Stay. He was forced to pay NZ\$3,750 in unpaid reparations since 1986. "The person intercepted owed \$3,750 of reparation for an offence in 1986 and had made no payments since late 1987," said Rick Barker, minister for the courts in New Zealand.

"Once intercepted, the individual was given the option to pay the full amount owing. He did and was subsequently allowed to travel," Barker said.

The legislation to be able to do this was put into effect on September 28, 2006. The legislation states that if a person owes any amount of money in reparation, fines in excess of \$5,000 or there is a warrant out for their arrest they will be stopped and forced to pay, withheld from travelling or will be stopped when they re-enter the country.

The fine-dodger picked up today at Auckland airport was exactly what the Government wanted to achieve, according to Barker.

The Pay and Stay campaign has currently already received \$10,000 from people getting ready to travel internationally. Barker said: "To avoid being stopped at the airport the best thing to do is simply to ensure you have no major unpaid fines or reparation before you pack your bags. I've said all along that if you have enough money to travel overseas you have enough money to pay your reparation and fines. This person obviously had the money, and it's only right he was made to pay what he owed."

Barker added: "This person stood up in a court and said he was

going to pay the victim of his crime reparation. He didn't follow this promise and... [after] 19 years, he couldn't escape the border agency."

Today in History

- 1830 - Belgian Revolution: A provisional government in Brussels declared the creation of the independent and neutral state of Belgium, in revolt against the United Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- 1883 - The Orient Express began operations.
- 1910 - Manuel II, the last King of Portugal, fled to the United Kingdom when a revolution erupted in Lisbon and his palace was shelled. The Portuguese First Republic was proclaimed the next day.
- 1957 - Soviet spacecraft Sputnik 1 was launched by an R-7 rocket from Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakh SSR and became the first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth.
- 1993 - Russian Constitutional Crisis: Tanks bombarded the White House in Moscow, a government building that housed the Russian parliament, where demonstrators against President Boris Yeltsin rallied outside.
- October 04 is Independence Day in Lesotho (1966); Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi (Catholicism); World Animal Day.

Quote of the Day

The average "educated" American has been made to believe that, somehow, the United States must lead the world even though hardly anyone has any information at all about those countries we are meant to lead. Worse, we have very little information about our own country and its past.
~ Gore Vidal

Word of the Day

kindle; v

1. To start a fire or light a flame.
2. To arouse or inspire.

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