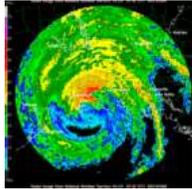




Top Stories

Hurricane Rita makes landfall



The core of Hurricane Rita made landfall just west of the Texas-Louisiana border as a category 3 storm at 3 AM Saturday with sustained winds near 120 mph. The center of the eye crossed the coast in east Texas, with the eyewall extending into Louisiana.

India subsidizes girls' education to offset gender imbalance



Free and reduced costs for the education of girls announced in India.

Featured story

St. Anthony Foundation provides hope



On the corner of Golden Gate Ave. and Jones St. in the Tenderloin, San Francisco, right next to the Civic Center you can see a throng of low-income and homeless people lining up outside of St. Anthony's Dining Room hall which opens up its doors everyday at 11:30 a.m

Wikipedia Current Events

- Unofficial reports from Hong Kong say the second Chinese human spaceflight, Shenzhou 6, is expected to launch October 13 carrying two taikonauts on a five day mission.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Human Rights Watch reports whistleblowers accuse U.S. troops of routinely torturing Iraqi prisoners and declining to investigate complaints.
- At least five Israelis are injured after Palestinian militants fire some 30 Qassam rockets from the Gaza Strip on Israeli communities.
- The Israeli Air Force strikes Palestinian militant group Hamas targets in Gaza killing at least four of its members.
- The Palestinian Authority blames Hamas for the previous day's explosion at a weapons rally in Gaza which killed at least 19 people, including several senior Hamas members.
- Hurricane Rita makes landfall as a Category 3 hurricane on the Texas - Louisiana border at 2:38 am CDT . The storm was downgraded within four hours to Category 2. As of 10 pm CDT (0300 UTC, September 25), the center of Tropical Depression Rita was located on land 40 miles (65 km) north of Shreveport, Louisiana. Rita was moving north at 10 mph (16 km/h) with maximum sustained winds of 35 mph (55 km/h)

Delta Air Lines to cut up to 9,000 jobs

Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines announced plans to cut 7,000 to 9,000 jobs by the end of 2007, approximately 17% of its employees.

CEO Gerald Grinstein will take a 25% pay cut. Executives have their pay cut by 15%. Other employees will have their pay reduced by 7 to 10%. Employees that make under than \$25,000 a year will not be affected by these pay cuts.

Delta has already canceled leases on 40 aircrafts and they plan to reduce its fleet by at least 80 more. They plan to reduce domestic capacity by 15 percent to 20 percent and increase international capacity by 25 percent.

Delta is the third-largest airline in the US. They have lost 10 billion dollars since 2001 and are 14 billion dollars in debt. Delta Airlines and Northwest Airlines filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last Wednesday, joining United and US Airways. Four of the seven largest US carriers are operating under bankruptcy protection. Chapter 11 protection gives companies time to rearrange its finances while continuing to operate.

Delta CEO Gerald Grinstein said they intended "to move from being an unprofitable airline today to a profitable airline in just over two years". "This means we will become a smaller, more cost-efficient airline, with a strengthened network and a stronger balance sheet." These cuts should help save Delta up to \$3 billion dollars.

Thousands march to demand end to Iraq war

ens of thousands of people rallied and marched in London, Washington D.C., San Francisco, and Los Angeles today to demand an end to the US-led war and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Many speakers linked the massive deployment of US troops in Iraq and the inability of the federal government to respond adequately to the needs of mostly poor, black people displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Other speakers linked the Iraq war to the occupation of Palestine, the oil crisis, and what many see as a deeply corrupt Bush administration closer to the interests of the corporate sector than to the needs of the U.S. populace. The mobilizations were united around the slogan "Bring the Troops Home Now!"

Notable in the U.S. mobilizations was the increasingly visible presence of military families speaking out against the war. Cindy Sheehan spoke in D.C., which drew the largest crowd, with estimates ranging from 100,000 - 250,000 attendees.

Antiwar mobilizations, as well as actions against the World Bank and IMF, will continue in D.C. tomorrow and into next week.

There is a live webcam from SF by Bright Path Video and a satellite feed from DC by Deep Dish TV.

US Chief Justice candidate John Roberts' nomination goes to full Senate

The Senate Judiciary Committee confirmed Supreme Court Chief Justice candidate John Roberts in a vote of 13-5 on September 22. The Senate is expected to hold

hearings on Monday before a having a full vote later in the week. The five members who voted No on Roberts were Senators Ted Kennedy, Joe Biden, Diane Feinstein, Charles Schumer, and Richard Durbin. The thirteen members who voted Yes were the Republicans in the committee as well as Democrats Patrick Leahy, Herb Kohl, and Russ Feingold. It is likely that the Senate will confirm Roberts to the Supreme Court.

Net skills to be taught by kids

It has been encouraged that young people (mainly children) take the role of an "Internet trainer" in order to help teach older people skills on the net. On 24 September it is grandparent's day in the United Kingdom and BT Group plc is trying to persuade children to teach their grandparents how to use the net. The step is being made to help prevent them from becoming "digitally excluded".

By the year 2025, around 23 million adults could miss out on what the internet has to offer, according to BT.

A web site, Internet Rangers, by BT, was recently launched with tools, activities and advice to assist children to help their grandparents make use of one of the world's most useful tools, the internet. The site links to BT's "Green X Code" telling kids how to stay safe on the internet.

BT is working with the government to help provide internet access to people who are unable to get access. Recent research shows that teenagers aged between 13 and 16 are encouraging their parents and grandparents to surf the net.

Sydney Swans win AFL premiership after 72 years in classic match

After 72 long years, long suffering fans of the Sydney Swans football club will be toasting their club's success as they defeated the West Coast Eagles of Perth today in the AFL Grand Final by a score of 8.10 (58) to 7.12 (54), a victory of four points. This gives the Swans, formerly based in South Melbourne before moving to Sydney in 1982, their first premiership since 1933.

Sydney captain Barry Hall and West Coast goalsneak Adam Hunter both kicked two goals in a low-scoring affair. West Coast kicked the first goal, and then proceeded to kick another after Sydney replied. The Swans went on to kick five unanswered goals (6 points) to take a 20-point lead into halftime, while the Eagles could manage a handful of behinds (1 point).

The Eagles came alive in the third quarter, and at three-quarter time reduced the deficit to two points thanks to picked-up performances from West Coast stars like David Wirrapunda and Brownlow Medal winner Ben Cousins. However, attempts at goal were wasted as West Coast failed to capitalize throughout the game at many scoring opportunities.

West Coast gained the lead 15 minutes in the final quarter thanks largely in part to a misjudged short kick by Luke Ablett which was caught by Cousins right in the front of the goal. This would bring the Eagle lead up to 10, before Amon Buchanan's goal erased the deficit. The Eagles mounted a spirited charge in the dying minutes, but a timely saving mark by Leo Barry seconds before the final siren was the final nail in

West Coast's coffin. Chris Judd won the Norm Smith Medal for being voted the best-on-ground, becoming the fourth person to win this honour while representing the losing side.

The grand final was Sydney and West Coast's fourth meeting of the season, with both teams splitting the home-and-away series. The Eagles had defeated the Swans by the same Grand Final-winning margin in the preliminary final at Subiaco Oval three weeks ago, and it is sweet vindication for the Swans, who lost that match on a number of questionable umpiring decisions which the AFL's chief umpire Jeff Gieschen later admitted were incorrect.

91,898 footy fans of all stripes and locales packed the Melbourne Cricket Ground for the game, which was opened with entertainment from the likes of Delta Goodrem (singing I Am Australian), the finalists of Australian Idol (performing Waltzing Matilda), Dame Edna and Michael Buble.

US army whistleblowers allege widespread torture of Iraqi detainees

Human Rights Watch yesterday released a report containing new and detailed allegations, by three serving US army officers, of widespread torture and abuse of Iraqi detainees by American forces, at Forward Operating Base Mercury, near Fallujah.

Prisoners are alleged to have been severely beaten, forced into painful "stress positions", deprived of sleep, denied food and water, subjected to extremes of hot and cold, and to have had chemical substances applied to their skin and eyes.

Some of the abuses were specifically ordered by Military Intelligence personnel, prior to prisoner interrogations, say the officers. In other cases, soldiers tortured prisoners (known as Persons Under Control—PUCs) on their own initiative, in order to "relieve stress".

"Everyone in camp knew if you wanted to work out your frustration you show up at the PUC tent. In a way it was sport", one sergeant told Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch suggests that the widespread abuses result from "civilian and military failures of leadership and confusion about interrogation standards and the application of the Geneva Conventions".

"The administration demanded that soldiers extract information from detainees without telling them what was allowed and what was forbidden," the group's Washington Director, Tom Malinowski, is quoted as saying. "Yet when abuses inevitably followed, the leadership blamed the soldiers in the field instead of taking responsibility."

The US government has claimed in previous cases that such abuses are exceptional, and not the fault of civilian or military leaders.

An unnamed captain told Human Rights Watch that he had tried repeatedly, over a period of 17 months, to raise concerns about the abuses with his superior officers, only to be told to ignore them and "consider his career". The concerns were only taken seriously after he approached members of Congress, he says. The Los Angeles Times today

named the officer as Captain Ian Fishback.

The US army yesterday announced that it had launched an investigation into the captain's allegations. Army Spokesman Paul Boyce told the Associated Press that army officials opened the inquiry as soon as the concerns were brought to their attention. "These are allegations of potential felony crimes," Boyce told the Los Angeles Times. "We want to speak to anyone else who might be able to corroborate this information. These things should be looked into thoroughly."

According to the Los Angeles Times, the investigation was opened following a referral from the Senate Armed Services Committee. Captain Fishback is the first officer to make such allegations publicly since the Abu Ghraib prison scandal came to light last year, says the newspaper, quoting an unnamed Capitol Hill aide as saying that the allegations are "very credible".

Massive traffic jams, gas shortages plug evacuation routes near Houston

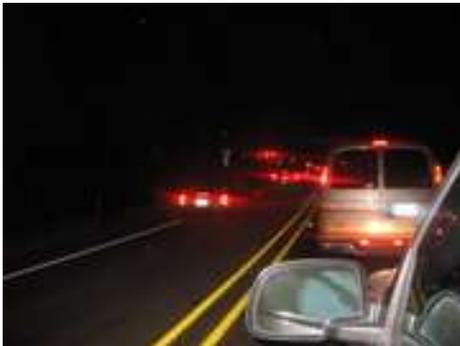
Before Hurricane Rita arrived, cars idling for hours in traffic jams near Houston began running out of gas, stranding evacuees in their cars.



Police supervised 2 hour wait in line at gas station.

The New York Times reported Friday morning that "Colossal 100-mile-long traffic jams left many people stranded and out of gas as the huge storm bore down on the Texas coast on Thursday. ... Acknowledging that "being on the highway is a deathtrap," Mayor Bill White asked for military help in rushing scarce fuel to stranded drivers."

The obvious express routes slowed to a crawl. Some drivers reported easy travel on rural roads, while others encountered heavy traffic on two-lane highways. Constantly during the evacuation on two-lane highways, people would take over the other lanes, causing some head-on collisions. Even when the line jumpers didn't get in a wreck, they still slowed the flow of traffic because they had to merge back into the right lane at some point. The general attitude towards these cheaters was very hostile. Curses and hand signals were exchanged. To stop the cheaters, cars would swerve in front of those who tried to pass or not let them merge back in line, often causing an accident, or at least causing a backup in the lane of oncoming traffic. Sometimes blockers would occupy the shoulder as well as the lane to stop them cutting back into the line.



Line jumpers driving on wrong side of road, who were later pulled over by the police.

Hurricane Rita makes landfall

The core of Hurricane Rita made landfall just west of the Texas-Louisiana border as a category 3 storm at 3 AM Saturday with sustained winds near 120 mph. The center of the eye crossed the coast southeast of Beaumont, Texas, near Sabine Pass, with the eyewall extending into Louisiana.

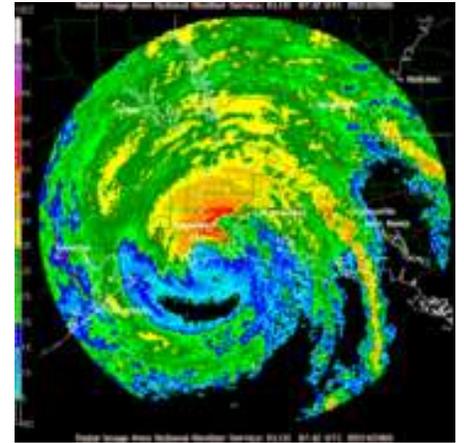
Rita is expected to produce rainfall accumulations of 8-12 inches, with the storm slowing down and producing a total of as much as 25 inches across eastern Texas and western Louisiana. Bursts of tropical storm winds and rainfall amounts of 3-5 inches are possible in New Orleans.



Path forecast 5 hours before landfall.

New Orleans' Ninth Ward, which saw as much as 20 feet of water during Hurricane Katrina, is currently in waist high water as a nearby levee was overtopped. Water is spilling over the levee in a section 100 feet wide. There are reports of damage or leakage at three levee breaches.

Near the center of the storm, coastal storm surge flooding of 15 feet above normal tide levels is expected, reaching 20 feet in bays and rivers. Tides are about 2 feet above normal along the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama coasts, and tides will increase to 4-6 feet above normal, with large waves and swells.



Radar image of eye at shoreline. The radar tower was destroyed by the storm.

Bomb explodes in Belarusian city



A bomb exploded in the Belarusian city of Vitebsk, injuring about forty-six people. The Thursday evening blast originated from a cafe in the city, which had an open-air structure and also had a dance floor, attracting many people. The bomb itself was planted in a flower bed next to the cafe.

The Ministry of Emergency Situations has said that four of the forty-six people have been critically injured, and twenty-one more have been hospitalized. Local police have not found a suspect in incident.

The Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko said, "I understand that it is very hard to stay intact in the midst of this boiling pot of terrorism. Why do we think that terrorism is far away from us and cannot occur here? The society should be on the alert." Lukashenko called on

citizens to aid law enforcement agencies during an address to the 39th congress of the Belarussian Youth Union.

No suspect has been found in an earlier bombing incident that occurred in Vitebsk less than two weeks ago. An explosive beer can or metal box, laced with nails, was placed near a bus station. The detonation of the bomb also came from a flower bed and injured two people in the blast.

U.S. soldiers engaged in gore-for-porn swap

An amateur pornographic website, NowThatsFuckedup.com, is giving free access to its content to American soldiers currently who post pictures of corpses from Iraq and Afghanistan. Soldiers can also send in pictures of themselves, their buddies, or their living quarters. The post on the website states "the kinda pictures you would be sending home to your family and friends". Chris Wilson of Florida, the website administrator, says he started offering free memberships to soldiers in exchange for photographs from overseas after finding that many soldiers wanted to join the site, but could not due to issues with recognizing foreign addresses associated with credit cards held by overseas enlisted men.

"They wanted to join the site, the amateur wife and girlfriend site," Wilson said. "But they couldn't, because the addresses associated with their credit cards were Quackistan or something, they were in such a high-risk country, that the credit card companies wouldn't approve the purchase."

Response to the trading has been met with a certain level of ambivalence from military higher-

ups; "There are policies in place that, on the one hand, safeguard sensitive and classified information, and on the other hand protects the First Amendment rights of servicemembers," said Army spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Chris Conway. "In plain English, if you're on the job working for the Department of Defense, you shouldn't be freelancing. You should be doing your duty." However, Army Chief of Staff Peter Shoomaker warned that soldiers compromise "operational security" when they post photographs from Iraq on the internet in a memorandum issued in August.

New Palm Treo will run Windows Mobile



Technology weblog engadget has published exclusive photos of the yet to be released Palm Treo 700w. The Palm Treo 700w is the first Palm handheld to run Windows Mobile

No official announcement has yet been made. Palm may choose to make the official announcement at the upcoming CTIA Wireless IT and Entertainment trade show. The CTIA Wireless IT and Entertainment trade show is one of the phone industry's largest trade shows.

Palm Chief Financial Officer Andrew Brown said in a interview with CNet last month, that a Windows Mobile based

smartphone may help convert corporate customers. "CIOs don't get fired for using Microsoft products."

According to engadget, the Treo 700w has a 1-megapixel camera, Bluetooth, 64 MB of memory and a 240x240 display.

Palm OS is no longer created by Palm but by a spinoff PalmSource. PalmSource was recently acquired by Japanese software company Access for \$324 million. Palm is the only major handheld manufacturer to use PalmOS. Many expect Palm to release a PalmOS version in addition to the Windows Mobile version, somewhat implied by the model number Treo 700w. A PalmOS version of the phone would most likely be named Treo 700p.

Oil price jumps as Rita heads to refineries

Oil, natural gas, and gasoline futures prices are all rising in anticipation of the Hurricane Rita landfall on Friday. The market price for crude oil is rising about 1% a day, while gasoline futures rose 5% both Wednesday and Thursday. Natural gas prices are also rising, with NYMEX Henry Hub price index showing an increase of over 3.5% on Thursday. Oil refineries in the path of the storm, despite the pressure exerted by rising oil prices, are expected to increase their prices which in turn will be reflected at the pump.

The price for crude oil is expected to reach US\$68 a barrel after reaching the all-time high in the U.S. at \$70.85 on Aug 30, in fear of the landing of Rita along the U.S. Gulf Coast. Along the Texas gulf coastline, whose key U.S. oil production facilities were largely untouched by the catastrophic

Hurricane Katrina onslaught three weeks ago, production and distribution facilities have been battened down.

Rita was downgraded to a Category 3 storm Friday as it neared the coast. The storm, packing sustained winds of 125 mph, appears headed for the border between Texas and Louisiana. Hurricane force winds extend up to 60 miles from the center, according to the National Hurricane Center. The storm, currently, is the third-most intense hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic, just behind Gilbert in 1988 and the 1935 Labor Day hurricane.

Regions of Texas near where the storm is expected to land is home to the biggest concentration of U.S. oil refineries, accounting for 26 percent of the nation's total capacity. After Katrina made its landfall in Louisiana last month, four damaged refineries in Mississippi and Louisiana were shut down, crippling 5 percent of the US capacity. Eighteen of the 26 refineries in Texas are located on the Gulf of Mexico with a combined distillation capacity of 4 million barrels daily.

The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for the Texas coastline, including Galveston, where the nation's largest oil refinery belonging to Exxon Mobil Corp. is located.

"Some of those refineries in Texas, they're at sea level. It's a table top, it floods every easily, said Ed Silliere, vice president of risk management at Energy Merchant LLC in New York.

Plants have shut down as Rita advances. Shell Oil shut down its seventh-largest refinery in Deer

Park, Texas. There is no date set for resuming production. Conoco Phillips is shutting its Old Ocean, Texas, refinery. BP is pulling some workers from its Texas refinery and shutting parts of the fourth largest plants in US. Valero, the largest U.S. refiner, said it is closing its plants in Texas City and Houston, with the shutdown to be completed by midday Thursday.

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed at its meeting in Vienna on Tuesday to effectively suspend its quota system for the first time since 1991 Gulf War to relieve the rising oil price by pumping an estimated additional 2 million barrels of oil a day, which will begin at Oct 1 and last for 3 months.

The head of the U.S. Energy Information Administration (the statistical and analytical wing of the U.S. Department of Energy), Guy Caruso, criticized OPEC for constraining production to keep prices high after the 11-member oil cartel pledged to make available the additional 2 million barrels daily.

"Without question," Caruso said Wednesday when asked during a Senate Commerce Committee hearing whether OPEC has contributed to soaring oil prices, "OPEC policy has been to constrain production and collude... Under the FTC definition of collusion and price-fixing, yes."

According to OPEC, 62 percent in U.K., and 24 percent of fuel prices in the U.S. consist of taxes. Consuming nations have a responsibility to invest in refineries and to lower taxes if they want lower fuel prices, OPEC President Sheikh Ahmad Fahd al-Sabah said. He is the oil minister

of Kuwait.

FBI recruits for "War on Porn"

The FBI's Washington Field Office began last month an internal recruitment drive to staff a new anti-obscenity squad. The job of the new squad would be to gather evidence against the "manufacturers and purveyors" of pornography, and would require eight agents, a supervisor and assorted support help. The squad would not be concerned with child pornography, but instead focus on pornography that depicts, and is marketed to, consenting adults. The squad would target bestiality, urination, defecation, and sadomasochistic behavior, which have a high rate of conviction in jury trials.

The initiative is described as "one of the top priorities" of Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, as well as FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III. Gonzales has said that "adult pornography is a threat to families and children." Christian groups, such as the Family Research Council who have criticized Gonzales for what they consider his weak stance on abortion, welcomed the initiative with "a growing sense of confidence in our new attorney general."

Historians have criticized past FBI policies for focusing resources on cases which are easy to solve, especially stolen car cases, with the intent of boosting the agency's success rate. Congress began funding the obscenity initiative in fiscal 2005 and specified that the FBI must devote 10 agents to adult pornography.

The adult pornography initiative is seen as a "running joke" by many agents at larger offices which usually focus on national security,

technology crimes, and public corruption.

Hard-core pornography is seen as far more mainstream today, partly due to its availability on DirecTV, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., and on in-room television offerings at the Sheraton, Hilton, Marriott and Hyatt hotel chains. Such companies are referred to as "white-collar pornographers" by Christian groups.

Today in History

1066: Harold II of England defeated Harald III of Norway in the Battle of Stamford Bridge, marking the end of Viking invasions of Great Britain.

1396: Ottoman forces under Bayezid I defeated a Christian alliance led by Sigismund of Hungary in the Battle of Nicopolis.

1513: Conquistador Vasco Núñez de Balboa (pictured), upon a peak in presentday Darién, Panama, became the first European to see the Pacific Ocean, which he named Mar del Sur, or South Sea.

1890: As envisioned by John Muir, the Yosemite National Park was established in the U.S. state of California.

1962: The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria was formally proclaimed. Ferhat Abbas was elected President of the provisional government, with Ahmed Ben Bella as Prime Minister.

1996: The last Magdalen Asylum in Ireland was closed.

Quote of the Day

"Between grief and nothing I will take grief." ~ William Faulkner

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. 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.

Got news and no computer? Call the Wikinews Hotline

+1-866-653-4265
(toll-free in the U.S.)
+1-202-742-5918
(outside the U.S.)

Audio Wikinews

Audio Wikinews is a public domain, non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily.
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio>

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit:
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print>