

Top Stories

Live 8 concerts to "End Poverty Now" taking place around the world



BREAKINGNEWS

Massive music concerts are taking place around the planet under the Live 8 banner in an effort to put pressure on the leaders of the eight richest countries in the world to end global poverty.

Multiple deaths as Congolese government cracks down on pro-democracy protests



SPECIALREPORT

Thousands of protesters are marching through the streets of Kinshasa demanding that the government resign over delayed elections. They were met by security forces who shot in the air and threw tear-gas grenades.

USA lifts remaining sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro



U.S. President George W. Bush suspended all sanctions on Serbia and Montenegro by a decree yesterday. Serbia and Montenegro was under various degrees of economic and other sanctions by the United Nations and individual countries since 1992.

Wikipedia Current Events

- On the McLaughlin Group programme, MSNBC columnist Lawrence O'Donnell claims to have known the identity of Matthew Cooper source in the Valerie Plame exposure scandal was Karl Rove.
- Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh unveils the Sethusamudram ship channel project amidst protests from fishermen and environmentalists. Nearly 600 are arrested.
- The Live 8 concerts begin their globe-spanning tour in Tokyo. Several famous artists and musical groups are joining in this effort to raise awareness about poverty and AIDS in the leadup to the G8 summit and on the anniversary of the 1985 Live Aid concerts.

Explosion in Russia kills 10: authorities suspect Chechen involvement

The Itar-Tass news agency reports that an explosion in the southern Russian town of Makhachkala, Dagestan, has killed 10 soldiers and wounded 20 others on Friday. Two bombs were set off in a bath house at 2:15 pm local time as the soldiers were passing outside, according to an official of the Russian Interior Ministry. Dagestan borders Chechnya, which has a long history of uprisings against Russian rule. The current insurrection started at the time of the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1990.

Federal Judge puts California's Prison Health Care system into receivership

U.S. District Judge Thelton Henderson of San Francisco has ordered the state's health care system for prisoners be put under the control of a receiver to stop deaths of inmates due to medical malfeasance. The system provides medical care to 164,000 inmates at a cost of US\$1.1 billion annually. Reportedly the judge described conditions in the state's medical system as barbaric. The appointment of a receiver was the last resort available after repeated failures of Governor Schwarzenegger's administration to improve medical conditions at state prisons.

Microsoft to pay IBM US \$775 million in Antitrust settlement

According to a report in the New York Times, Microsoft will pay IBM Corporation US \$775 million to settle antitrust claims which resulted from the U.S. government's antitrust lawsuit against the software manufacturer. The issues dealt with Microsoft's actions in reducing the value of IBM's OS/2 operating system, which competed with Microsoft's Windows Operating System. This settlement with IBM follows several other settlements of hundreds of millions of dollars each with Sun Microsystems, America On Line, Gateway and Novell. Microsoft also has a lawsuit pending against it that was filed by

Real Networks, as well as an appeal of a US \$600 million fine imposed by European antitrust regulators.

Truex Jr. beats Harvick in the Winn-Dixie 250



Spectators point at fighter jets

Martin Truex Jr. was welcomed with a firework celebration into Gatorade Victory Lane at Daytona International Speedway late Friday night as the winner of the NASCAR Busch series Winn-Dixie 250 race. Truex Jr. lead for most of the race, first taking the lead position at lap 21.

Four fighter jets from the Connecticut Air National Guard flew over the track after the national anthem, a NASCAR tradition for races.



The race got off to a rocky start for some, such as the #64 car driven by Jeremy Mayfield pit early twice, once on lap four and another one lap after. On lap 13, the #60 car driven by Carl Edwards spun through the grass near Turns 1 and 2 after being hit by Truex Jr, sending the race into a caution.

Truex Jr. fought for the lead on lap 21 with his car owner Dale Earnhardt Jr., where Truex passed Earnhardt on the high end of Turn 4. Earnhardt would later slip back to the third position two laps later.

Lap 37 started with a smoking run into the pits by Kyle Krisiloff and his #5 car after a

break malfunction, which led to him exceeding the speed limit placed by NASCAR on pit road. Seven laps later, JJ Yaley's #18 car stalled on the track and coasted into the garage.

Nextel cup veteran driver Sterling Marlin's front right tire gave out on lap 56, sending the race into yet another caution for the night. The race was then silent until lap 78, when Earnhardt came into contact with driver Paul Menard of the #11 car coming off turn 4, causing Earnhardt to spin. Earnhardt did not return to the race after the incident, believed to be the cause of a broken transmission from the spin. A caution was issued.

It would be 10 laps until another caution would be issued, this time for the rookie Michel Jourdain Jr. in his #10 car, after he spins after coming in contact with two other cars. After the caution, a three-car leadership of Greg Biffle, Kevin Harvick and Truex Jr. would lead the remainder of the race, with each of them taking a turn leading.

A major crash caused by #34, driven by Randy LaJoie, resulted in an 8-car pileup along the backstretch on lap 97, sending the race into its final caution of the night. A red flag was issued on lap 99, freezing the field of any movement or alterations with the cars. The race finally resumed almost 20 minutes later, with a green-white-checked finish led by Truex Jr.



Live 8 concerts to "End Poverty Now" taking place around the world



Massive music concerts are taking place around the planet under the Live 8 banner in an effort to put pressure on the leaders of the eight richest countries in the world to end global poverty.

All concerts are timed to take place between

2pm and 10pm local time, with over a million people expected to attend concerts in Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the US, Canada, South Africa and Russia. The events are being broadcast to a potential audience of five and a half billion people world-wide.

The largest concert is in the US in Philadelphia, where 1.5 million people are watching Stevie Wonder, Kanye West, Destiny's Child and 50 Cent among others, with Will Smith presenting.

In Hyde Park in London, 205,000 people watched acts including Elton John, Madonna, Coldplay, Robbie Williams and Pink Floyd. The concert was opened by Sir Paul McCartney and U2 playing Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band - the first time the song has ever been performed live by a Beatle. It ended at 11.58pm with all of the acts coming on stage to sing one last time.

Bill Gates - founder of Microsoft and the richest man in the world (owning \$46.5 billion) - appeared on the London stage to discuss the challenges facing the world, before introducing Dido. Later, Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the UN addressed the audience, thanking them for their support.

However, the first concert to open - in Japan - only drew 10,000 spectators, disappointing many.

The concerts follow on 20 years after the Live Aid concert organised by Bob Geldof, which was created to raise money for famine victims in Ethiopia.

By contrast, the aim of Live 8 - also organised by Geldof - is not fund-raising but instead to apply pressure to the leaders of the G8 to end world poverty, which claims the lives of 50,000 every day.

The Live 8 organisers are urging the G8 to: Double the aid sent to the world's poorest countries, Fully cancel their debts, Change the trade laws so that they can build their own future.

The Finance Ministers of the G8 agreed a plan last month to cancel the debt of 18 of the poorest countries to the IMF, the World

Bank and the African Development Fund, but are requiring other countries to end political and financial corruption before they become eligible for debt relief.

On Thursday the President of the United States, George Bush, announced that the US will double US aid to Africa by 2010 - increasing to \$8.6 billion a year. Bob Geldof welcomed the news, saying "This is the first time we have heard this sort of language.

"This is very, very positive indeed."

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.

Four channels to be launched on Viasat in the Nordic and Baltic countries

Swedish satellite broadcaster, Viasat, has announced that they are about to launch four new channels on their digital platforms in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia this autumn. The channels are Toon Disney, Cartoon Network, TCM and E!.

The launch of Toon Disney has been announced earlier in 2005. Until August 1, Viasat have broadcasted the Disney Channel exclusively on satellite. With the launch of Toon Disney, their competitor Canal Digital is also able to broadcast the Disney Channels.

Cartoon Network and TCM are already available with most of Viasat's competitors, but from September 23, Viasat will also broadcast the Turner-owned channels.

The company that broadcasted E! in the Nordic countries before decided to rename their channel and get a new franchise. However, E! will re-arrive to the Nordic and Baltic countries on August 1.

CNet News launches reader wiki

As an experiment in the use of wiki technology for news, CNET News has launched a web site where readers can collaborate with other readers to predict the future of India's technology industry, collectively supplementing a CNET report on India published on June 27, 2005.

The wiki uses Wikipedia's software,

MediaWiki, with a custom design. Editing is not restricted. The wiki was set up by Andrew Lottmann of the technical production team at CNET News.com. "I would love to know if readers feel this wiki is a good medium for feedback or even 'citizen journalism' on News.com", Lottman stated in his user profile.

As of July 2, 2005, the wiki was still relatively inactive, with only one "legitimate content page" and 176 page edits according to the site's statistics.

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MTV debuts cable channel targeting gay market



MTV Networks launched a new cable channel to 10 million homes Thursday featuring movies, documentaries and original programming targeting the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender audience becoming the first 24-hour digital cable network offered in the United States on several cable providers and satellite systems.

Logo will present original series, documentaries and specials as well as a library of over 200 lesbian and gay films. The cable channel is also teaming up with CBS News to cover lesbian and gay stories and headlines.

While the channel debuted Thursday, Viacom, the parent company of Logo, had still not signed licensing agreements with several of the largest cable providers including Comcast and Cox. DirecTV signed a deal Wednesday making Logo available to 13 million households, and Time Warner and Atlantic Broadband have committed to carry the network.

Advertisers will include Orbitz, Tylenol, Motorola, Miller Lite, Lions Gate Films and Subaru wishing to market to the coveted 25-to-49 age range providing an opportunity to reach out to the lesbian and gay market.

Opposition to the new channel was

expected with MSNBC quoting Janice Crouse, senior fellow at Concerned Women for America, a conservative public-policy women's organization based in Washington, D.C., calling Logo "another example of an assault on children's innocence, a means of legitimizing a homosexual lifestyle, mainstreaming homosexuality in a positive and appealing way."

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) hails the launch of Logo.

"Logo has the potential to reach millions of American television viewers with images and stories that can play a vital role in broadening understanding of our lives, our families and our relationships," says GLAAD Entertainment Media Director Damon Romine. "MTV Networks has a long history of groundbreaking gay and lesbian programming, and devoting an entire network to telling our stories gives us cause to celebrate."

"What these networks provide is something new: an unprecedented opportunity for gays and lesbians to see ourselves depicted as we are, rather than as others see us," Romine says. "At its best, television holds up a mirror to our lives, and the advent of these three networks means that LGBT viewers can now see themselves more accurately and fully reflected in that mirror."

Many have wondered why it took as long as it did to introduce a national LGBT cable channel considering the success of mainstream network shows like "Will & Grace" and "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy."

Judge orders Baltimore City prison to produce plan for improvement

A city Circuit Court judge in Baltimore, Maryland, John M. Glynn, ordered state corrections officials on Friday to produce in 30 days a written report that will outline plans to reduce over crowding and slow processing times at the city's Central Booking and Intake Center. The state-run facility is a centralized jail designed to process arrests made by all city police precincts and is the gateway into the criminal justice system of suspects taken into custody in the city of 640,000 people.

In the last 3 months, over 80 arrestees were released from the Central Booking facility without being formally charged. In April this year, a temporary restraining order was issued by Judge Glynn against the facility to enforce the release of those held more than 24 hours after their intake who did not receive a hearing by a court commissioner. The commissioner sets bail, if granted, and formalizes the charges filed by the arresting officer. The charges are then entered into the state's computer system where the case is tracked. The hearing also marks the date for the suspect's right to a speedy trial.

The Friday hearing was called after the city mayor's office of Martin O'Malley filed a motion to join a lawsuit that was brought by public defenders on behalf of those criminally detained at the facility. In Maryland, a hearing with a court commissioner within 24 hours of being arrested is state law. Judge Glynn presided over that lawsuit which led to the temporary restraining order. The order is to remain in effect until November.

Aides to O'Malley are seeking help from his court to implement and then monitor procedural changes at Central Booking, and made sharp criticisms of state public safety officials. One mayor's aide said, "We continue to offer management solutions, and they are accepted. But you know what? I don't have time to run [Central Booking], nor does the police department."

Judge Glynn expressed concern during the hearing that a purely judicial remedy may not be the answer, and said, "If I find that it is a hopeless disaster... what can I do about that?" He peppered parties to the suit with questions and suggested there is the possibility that political action, not court intervention, may be needed to solve what city and police officials call inefficient management practices by the state.

Glynn also requested parties to the suit to report back on what happened to the 80+ arrestees who were released so far as a result of the restraining order. The suspect could be re-arrested if officers knew the circumstances of the release, but police say that would take time and money to work out. An arrestee released without seeing a court commissioner has as the only record of the offense the hand written charging document by the officer.

The Maryland attorney general's office representing the corrections officers said at the hearing that city police are part of the problem by not filing charging documents at Central Booking when the arrestee is delivered and processing begins. The state must accept the prisoners, but cannot move forward without the necessary documents. They also say city police sometimes flood the facility, which can create temporary backlogs.

Central Booking was designed to process 60,000 suspects a year, but currently handles nearly 100,000. It was built to accommodate 900 people at any one time, but normally crowds in 1,200. Arrestees describe conditions in holding cells with no room to sit on the floor, and being crammed in with people who suffer with health problems or drug addicts who vomit from withdrawal.

Serbia and Montenegro military announces mandatory service shortening



Soldiers in peace-time service

Dragan Paskas, the president of the Generalštab, the main governing body of the Military of Serbia and Montenegro, announced that mandatory military service may get shortened to six months.

So far, every capable male citizen had to serve for nine months in military, or thirteen months in civil service. "I think that mandatory service should last for six months, which would eliminate barriers caused by its length, and we could start new military programs," Paskas said.

Military of Serbia and Montenegro has been under a lot of pressure lately, as the government froze Defense Ministry's fundings, and the military has been unable to sell buildings in downtown Belgrade attractive location, which were heavily damaged during NATO bombing in 1999.

Schröder loses motion of confidence

The German Federal Chancellor (Bundeskanzler), Gerhard Schröder, deliberately lost a confidence vote in the German lower parliamentary house, the Bundestag. Schröder had aimed to lose the vote of confidence in order to dissolve the Bundestag and to achieve earlier elections. In debate, Schröder argued, that there is no safe majority for his policy in the Bundestag. In his second term as Chancellor, he tried to start a reform agenda (Agenda 2010) which aimed to cut the budget deficit and unemployment in Germany, which has been criticised as neo-liberalism by several supporters of his party.

During the debate, opposition leader Angela Merkel explained that her party, the Christian Democrats, supports early elections. However, she did criticise the coalition government of the Social-Democrats and the Greens, for the country's high unemployment rates (which have peaked at 5 million) and low economic growth. A Green deputy, Werner Schulz, attacked Schröder's using the vote of confidence in order to achieve early elections, which is from his point of view unconstitutional. Franz Müntefering, leader of the Social Democrats had invited members of the ruling coalition to abstain from voting. 151 deputies supported Schröder, 296 voted against him and 148 abstained from voting.

After the lost motion of confidence, the German President Horst Köhler can examine Schröder's arguments for three weeks and dissolve the Bundestag while setting a date for early elections. At least one deputy has announced he intends going to the Federal Constitutional Court to appeal against Schröder's way of using the vote of confidence. The court will then have to decide whether it was constitutional or not.

All parties know that there might be early elections by September. At the moment, opinion polls are showing a majority for conservative opposition.

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Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

323 – Constantine the Great defeated Licinius.

987 – Hugh Capet was crowned King of France, the first of the Capetian dynasty that ruled France till the French Revolution in 1792.

1608 – Quebec City was founded by Samuel de Champlain.

1863 – Pickett's Charge occurred during the final and bloodiest day of fighting in the Battle of Gettysburg, marking a turning point in the American Civil War.

1938 – The LNER Mallard reached a speed of 203 km/h (126 mph), a world record for a steam railway locomotive.

1964 – President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting racial segregation in public places in the United States.

Quote of the Day

"Wisdom is not communicable. The wisdom which a wise man tries to communicate always sounds foolish... Knowledge can be communicated, but not wisdom." ~ Hermann Hesse

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