



Top Stories

Jacques Chirac announces he will not pursue a third Presidential mandate



The President of France, Jacques Chirac, announced during a radio and television broadcast that he will not seek a new mandate.

Zimbabwe police break up rally, detain leaders

Zimbabwe police broke up a



prayer rally protesting government policy on Sunday,

arresting over 100 people, including the leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, Morgan Tsvangirai.

Featured story

Bug in Microsoft antivirus deletes users' e-mails

Microsoft's officials admitted that the company's Windows Live OneCare security suite has been deleting by accident e-mails of those users that worked with Outlook and Outlook Express.

Wikipedia Current Events

•A woman accused of starting several fires near Wrigley Field in Chicago is charged on four counts of murder.

•Nigel Griffiths resigns as the Deputy Leader of the House of

Wikipedia Current Events

Commons in the United Kingdom over the proposed expansion of the Trident missile program.

•Lieutenant General Kevin Kiley resigns as the surgeon general of the United States Army over the Walter Reed Medical Center scandal.

•Asanbekov Sarybayev, the Deputy Culture Minister of the Government of Kyrgyzstan, resigns and joins the United Front For A Worthy Future For Kyrgyzstan opposition coalition. The United Front says it will hold protests in Bishkek in April against the Constitution and in favor of early presidential elections.

•United Nations investigators criticise Sudan for gross human rights violations in Darfur including murder, mass rape and kidnapping.

•The blueprint for the Chinese space program, including the first Chinese-built astronomy satellite, a joint unmanned mission to Mars with Russia, and other extensive international cooperation, is released.

•Lawyers in Pakistan boycott courts in protest at President Pervez Musharraf's suspension of the country's Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry for alleged "misuse of authority". More than 20 lawyers were injured in clashes with police during demonstrations in Lahore.

•After announcements in February that China's trade surplus is near

Wikipedia Current Events

a record high, in an open press conference, People's Bank of China Governor Zhou Xiaochuan and Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai were both vocal in their criticism towards the United States in a proposed 27.5% tariff, with Bo calling it "destructive to bilateral trade".

Marcello Lippi completes European XI squad

Coach Marcello Lippi has confirmed his squad for the March 13th charity match against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Lippi has been recruiting some of the best players from across Europe in the past weeks to participate in the match, which celebrates 50 years since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, as well as 50 years of Manchester United participating in European competitions. Three more players have been added, one German, one Italian, and one Sweede. The players form a 22 man squad, which already includes the likes of Ronaldinho, Henrik Larsson, and Ronaldo.

Added Players

Oliver Kahn:

Current Club: Bayern Munich

Age: 47

Kahn is a highly experienced goalkeeper, currently playing in his 20th professional season. He has won 7 Bundesliga titles with Bayern, along with one UEFA Cup, Champions League, and Intercontinental cup. He is regarded as one of the best keepers of all time.

Zlatan Ibrahimović:

Current Club: Internazionale

Age: 25

The Swedish Ibrahimović has a full bag of tricks and a great eye for goal. He is currently the top goal scorer at Serie A leaders Inter, but he has also played at current Serie B leaders Juventus, and Dutch giants Ajax.

Fabio Grosso:

Current Club: Internazionale

Age: 29

Grosso can play both midfield and defence at Inter, but will be playing defence for the charity match. He is a highly experienced player, and was with the winning Italian team in the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

UN report says Sudan government guilty of orchestrating Darfur crimes

A report from a United Nations human rights mission "concludes that the government of the Sudan has manifestly failed to protect the population of Darfur from large-scale international crimes, and has itself orchestrated and participated in these crimes." The mission urges the U.N. to take "urgent further action", for example by deploying the proposed U.N. and African Union peacekeeping forces, and co-operating with the International Criminal Court.

The report team, lead by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Jody Williams, further urges Sudan to stop targetting civilians. The armed rebel groups aren't spared either, and they are advised to abide international human rights laws.

To summarise the situation, the 35-pages documents says: "Today, millions are displaced, at least 200,000 are dead, and conflict and abuse are spilling over the border into Chad."

During their month of work, the researchers didn't actually get into Sudan because of visa restrictions, but they interviewed hundreds of relevant people (such as refugees), and reviewed thousands of pages from documents on the humanitarian situation in Darfur.

U.S. Army's surgeon general asked to resign

The United States Army's Surgeon General Lt. Gen. Kevin C. Kiley was asked to resign Monday in light of the recent Walter Reed Army Medical Center neglect scandal. Lt. Gen. Kiley is the third official to be stripped of command due to the scandal.

Lt. Gen. Kiley was heavily criticized for his actions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where the hospital was kept in very poor condition and its patients neglected.

Gas line explodes in Texas

A gas line at Lake Weatherford, Texas exploded Monday afternoon. So far no injuries have been reported; however KWTX reports that some workers may be missing. Flames are reported to be at least a hundred feet into the air.

Workers were laying pipes near pipes that were already installed and running, when the explosion occurred. As many as 20 workers were working on the site of the explosion when flames broke out. The local fire department has not ascertained exactly how many people were at the scene.

At least 10 cars can be seen on fire near the site of the explosion and homes and businesses in North Parker County have no power due to the fire.

Swiss reject single health insurance

24 of 26 Swiss Cantons rejected

the proposal for a single health insurance system, in which premiums would be based on income and wealth. The vote on Sunday was the latest in a series of attempts to cut rising costs and ease the financial burden on citizens.

Around 71% of voters rejected the reform. Turnout was at about 46%, slightly above the Swiss average.

As expected, voters in the main German-speaking part of the country turned down the planned reform, which was supported by the centre-left but opposed by the centre-right as well as the business community, parliament and the government.

Opposition in the French and Italian speaking regions was less pronounced. The cantons Jura and Neuchâtel in the French speaking regions voted in favor of the proposed reforms.

Health insurance premiums are higher in southern and western Swiss cantons than in German-speaking areas.

The Swiss Interior Minister Pascal Couchepin said an important part of the Swiss Population appeared to be opposed to "a revolution" in health insurance but he said that he wanted current reforms currently under discussion in the Swiss Parliament to go ahead. He called on all sides, especially health insurers and the cantonal authorities, to make efforts to reduce spending on health insurance and aim for a greater cost efficiency. Currently Switzerland has 87 private insurers providing mandatory basic health care coverage for Swiss residents under a 1996 law. But costs have sky-rocketed. Over 100,000 people are not covered by health insurance

due to non payment.

Opponents to the initiative argued that a single insurance system would lead to complacency and create a two-tier system, in which the wealthy would be the only ones available to afford to have additional private insurance coverage.

Supporters of the initiative said a single health insurer would increase the system's efficiency and allow for annual savings of at least 300 million Swiss Francs (about \$245 million) in administrative costs. Currently, the funding system is unbalanced, since many clients on low incomes use state subsidies to pay their premiums, according to the Green Party and the Social Democrats.

The initiative to unite all the insurance companies and introduce premiums based on wealth and income was the most recent in a series of attempts over the past ten years to reduce the public spending on health care. A proposal, similar to this recent proposal, to modify the funding system of the health insurance companies was rejected by 73% of voters in 2003.

Switzerland has the most expensive health system in Europe.

Switzerland's expenditure on health care was 11.6% in 2005, in front of Germany and France but behind the United States.

BBC correspondent missing

The BBC says it is concerned for the safety of its correspondent in the Gaza Strip, Alan Johnston. The BBC said it had been unable to make contact with Johnston , however it did not make any comments on Palestinian reports that he had been kidnapped.

Johnston's car was found abandoned in Gaza City shortly after he left his office to drive home.

Jaime Razuri, a photographer working for Agence France-Presse (AFP), was kidnapped January 1, 2007 and released a week later. On October 24, 2006, the Spanish photographer Emilio Morenatt of the Associated Press (AP) was kidnapped by Palestinian gunmen and freed later that day.

In all, 14 journalists in all have been kidnapped in Gaza since 2004. Johnston, 44, has been the BBC's correspondent in Gaza for three years.

The BBC stated that: "We are currently unable to contact him and are concerned for his safety. We are trying to gather as much information as possible."

Details of what happened are sketchy. Palestinian police said four gunmen were seen in the vicinity of where Johnston's car was found. Palestinian Interior Minister Sayeed Sayyam said Johnston's disappearance was a "criminal act". Palestinian security forces set up checkpoints around Gaza and were searching for Johnston.

One of the few Western correspondents still inside Gaza itself, Johnston has been described by the BBC as a "highly experienced and respected reporter."

According to Paul Adams, now the BBC's diplomatic correspondent, himself a former Middle East reporter, said that: "It is his [Johnston's] job to bring us day after day reports of the Palestinian predicament in the Gaza Strip"

Johnston was born in Tanzania and educated in Scotland. He joined the BBC in 1991 and has spent eight of the last 16 years as a correspondent, generally in the Middle East (in Nations such as Uzbekistan and Afghanistan). Johnston is on his last few weeks in Gaza.

CSX freight train derails in Oneida, New York, gas tank explodes

A CSX freight train traveling from Buffalo to Selkirk derailed in Oneida, New York.

No injuries have yet been reported as a result of the accident. It is not yet known what caused the accident; CSX and NTSB officials are investigating.

Twenty six of the train's 79 cars derailed around 7:00 a.m. local time; the derailment led to the explosion of at least one tank car carrying propane. Two other cars are known to contain hazardous materials. As many as seven cars have been reported as burning.

As a precaution, 23 mi (37 km) of the adjacent Thruway have been closed between Syracuse and Verona. Authorities have ordered a complete evacuation for a one-mile radius around the derailment site, including a jail and two elementary schools. Amtrak's Empire Service between Albany and Syracuse is suspended and Lake Shore Limited between Syracuse and Chicago is also affected; passengers on these routes are being bused around the affected area.

At the time of the accident the train had a two-man crew and was traversing a section of track that has a 60 mph speed limit. The train crew were not injured; it is not yet known what speed the train was traveling when the accident

occurred.

Zimbabwe police break up rally, detain leaders

Zimbabwe police broke up a prayer rally protesting government policy on Sunday, arresting over 100 people, including the leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, Morgan Tsvangirai. Zimbabwe police claimed that the prayer rally violated a government ban on political protests.

Riot police reinforcements cordoned off the area where the rally was to be held, and searched cars as they entered. As political leaders approached the area, they were reportedly pulled out of their cars and detained. Witnesses reported heavily armed military police forces surrounding the area of Highfields, the suburb where the rally was to be held.

Police fatally shot one person, after being reportedly attacked by a large mob of protesters. A spokesman for one of the men arrested claimed that a lawyer was beaten and chased away from the Machipisa police station in Highfields, where the arrested people were being held.

Opponents of President Robert Mugabe have blamed him for food shortages, repression of people's rights, and failing to control Zimbabwe's record inflation of over 1600%.

A spokesperson for U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said the Secretary-General condemned the reported beating of the leaders, and that he urged their release.

NCAA Basketball: National tournament field set

The field for both the 65-team NCAA national tournament and the

32-team National Invitation Tournament were set yesterday following the conclusion of the final conference tournaments.

The 65-team NCAA Tournament is highlighted by top seeds Florida (Midwest regional), North Carolina (East regional), Ohio State (South regional), and Kansas (West regional). An opening round game between Niagara and Florida A&M will take place on Tuesday night, with the first round of the tournament being played out on Thursday and Friday.

A number of teams widely considered to be "on the bubble" were not selected and instead will join the 32-team NIT field, which begins play on Tuesday night, March 13. The top seeds for the NIT are Mississippi State, West Virginia, Air Force, and Clemson. Of the top seeds, West Virginia and Air Force had a chance at being selected for the NCAA tournament. However, when they were not selected, they were relegated to the NIT.

The championship for the NIT will take place on March 29, with the championship of the NCAA tournament and the right to be called the "National Champion" taking place on April 2.

Bug in Microsoft antivirus deletes users' e-mails

Microsoft's officials admitted that the company's Windows Live OneCare security suite has been deleting by accident e-mails of those users that worked with Outlook and Outlook Express.

Microsoft's OneCare forum included postings that stated the cause of message deletion. Thus the issue occurred thanks to an antivirus application that finds e-mails containing viruses. The problem

with the software was that the antivirus, instead of deleting or quarantining the hazardous e-mail, deleted all messages from the personal folder.

The forum, however, gave hope in a post saying that some messages might be recovered but only in case they were quarantined. Thus users are able to find those e-mails in OneCare's quarantine facility.

The administrator of the forum, Stephen Boots, outlined that he was very unhappy with the issue which, he said, appeared over a year ago and the company thought it fixed the problem with the release of 1.5 version. Boots said that the beta version of the program worked fine but when the final version was launched the problem occurred once again.

According to the statement, reported by the spokesperson of the software giant, Microsoft is now working to fix the problem and release an updated version of OneCare on March 13.

OneCare was criticized after it failed to pass an independent test of security products that provided a certain certification. In addition to this the program did not provide enough protection for Windows Vista users.

New Zealand's Prime Minister supports daylight savings extension

The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Helen Clark has expressed an interest of extending daylight saving time in New Zealand after a petition to extend daylight saving was closed, gathering 35,000 signatures.

The petition was launched by Peter Dunne, leader of the United Future party, and councillor for Nelson,

Mark Holmes in October, 2006. The petition requests "...that the House call upon the Government to provide 3 extra weeks of daylight saving to begin on the last Sunday of September and end on the first Sunday in April."

Ms Clark says that daylight savings could be stretched at the end because our summer is now lasting through till March. Ms Clark does not support a change to the start of daylight savings. Ms Clark said, "I think the way our weather and seasons have moved around we are finding that at the start of the so-called summer it's not the best, but we've just seen the most glorious Indian summer lasting well through into March and daylight savings ends in about a week's time."

Ms Clark also says she supports moving the summer school holidays from January to February, although she says that this would be hard to do.

The Minister for the Department of Internal Affairs, Rick Barker, is considering the extension of daylight savings, as an extension does not require any law change, instead it is done by Order in Council signed by the Governor-General, acting under section 4(1) of the Time Act 1974.

Ms Clark claims that there is a lot of public support for the extension.

If any change was to occur, it would be implemented next year, as daylight savings finishes this coming weekend.

The United States and Canada have both recently extended their daylight savings periods.

Today in History

1781 - William Herschel discovered the planet Uranus, thinking it was a comet.

1881 - Tsar Alexander II of Russia was assassinated in a Nihilist plot by Ignacy Hryniewiecki.

1921 - Mongolia, under the Black Baron, proclaimed its independence from China.

1954 - Viet Minh forces under Vo Nguyen Giap unleashed a massive artillery barrage on the French military to begin the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the final battle in the First Indochina War.

1996 - Dunblane massacre: A spree killer in Dunblane, Scotland shot 16 children and a teacher at a primary school to their death and then committed suicide.

Quote of the Day

Man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane... something sacred shows itself to us ... something of a wholly different order, a reality that does not belong to our world, in objects that are an integral part of our natural "profane" world. ~ Mircea Eliade

Word of the Day

solace; n

1. Comfort or consolation in a time of distress.
2. A source of comfort or consolation.

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