

Top Stories

Space Shuttle Discovery launches



Discovery roared into the Florida sky at 10:38AM ET, 2 weeks after the launch was scrubbed due to a faulty sensor.

WHO: China engaging in bird flu cover up



The World Health Organization's Beijing spokesman has said that the People's Republic of China has withheld vital information regarding

H5N1 outbreaks, a type of bird flu that is infecting animals throughout Asia.

Featured story

Britain's Royal Windsor Castle to get hydro-electric power plant

Windsor Castle, one of Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom's official residences, is to get a hydro-electric power scheme.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Several protesters have been injured again in India on this second day of protests.
- The STS-114 Space Shuttle blasts off at 10:39 EST this morning. The NASA commentator says during launch "Lift-off, lift-off, and return to America's journey to the Moon, Mars, and beyond".
- Lebanese Christian Militia leader, Samir Geagea, has been released from prison after 11 years.
- At least 1,000 protesters have staged a demonstration outside the main US base of Bagram in Afghanistan.

Wikipedia Current Events

- South Korean ambassador to USA, Hong Seok-Hyun, resigns for alleged involvement with slush fund scandal of illegal donations during a presidential campaign in 1997.
- Burma/Myanmar forgoes 2006 chairmanship of ASEAN.

Windows Vista faces possible trademark challenges



Microsoft, the world's largest software company, announced the name of its forthcoming version of the Windows operating system from its headquarters in Redmond, Washington Friday. But in choosing the name "Vista," Microsoft may find itself in a legal fight.

Microsoft has made a name for itself in legal circles as a company that fiercely defends its trademarks and other intellectual property. With the choice of "Vista," the tables may turn as it may face allegations of swiping another company's trademark.

It appears the Vista name has already been taken by another high-tech company, coincidentally also based in Redmond. A few miles from the sprawling Microsoft campus is Vista Incorporated, which has operated a small business internet interchange since it was founded by Wall Data founder, John Wall in 2000. He was suprised by his larger neighbor's move.

"We are going to consider our options and talk to Microsoft," Wall said in an interview with the Seattle Times. Wall reportedly has not yet filed suit against Microsoft to stop it from using the "Vista" name. An investor in SCO, he does have other legal options aside

from law suits. Instead, he may offer to sell the rights to the "Vista" name.

However, John Wall's company is not the only business with claims on the name "Vista." Many other tech companies use "Vista" as product names. Additionally, a wide-range of non-computer businesses have the name reserved, including branded products for sewing machines, elevators and the dairy industry.

Microsoft announces name of new version of Windows: Vista

Microsoft Corporation has announced that the official name of the next version of its Windows operating system will be "Windows Vista". The system was formerly referred to by the codename "Longhorn."



Brian Valentine and Kevin Johnson announce Windows Vista at the Microsoft Global Business Conference in Atlanta

Brad Goldberg, the general manager of Windows product development, said the new name is aimed at "communicating the idea of clarity." Microsoft has said that this new version will include better graphics and security.



Microsoft employee Don Lionetti tries out an early version of Windows Vista.

Windows Vista is scheduled to launch in the second half of 2006; this will make five years after the launch of Windows XP, the

longest interim yet between releases of Windows.

Additional details on Windows Vista will be released at a developer's conference in September. Beta testing of the software targeted at developers and IT professionals will begin on August 3.

Int'l Football: Liverpool beats Kaunas

Liverpool earned the upper edge, in the Champions League, Second Leg by beating Lithuania's Kaunas, in dramatic style.

The Reds were a goal down through Giedrius Barevicius, who scored a close range shot against José Reina. Within minutes, Liverpool were back in the game with a Steven Gerrard effort, headed by Crouch and finished off by Cisse. Liverpool soon found their scoring touch, through a corner which was converted into a goal by Jamie Carragher. It was his first in around 6 years.

The start of the second half saw captain, Steven Gerrard, fouled in the box and awarded a penalty. Steven took the chance, and converted it with a goal which saw Liverpool, three goals up, looking likely for the win.

The game also marked the competitive debut of Peter Crouch, who signed for Liverpool for around £7 million. Mohamed Sissoko, a former Valencia star, marked his competitive debut for Liverpool with much impact.

The game ended 3 - 1, it looks like Liverpool have a great chance of winning this leg, with 3 straight away goals.

The second leg is at Anfield, on Tuesday 2nd August 2005.

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter

Neighbours of Niger also facing food crisis

A food crisis is threatening three other countries in the region of Niger — a country facing severe food shortages after drought and plagues of locusts — the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has warned.

The three — Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania — have been affected by drought and plagues of locusts that engulfed the Sahel region of West Africa last August.

About 6 million are short of food and require food aid: 3.5 million from Niger; 1.1 million from Mali; 750,000 from Mauritania; and 500,000 from Burkina Faso.



Nigerian child starving due to nationwide food shortage.

The United Nations — which has a Consolidated Appeal for West Africa of just under £196 million US dollars in aid for the region this year — is expecting to feed 250,000 people shortly. In May, OCHA made an additional flash appeal for \$16,191,000 US dollars.

Over the past few weeks, the media has shown graphic images of the situation in Niger. Jan Egelend, OCHA Under-Secretary General and Emergency Relief Coordinator, claims that the situation in the region prior to this was largely ignored by the international community, saying that: "Over the last few days, the world has finally woken up, but it took graphic images of dying children for this to happen."

U.S. consumer confidence drops

The confidence of American consumers in their economy has slipped unexpectedly in July after it had risen the previous three months.

The Consumer Confidence Index dropped from 106.2 in June to 103.2 this July, the Conference Board said in New York. Analysts blame it on Americans' increased fear over job security, wage perspectives, and rising gas prices.

But Lynn Franco, director of the board's Consumer Research Center, said that's nothing to be concerned about: "The overall

state of the economy remains healthy and consumers' outlook suggests no storm clouds on the short-term horizon."

In the last months, several large American corporations have announced job cuts. Among them are Eastman Kodak, Hewlett-Packard, and Kimberly-Clark.

Private consumer spending is considered to be the backbone of the U.S. economy since it accounts for two-thirds of its Gross Domestic Product. However, in the last few years, the correlation between consumer confidence and actual retail sales has been questioned since consumers were spending money even when survey figures said they wouldn't.

Last WWII Comanche 'code talker' dies



Charles Chibitty

The last surviving member of the group of 17 who served World War II as the Comanche "code talkers" died in a Tulsa, Oklahoma nursing home. Charles Chibitty was 83 when he passed away July 20, 2005.

Chibitty was among the 14 Comanches who landed with the D-Day invasion of Normandy Beaches where they reported by radio to division headquarters on the progress of the landings. The Comanche were dubbed code talkers because the American Indian language has no written record, and it was never broken by the Germans during the war.

One of the first messages transmitted in Comanche language during the landings was "right beach, wrong place". It warned soldiers they landed about a half mile from their intended target. Chibitty served with a unit that landed on Utah Beach on June 6, 1944.

Mr. Chibitty served with the rank of a Corporal in the 4th Infantry Division that engaged in the breakthrough of the Siegfried line in Hurtgen Forest. His division also saw action in the Battle of the Bulge and the rescue of the "Lost Battalion". His division was among the first to undertake the liberation of Paris. Then later, the 4th Infantry was the first to enter Germany.

The Comanches, who came from the Lawton area in Oklahoma, heard rumors of a military plan to organize a native speaking unit. He enlisted in 1941, and along with 19 others, they were trained for special duty by the U.S. Army Signal Corps. All were sent to Fort Benning, but three remained stateside because they had dependents and deployment in the mission was dangerous.

The U.S. declassified the code talker program in 1968. Only 3 remained living at the time. The French Government gave special honors to the Comanches by bestowing them with the Chevalier of the National Order of Merit in 1989. Mr. Chibitty was honored in 1999 when the Pentagon bestowed on him the Knowlton Award.

In a 1999 interview with the Armed Forces Information Center, Chibitty said: "The Navajo did the same thing. The Navajos became code talkers about a year after the Comanches, but there were over a hundred of them because they had so much territory [in the Pacific Theater] to cover."

Joe Holley of the Washington Post reports this quote from Mr. Chibitty in 2002:

"It's strange, but growing up as a child I was forbidden speak my native language at school. Later my country asked me to. My language helped win the war, and that makes me very proud. Very proud."

The funeral service was held today at 10:00am. He has three surviving grandchildren.

U.S. magazine TV Guide to drop local editions in makeover

After years of declining subscription rates, the owners of U.S. magazine TV Guide ordered a complete overhaul of the 52-year-old publication. Gemstar-TV Guide

International, the corporate parent of the magazine says the current format of the magazine has caused it to become unprofitable.



The cover of a past issue of TV Guide

The changes will be effective with the October 15 issue. Lack of profitability has been a point of contention between Gemstar management and its largest shareholder, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

Included in the new design is a shift away from detailed listings to more of a People or Entertainment Weekly celebrity-focused format. Included in that change will be the elimination of the 140 localized editions of TV Guide in favor of one national publication with only "Eastern" and "Pacific" times listed for program listings.

The magazine's owners noted that with the advent of digital cable and satellite TV, more viewers rely upon electronic program guides provided free by the television service provider than printed listings.

TV Guide officials say the current magazine is 72 percent listing, printed on newsprint and in black-and-white. The new version of the magazine will be four-color and on glossy paper.

A second change will be the magazine's size as it moves from a digest-sized publication to a full-sized glossy. The company expects the larger edition will be more profitable against competition such as People and US Weekly. But that profitability may be at the expense of national reach.

Although the magazine is getting physically larger, according to reports, the readership is expected to shrink. Gemstar expects many of its subscribers not to renew with the new format. Currently the TV Guide guarantees 9 million subscribers to its national advertisers. According to reports, it is only guaranteeing

3.2 million subscribers to its revamped publication once it hits newsstands.

Press freedom watchdog 'outraged' by closure of Burundi radio station

The Burundian authorities have forcibly shut down one of Burundi's most popular independent radio stations, Radio Publique Africain. The move came despite a compromise deal agreed last week between RPA and the Burundian authorities.

Burundi's National Communications Council (CNC) had ordered the indefinite suspension of RPA on July 15th, claiming that its coverage of recent elections had been biased, and that the radio station had insulted them. The station's Director Alexis Sinduhije rejected the allegations, and Burundian media groups accused the CNC of acting as a tool of political repression. Following negotiations, the authorities lifted the indefinite ban, after RPA agreed to a 2-day suspension.

RPA went off air on Monday July 18th. Broadcasts were resumed on Thursday morning, but less than 48 hours later the authorities were attempting to shut down the station again.

Bujumbura journalist Gregoire Wakana, writing on the the African news website abarundi.org, reported a tense stand-off outside the radio station on Friday afternoon, as around 30 soldiers, led by Colonel Ildephonse Mushwabure, tried to gain entry. "The suspense lasted several hours, and a large crowd gathered, with several Burundian journalists coming to watch the fate of their RPA colleagues".

Abarundi.org reports "widespread indignation" over RPA's closure, with onlookers shouting angrily at the authorities as they moved in on the station. Some later threw stones at a nearby building owned by the Burundian President Domitien Ndayizeye.

Abarundi.org notes that Colonel Mushwabure is a controversial figure in Burundi, after giving contradictory statements to a UN inquiry over his whereabouts during the 1993 coup led to the assassination of the country's first democratic president, Melchior Ndadaye.

Last month's elections were the first since the coup, which plunged Burundi into more than a decade of vicious, ethnically-charged civil war.

Earlier this week, the head of the UN's electoral unit in Burundi praised the country's media, saying it had "masterfully played its role of democratic watchdog by helping Burundians to allay their fears and go to the polls".

The dispute between RPA and the Burundian government has been monitored by the international press freedom watchdog the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ).

"RPA fell silent around 5 p.m. local time as police broke into the station compound, padlocked its studios, and cut off its transmitter. It was not immediately clear if any RPA staff had been arrested, although one journalist told the CPJ in a brief phone call, 'they are taking us to the police station'", they announced in a press release on Friday.

"No one is above the law. Sanctions must be taken against whoever breaks the law... African Public Radio continues to show its lack of respect towards the authorities", the National Communications Council chairman Jean-Pierre Manda was quoted by Reuters as saying on Saturday.

The council had accused RPA of giving disproportionate coverage to the opposition FDD party in recent elections.

The FDD heavily defeated President Domitien Ndayizeye's FRODEBU party, gaining a majority of seats in the country's National Assembly, with 58% of the popular vote. The party is now expected to form the next government.

Abarundi.org reports that the men who broke into the radio station were unable to produce any kind of warrant. RPA's director Alexis Sinduhije told Reuters he had evidence Ndayizeye issued the order to shut down the radio station, calling it "an abuse of power".

"If they (the communication council) believe I have insulted them, they must go to court, but not punish the radio and the public audience," Reuters quoted him as saying.

"CPJ is outraged at the Burundian authorities' failure to deliver on their promise," said CPJ Executive Director Ann Cooper, in a press release. "We call on President Ndayizeye to ensure that RPA can resume broadcasting immediately, allowing journalists to work freely without fear of reprisal."

Quoting Burundi National Radio and Television, BBC monitoring has reported that President Domitien Ndayizeye met representatives of a media organization on Saturday to discuss the reopening of Radio Publique Africaine.

The president reportedly decided to close the radio in order to "safeguard the integrity of state institutions."

Space Shuttle Discovery launches



The NASA Space Shuttle Discovery roared into the Florida sky at 10:39AM ET (14:39 UTC), 2 weeks after the launch was scrubbed due to a faulty sensor. The launch was the start of the STS-114 mission, which is planned to be completed on August 7, 2005.

Solid rocket booster separation was triggered two minutes and five seconds into the flight after burnout of the putty-like fuel packed inside each rocket. The firing of explosive bolts freed the twin boosters from the side of the external tank, allowing them to peel away from the space shuttle. Parachutes were then automatically deployed from the boosters, allowing them to slowly descend into the Atlantic Ocean where they will be towed back to shore.

Discovery initiated the command for main engine cutoff, or MECO, at the 8-minute, 23-second mark. MECO shuts down the orbiter's three powerful engines in the rear of Discovery after completing the "uphill" climb into space.



With the ascent into space complete and fuel onboard the external tank exhausted, Discovery jettisoned the orange canister. Following jettison, Commander Eileen Collins pitched the orbiter up until the tank could be sighted through the orbiter's upper windows. Mission Specialist Soichi Noguchi then took digital photographs and video of the external tank from a distance of just 1,500 feet.



Inter lead race to snap-up Figo

Internazionale are understood to be on the brink of snapping up Real Madrid star, Luis Figo and are also thought to be leading the race to sign him.

According to the Italian newspaper Gazzetta dello Sport, the 32-year-old Portuguese right-side midfielder, who has been a Liverpool F.C transfer target for quite some time, is close to agreeing a deal with Inter.

Reports in Spain, however, suggest Figo will finally resolve his dispute with the Madrid giants when he returns from the club's pre-season tour of Japan later this week, clearing the way for a move to Merseyside.

Liverpool F.C. manager Rafael Benitez has also revealed that he will buy a right-sided midfielder before the start of the new Premiership campaign.

"We are waiting for news, we have heard nothing as yet," he said. "We are in Lithuania and he is flying from Japan so maybe we will hear something later in the week."

Figo has been in dispute with Real over the payment of the final year of his contract.

Liverpool are likely to offer Figo wages of around £60,000 a week, if he does sign, but Inter are also stepping up by stating that they would give him around €3.5 Million Euros a year.

Murderer of Dutch filmmaker van Gogh gets life term

Mohammed Bouyeri, a radical Islamist who was a member of the Hofstad Network, was sentenced to life in prison by a court in Amsterdam for the killing of the controversial filmmaker Theo van Gogh in November 2004.

Van Gogh was ambushed on an Amsterdam street and shot repeatedly in chest before Bouyeri stabbed him and slit his throat. The judgment said that Bouyeri showed "complete disregard for human life" and butchered Van Gogh "mercilessly".

Bouyeri, a 27 year who holds joint Dutch-Moroccan citizenship, claimed he acted on behalf of Islam. He made a confession in the courtroom and vowed he would "do it again" if he had the chance.

Van Gogh had been a staunch critic of Islam and its perceived mistreatment of women. Van Gogh directed several movies critical of Islam, most notably Submission in which verses of the Qur'an were written on naked women's bodies.

Brazilians call for arrest of UK policemen after shooting death



Landless Workers' Movement (MST) protest against Britains in front of United Kingdom Embassy in Brazil. Photo: Lindomar Cruz/ABr.

The death of Brazilian-born Jean Charles de Menezes in London on the 21st of July at the hands of British police, who mistook him for a terrorist, is being called an "assassination" by the mayor of Gonzaga, Brazil. "It's easy for Blair to apologize, but it doesn't mean very much," said Mayor Julio de Souza, referring to Metropolitan Police commissioner Sir Ian Blair's description of the incident as a "tragedy". "What happened to English justice and England, a place where police patrol unarmed?"

Brazil's Foreign Minister, Celso Amorin, came to London and said president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva asked him "to take firm measures to defend the interests of the family of a Brazilian who died in an absurd manner."

Brazilian protesters called for the arrest of the policemen who shot Menezes, and are also demanding the immediate return of the victim's body, as traditionally in Brazil bodies are buried within 24 hours of death.

According to witnesses, police pursued the fleeing Menezes into a subway station and held him to the ground before shooting him. London was on heightened alert after the 7th of July's deadly bombings.

A 5.6 Richter quake hits Western Montana

A moderate earthquake shook western Montana at 10:08 p.m. on Monday. No immediate reports of damage have been received by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and its National Earthquake Information Center. The earthquake was centered about 20 km (15 miles) north-northeast of Dillon, and about 65 km (40 miles) south of Butte.

Bush likely to appoint Bolton during congressional recess



John Bolton

As the US Senate is about to take its annual

August recess, they have not yet taken action on the controversial United Nations ambassador nomination of John Bolton. With Congress gone and President Bush at his ranch in Texas, White House press secretary Scott McClellan, speaking unofficially, hinted that Bush might exercise his constitutional authority and post him to the U.N. by use of a recess appointment.

The appointment would stand until January 2007 before it would once again become subject to Senate confirmation.

The Bolton nomination was passed on to the full Senate for consideration on March 17. This was done without a favorable recommendation from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Senators Joseph Biden (D-DE) and Christopher Dodd (D-CT) succeeded twice in leading Democrats to block efforts of Republican chamber leaders to bring the matter to a vote. Democrats raised questions on whether Bolton abused subordinates while acting in his role as undersecretary of state, and whether he tried to pressure intelligence analysts to issue reports that conformed to his views. There was also the question of Bolton's past criticisms of the body of the United Nations itself.

Democratic filibusters demanded of the Bush administration that it release classified information regarding the involvements of Bolton in his position as the Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security since May 11, 2001. In the past, however, Senate confirmation was granted him to fill positions in government posts on four occasions.

With a week to go before recess, there are no signs of a Senate breakthrough.

In 1998, former President Bill Clinton selected Richard Holbrooke. In what some have called "partisan bickering", Republicans blocked Holbrooke for 14 months, before he was finally confirmed in August 1999.

Rules may be bent to launch Discovery

With the problem with the fuel gauge still unexplained NASA has announced that it may bend some of its long-standing safety rules to launch the Space Shuttle Discovery

on time. NASA managers have decided to launch with just three of the four fuel gauges working if the problem reappears Tuesday, however this would mean disregarding the rule created in 1986 after the Challenger explosion. In a press conference on July 13, NASA officials commented that they have never in the past flown a shuttle with less than four sensors working.

"There's very little in life that is 100 percent guaranteed, and there's probably less in rocket science that's 100 percent guaranteed," deputy shuttle program manager Wayne Hale said over the weekend. "That is part of the risk we take."

Discovery and the crew of 7 are set to blast-off for the International Space Station at 10:39 a.m. Tuesday morning. This will be the first launch since the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster two and a half years ago.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

1789 - The first U.S. federal government agency, the Department of Foreign Affairs, was established (later renamed the Department of State).

1865 - A group of 153 Welsh settlers arrived at Chubut Valley in Argentina's Patagonia region.

1921 - University of Toronto researchers led by Frederick Banting announced the discovery of the hormone insulin.

1940 - Bugs Bunny debuted in the animated cartoon A Wild Hare.

1996 - Centennial Olympic Park bombing: A pipe bomb exploded during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, killing two and injuring 111.

July 27 is London Pride

Quote of the Day

"From quiet homes and first beginning,
Out to the undiscovered ends, There's
nothing worth the wear of winning, But
laughter and the love of friends." ~ Hilaire
Belloc

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