



Top Stories

Explosions hit waterfront in New Orleans, Louisiana



Fires are raging in New Orleans following a series of explosions

along the waterfront. The cause and the effects of the blasts are not known.

Louisiana officials accused of blocking rescue volunteers



SPECIAL REPORT

State Police in Lafayette, Louisiana, have been accused of hindering attempts by

private citizens to rescue people trapped by floodwaters in New Orleans.

Featured story

Rapper Kanye West denounces Bush response, American media at hurricane relief telethon



Grammy award-winning rapper Kanye West Friday bashed President Bush on a live on-air

telethon, saying George Bush doesn't care about black people, and "America is set up to help the poor, the black people, the less well-off as slow as possible."

Wikipedia Current Events

• Over 40,000 military personnel will be deployed along the Gulf Coast in the coming week: President Bush is ordering 7,000 additional active duty forces to the Gulf Coast to add to the 4,000 active duty personnel and 21,000 National Guard troops already in the area. The Pentagon announced an additional 10,000 troop deployment from the National Guard.

•The White House announced the President will return to undisclosed parts of the Gulf Coast on Monday.

•New Orleans Police Chief Edwin Compass says of plight of New Orleans: "We have never had an urban warfare battle like this on any front in the history of our nation."

•Chinese President Hu Jintao has postponed his scheduled visit to Washington in the coming week. He plans to meet with President Bush later in the month while attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York City.

•A unilateral three-month ceasefire is declared by Nepal's Maoist rebels as negotiations begin with an alliance of political parties. Their leader, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, said they would "not launch any offensive" during the truce.

•The Japan Meteorological Agency announces Category 5 Typhoon Nabi is set to hit Okinawa and the Ryukyu Islands and possibly Kyushu on Monday.

•French President Jacques Chirac, 72, will be hospitalised for a week after suffering a "minor vascular incident" which is affecting his vision.

Mayor of New Orleans Ray Nagin slams Bush, federal government in radio interview

The mayor of New Orleans, Ray Nagin, castigated the federal government for their (lack of) response to Hurricane Katrina. In the interview he touches on many points, one of the strongest I'll quote here:

"We authorized 8 billion dollars to go to Iraq, lickity split. After 911, we gave the president unlimited powers, lickity split, to take care of New York and other places. You mean to tell me that a place where most of your oil is coming through, a place so unique that when you mention "New Orleans" anywhere around the world, everybody's eyes light up. You mean to tell me that a place where you probably have thousands of people who have died and thousands more are dying every day, we can't get figure out a way to authorize the resources that we need.

I mean I'm not one of those drug addicts... I am thinking very clearly...And I don't know whose problem it is; I don't know if it's the governors problem or if its the presidents problem, but somebody needs to get their ass on a plane and sit down the two of them and figure this thing out RIGHT NOW."

Chimpanzee genome sequenced

The Chimpanzee Sequencing and Analysis Consortium, made up of 67 scientists from the United States, Israel, Italy, Germany, and Spain, has released a draft version

of its report on the chimpanzee genome in the September 1 edition of the scientific journal *Nature*. The researchers mapped 94% of the genome. The report centers on comparisons between chimpanzee and human DNA.

Rapper Kanye West denounces Bush response, American media at hurricane relief telethon



Kanye West during telethon, as he makes his statement live.

Grammy award-winning rapper/producer Kanye West appeared on a live on-air telethon simulcast on NBC, MSNBC, CNBC and PAX for Hurricane Katrina victims. Live on air, West said "George Bush doesn't care about black people," after saying "America is set up to help the poor, the black people, the less well-off as slow as possible." He also said "the Red Cross is doing everything they can," and stated that he was going to see what the maximum amount of money he can donate is. West criticized government authorities and stated that "They've given them permission to go down and shoot us."

West first deviated from the script he and comedian Mike Myers were using by commenting on the recent uproar over differently captioned photos for black and white people in the aftermath of the hurricane: "I hate the way

they portray us in the media. If you see a black family, it says they're looting. See a white family, it says they're looking for food."

Though a several-second delay was in place, the comments were let through uncensored on the EST live broadcast as the person in charge "was instructed to listen for a curse word, and didn't realize he had gone off-script," according to an NBC spokeswoman.

NBC has released a statement after the broadcast: "Tonight's telecast was a live television event wrought with emotion. Kanye West departed from the scripted comments that were prepared for him, and his opinions in no way represent the views of the networks. It would be most unfortunate if the efforts of the artists who participated tonight and the generosity of millions of Americans who are helping those in need are overshadowed by one person's opinion."

The sponsor of the event, the American Red Cross, also issued a statement on the telethon, stating: "During the telecast, a controversial comment was made by one of the celebrities. We would like the American public to know that our support is unwavering, regardless of political circumstances. We are a neutral and impartial organization, and support disaster victims across the country regardless of race, class, color or creed."

Federal response to Katrina a 'National Disgrace'

The vast majority of onsite commentators are condemning the federal government's slow and inadequate response to Hurricane Katrina. Major Ray Nagin has repeatedly pleaded for more help.

The Mayor told CNN, "This is a desperate SOS. Right now we are out of resources at the convention centre and don't anticipate enough buses. We need buses. Currently the convention centre is unsanitary and unsafe and we're running out of supplies."

The city's police chief warned that storm victims were being raped and beaten on the streets. Even in the Superdome stadium and the city convention centre, where tens of thousands were awaiting evacuation, fights are breaking out, rubbish is catching fire, and dead bodies have been left uncollected.

The head of New Orleans' emergency operations, Terry Ebbert, complained that the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was not doing its job. "This is a national emergency. This is a national disgrace," he said. "FEMA has been here three days, yet there is no command and control. We can send massive amounts of aid to tsunami victims, but we can't bail out New Orleans."

Web pundits suggest that Mike Brown will "be chosen to take the fall" for the poor response. [1] A critic at the International Arabian Horse Association, which previously fired Mike Brown, said "He was an unmitigated, total ... disaster. I was shocked as hell when captain clueless (a reference to President G.W. Bush) put him in charge of FEMA a couple of years ago." [2] It has also been suggested that the the impact of the philosophy of privatization has damaged federal emergency response, but the validity of such claims has not been assessed. [3]

Over twenty five nations, some with assets in the area, have

offered aid to the city of New Orleans, but the president has refused all material aid from foreign nations. Such refusal of aid is not uncommon among nations with coldy hostile relationships, such as between the U.S. and Cuba or Venezuela, but it has created a stir among the European media.

Federal government begins employing strategies to repair New Orleans

When Hurricane Katrina flooded most of New Orleans in up to thirty feet of water, an engineering nightmare was created. Now, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers seems to have found a solution.

The problem was caused by three breaches in a levee system not designed to withstand a powerful Category 4 hurricane. These breaks allowed water to flow into New Orleans from massive Lake Pontchartrain.

It will take between 36 and 80 days according to Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, but engineers believe they've found a way to get water out of the city.

The first step was to stop the rising level of water, which the Corps and a team of private contractors accomplished yesterday.

Currently, the 17th Street Canal is being closed using a combination of steel sheets, 300-lb. and 3,000-lb. sandbags, and the construction of a rock dyke. The London Avenue breach will be closed off as well while the break at the Inner Harbor Lock will be left open to allow drainage.

In St. Bernard Parish, one of the

hardest-hit areas of the city, a levee is being opened to allow water to drain out.

Once the water finally drains out of New Orleans, some areas will still be up to seven feet deep due to the city's location under sea level. This will have to be pumped out, possible only when electricity returns.

Sun retires the Sun Industry Standards Source License

Yesterday, September 2, Sun Microsystems announced the retirement of the Sun Industry Standard Source License (SISSL) scheme. The Open Source Initiative had been discussing ways of reducing the quantity of Open Source licenses to make it easier for developers and companies to chose a license. Dropping the SISSL takes them one step closer to this goal. Sun's decision to drop the SISSL comes a few months after Intel's similar decision to drop it's Open Source License in March.

Simon Phipps, the director of Sun's Open Source Office, said in his blog that he will ask the OSI to put the SISSL on the "not recommended" list. He also said "he would encourage any project that's currently using it to make other plans at the time of their next major release".

No future Sun open-source projects will use the SISSL, and current Sun projects using a dual-license scheme will drop the SISSL "as soon as the development cycle allows". One of Sun's most popular open-source projects, OpenOffice.org, is licensed under both the LGPL and SISSL. As of September 2, all OpenOffice.org 2.0 code is now licensed exclusively under the LGPL.

Sun prefers the Community Development and Distribution License, a variant of the Mozilla Public License. Sun released OpenSolaris and the Glassfish Java server under the Community Development and Distribution License.

Blizzard Entertainment's victory over bnetd sealed in Appeals Court

Blizzard Entertainment has won a federal ruling in the U.S. Court of Appeals against the programmers of bnetd, a software package that emulates Blizzard's Battle.net service. The court reaffirmed the original judgement, given in October, that the Digital Millennium Copyright Act and click-through EULA's prohibited the reverse engineering of Blizzard's software in order to improve their playability. This was the first real test of the DMCA's applicability.

Bnetd, released under the GNU General Public License, was created to enable users to play multiplayer games, bypassing Blizzard's Battle.net servers, which have often been too unreliable or slow for gamers, despite having no cost to use. The software also disabled the CD-Key check which is present in Battle.net to prevent users of pirated copies from being able to connect to Blizzard's servers. Offers by bnetd developers to incorporate Blizzard's CD-Check system were declined.

The CD-Check system itself has not been without controversy, with many users complaining it borders on breaching privacy in the same way as adware and other malevolent software. This is not confined to Blizzard: controversy

occurred when Sony Online Entertainment's EverQuest had a similar system which was later disabled due to complaints. Other games designed for network play are also known to have similar systems in place, the most prominent perhaps being Valve Software's Steam system developed for Half-Life 2.

Blizzard has produced popular titles such as Starcraft and World of Warcraft.

Swazi princess beaten by government official for wild party

Ntfonjeni Dlamini, the government's official overseer of traditional affairs, beat one of the princesses of Swaziland.

A daughter of HM King Mswati III, 17-year-old Princess Sikhanyiso was throwing a party with loud music and alcohol. The party was to celebrate the end of the chastity decree.

"It was within the traditional overseer's right to discipline anyone — including princesses — who wanted to spoil the important [Reed Dance] ceremony," claimed Jim Gama, governor of the queen mother's residence. The Reed Dance ceremony is an annual ritual in the culture.

Princess Sikhanyiso had already caused ire around Swaziland, as she broke traditions by wearing Western-style short skirts and jeans.

Liberia's World Cup woes averted

In a last minute change of position, the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) has reversed its decision not to allow

the Liberian National football team, The Lone Star, to attend Sunday's World Cup qualifier against Togo. The NTGL had announced on Wednesday that the squad would not be able to travel to Lome, Togo because of a lack of funds to pay for the team's travel.

In a statement explaining its decision not to fund the team's travel, the NTGL highlighted more pressing financial obligations such as the country's upcoming national elections and the demobilization of the nation's defunct armed forces. "As a result of the huge expenditure, the National Transitional Government of Liberia has decided it is unfeasible to underwrite the Lone Star's travel to Togo," said the Minister of Information, Dr. C. William Allen.

The decision to allow The Lone Star to travel to Lome was made after the price of the team's travel decreased from US\$31,000 to US\$18,000. The team now plans to fly to Accra and take a bus to Lome versus fly the entire way. Had Liberia failed to take the field on Sunday, the country would have faced fines of US\$31,895 and possible prohibition from participating in the 2010 World Cup to be held in South Africa. Incidentally, the fines would have been slightly more than the team's original travel budget.

Cape Verde to launch first public university, with Brazil's support

To help launch Cape Verde's first public university, the Brazilian government has made the promise to provide organizational advice and to train professors.

According to Fernando Haddad,

Brazilian Minister of Education, Brazil will send its professors to the small nation off the African coast to train them in lecturing, marking, and other important skills involved in the profession.

Filomena Martins, Cape Verdean Minister of Education and Human Resource Enhancement, met with Haddad on August 22 to work out the details of the plan, which was first launched by Brazil's President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, in July 2004.

Cape Verde also hopes to increase the level of education for the university professors themselves. Of the 300 professors at the planned institution, only 3% have doctorates and only 21% have master's degrees.

Brazil also helps Cape Verde reduce its debt through the Post-Graduate Student Agreement Program. PEC-PG encourages Cape Verdeans to become foreign exchange students in Brazil. In 2005-06, 20 students will participate, with the level increasing to 50 students in the next calendar year.

US unemployment fell to four-year low before Katrina

The United States Department of Labor announced that the country's unemployment rate fell to a four-year low of 4.9%. American employers created about 169,000 new jobs in August. However, this trend is projected to end due to Hurricane Katrina (the data was collected prior to the hurricane).

Economists expect the number of jobless to grow by more than 500,000 in September and the unemployment rate to drive up over 5% again, but they are

ensure of the effect an of upcoming Federal Reserve decision on interest rates. Some sources believe the Fed will make no change, while others say the rates will likely be increased to prevent the economy from overheating, causing inflation, which also may be caused by the surge in crude oil and gasoline prices.

The markets fell despite the unemployment data. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 12.26 points to 10,447.37 while Nasdaq fell 6.83 points to 2,141.07. The US dollar declined slightly against most world currencies.

Many nations offer material aid to hurricane victims; Bush refuses to accept

Over twenty five nations have offered aid in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. In particular, France has offered the use of its resources in the Caribbean sea, including 2 navy ships, 1 navy hospital, 8 planes, 600 tents, 1000 beds, and rescuers. President George W. Bush has refused such material aid to the hurricane's victims, although cash donations will be accepted. He explained his reasons to ABC News:

I'm not expecting much from foreign nations because we hadn't asked for it. I do expect a lot of sympathy and perhaps some will send cash dollars. But this country's going to rise up and take care of it. You know, we would love help, but we're going to take care of our own business as well, and there's no doubt in my mind we'll succeed. And there's no doubt in my mind, as I sit here talking to you, that New Orleans is going to rise up again as a great city.

A few of these nations, such as Venezuela and Cuba, are disliked

by the administration, but the majority are considered allies of the United States. Venezuela's Citgo Petroleum Corp. pledged a \$1 million donation for hurricane aid. Cuba refused U.S. aid following Hurricane Dennis. In order to reduce the side effects of hurricane Katrina, Japan, Venezuela, and most EU countries offer to provide oil reserves to the U.S.

President Jacques Chirac of France hospitalized



Jacques Chirac, President of France

Jacques Chirac, President of France, entered the military hospital of the Val de Grâce in central Paris yesterday evening. According to the communiqué of the hospital, he suffers from some troubles of vision following from a vascular accident and these problems should be over in a few days. Hospitalization should last one week, and meetings are being rescheduled accordingly.

Today, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin visited the president and discussed a number of urgent matters, such as the help proposed to the United States following from the disastrous Hurricane Katrina.

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Today in History

- 476 - Romulus Augustus, the last emperor of the Western Roman Empire, was deposed.
- 1260 - Florence and Siena fought in the Battle of Montaperti, as part of the conflict between the Guelphs and Ghibellines.
- 1870 - The French Third Republic was declared, as the Second Empire collapsed.
- 1886 - After years of fighting against the U.S. Army and the Mexican armed forces, Geronimo of the Chiricahua Apache surrendered in Arizona.
- 1957 - Governor Orval Faubus of Arkansas, defying orders from the U.S. Supreme Court, tried to prevent nine African-American students known as the "Little Rock Nine" from attending Little Rock Central High School
- September 04 is Father's Day in Australia and New Zealand

Quote of the Day

"I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence." ~ Frederick Douglass