



### Top Stories

#### **Pakistani army storms Red Mosque; Ghazi is killed**

After failed last-minute negotiations, Pakistani troops have moved in to end the nearly one-week standoff at the Red Mosque in Islamabad. As many as 1,800 clerics and followers had remained in the mosque. Abdul Rashid Ghazi is killed.

#### **TNT blamed for Chinese karaoke bar explosion that killed 25**

More than a ton of TNT stored illegally in the basement of a karaoke bar caused the recent explosion that killed 25 people in a town in north-east China.

### Featured story

#### **Top two aides quit US presidential candidate McCain's campaign**

The resignation of campaign manager Terry Nelson and long-standing chief strategist John Weaver comes while McCain trails in polls and fund-raising.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Mexico's Interior Department increases security on strategic installations following attacks on pipelines. The People's Revolutionary Army or EPR has claimed responsibility.
- The Gadhafi Foundation announces a deal has been reached with families of HIV-infected children related to five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor.
- The European Union chooses Dominique Strauss-Kahn as its nominee to head the International Monetary Fund making him the frontrunner to fill the position in October.
- All 24 police officers missing after a fight between police and Maoist insurgents in Chhattisgarh central India have been found dead.
- Amy St. Eve, the judge in the Conrad Black fraud case, orders the jury to go back to work after it advised her that it couldn't reach a verdict on all the counts before it.
- Raul Castro, the interim leader of Cuba, sets a date in late October for local elections.
- Chester Turner is sentenced to death for the murder of ten women and an unborn child in Los Angeles, California in the 1980's and 1990's.
- Pope Benedict XVI approves a document issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which redeclares the doctrine of Extra Ecclesiam nulla

#### **Al-Qaeda threatens UK over Rushdie's knighthood**

Al-Qaeda's No.2 Ayman al-Zawahiri warned in a 20-minute audiotaped message that the knighthood of Salman Rushdie was defying the Islamic world by granting the honor to the author of The Satanic Verses, which was deemed an insult to Islam.

Al-Zawahiri said in the message that a "very precise response" is in preparation to retaliate against this offense, "And if you did not understand, listen, we are ready to repeat it for you."

Rushdie was given the knighthood last month by Queen Elizabeth II. The United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office said the honor was not intended as an insult to Islam but was "a reflection of his contribution to literature."

#### **Tour de France: Yellow jersey Cancellara surprises sprinters**

The riders had 236.5 km in front of them when they started around 11 a.m. this morning in Waregem, Belgium, heading for the French town Compiègne, which is known also as the start of the race Paris-Roubaix. Remarkably, the riders didn't go faster than 30 km/hour most of the stage, so they came in an hour behind schedule after almost seven hours in the saddle.

"The wind was stopping the whole peloton and it's hard to ride 240km with the wind in your face. That's one of the reasons that the

whole peloton chose to ride slower because we are not machines, we are humans." —Fabian Cancellara

After an early escape, Nicolas Vogondy and Matthieu Ladagnous were joined by Stephane Auge and Frederik Willems (the first three French, the latter Belgian) at 42 km of the finish. The former duo had a maximum lead of around 13 minutes 45 seconds, but the quartet of escapees was caught by the peleton just 500m from the finish..

"He pulled a rabbit out of the hat there! I've never seen anything like that in my 11 Tours."  
—Stuart O'Grady on Cancellara

The yellow jersey and winner of the prologue took an early shot at the finale and managed to keep off Erik Zabel, Danilo Napolitano and Tom Boonen, among others. The bonus seconds expand Cancellara's lead from 13 to 33 seconds. In the climbing ranking, David Millar lost the polka dot jersey to Stephane Auge but remains third, 43 seconds behind Cancellara.

Results of the third stage:  
Fabian Cancellara: 6 hrs 36 mins 15 secs (others listed: same time)  
Erik Zabel  
Danilo Napolitano  
Tom Boonen  
Robert Hunter  
Robert Foerster  
Robbie McEwen  
Bernhard Eisel  
Mark Cavendish  
Heinrich Haussler

Overall standing:  
Fabian Cancellara: 15 hrs 12 mins 8 secs  
Andreas Klöden: + 33  
David Millar: + 41  
George Hincapie: + 43  
Bradley Wiggins: + 43

Vladimir Gusev: + 45  
Tom Boonen: + 46  
Vladimir Karpets: + 46  
Thor Hushovd: + 49  
Mikel Astarloza: + 49

### **Self-Defence party to stay on in the governing coalition of Poland**

Andrzej Lepper, the now-former Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, as well as Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland announced on Tuesday that his party is "conditionally" staying on in the governing coalition. The only condition is to show "so-called serious proofs" of his guilt until this Friday. The crisis has media speculating that Poland's coalition government may fail and early elections be required.

Lepper told the journalists on his press conference that he want the so-called proofs to be shown: "They say that there are some recordings, some tapes (...) so show them all, please."

Self-Defence stays on in the government, but, as he said, without him. He didn't want to disclose the name of his successor on the position of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

In an interview for Polish news-only channel TVN24 Lepper said that the whole situation was faked by the Central Anticorruption Bureau and that there is no connection with him. He repeated also that he won't come back to the government again.

"I surely won't be the Minister of Agriculture anymore. (...) I won't come back to the government and I keep my word. (...) The post of the Deputy Prime Minister is waiting for me if these charges won't be confirmed, but I want to

focus on work related to my party. (...) The Central Anticorruption Bureau has faked this affair from the very beggining. (...) I have played no part in this issue. (...) If there really are proofs in this matter, why nobody showed them?"

He explained why Self-Defence stays on in the governing coalition as well:

"We think that this coalition has still a lot of work to do."

### **Argentina celebrates its independence day covered in white**

Yesterday, amid the celebration of the Argentinian Independence Day, snow and sleet surprised many in the greater area of Buenos Aires and other parts of Argentina. It was the first snowfall there since June 22, 1918. The National Weather Service even doubted to announce the predicted snowfall, because it is a phenomenon that occurs only about every hundred years.

"It's the first time that sleet falls here since the sixties, and it hasn't snowed since 1918 –I wasn't even born yet," said Diana Morinelli, a resident of the Olivos locality.

The snow fell mostly during the night and when the inhabitants of the capital city left their homes in the morning, many began to play with the snow. In 1918, the snowfall inspired composer Agustín Bardi's ¿Qué noche! (What a night!) tango.

Argentine daily La Nación reported that at least two homeless persons died because of the unusual cold. In Santa Rosa, La Pampa, the temperature was -10°C, with the perceived temperature as low as -15°C in some cities. Late May, the lowest temperatures in Buenos

Aires in 40 years caused 23 deaths due to hypothermia, and an energy crisis.

The Argentinian version of Google decorated its main page with an Argentinian flag to celebrate the Independence day.

### **Cyprus and Malta to adopt the euro**

The European Union's Council of Ministers has approved the entry of Mediterranean islands Cyprus and Malta into the Eurozone. They will begin to use the euro from January 1, 2008.

European finance ministers (collectively known as Ecofin) set fixed rates of one euro to 0.585274 Cypriot pounds and 0.4293 to the Maltese lira. Slovenia was the first new country to join, the adopted it in January of 2007. No other country has yet met the strict entry criteria, including inflation which prevented the entry of states such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The news comes amid a rising value of the euro, on the same day it reached a new all-time high of 1.37 U.S. dollar.

### **Top two aides quit US presidential candidate McCain's campaign**

The top two aides in United States presidential candidate John McCain's campaign have resigned from their posts today.

The resignation of campaign manager Terry Nelson and long-standing chief strategist John Weaver was announced while McCain was on the floor of the Senate debating strategy in Iraq.

Nelson said, "It has been a tremendous honor to serve Senator McCain and work on his

campaign," and "I believe John McCain is the most experienced and prepared candidate to represent the Republican Party and defeat the Democratic nominee next year."

Weaver's statement echoed that of Nelson: "It has been my honor and a distinct privilege to serve someone who has always put our country first. I believe that most Americans will come to the conclusion that I have long known there is only one person equipped to serve as our nation's chief executive and deal with the challenges we face, and that person is John McCain."

In a statement, McCain said the resignations were "accepted with regret and deep gratitude for their dedication, hard work and friendship." He further said, "I will continue to address the issues of greatest concern to the American people, laying out my vision for a secure and prosperous America."

Rick Davis will step in as campaign manager. Davis served in this capacity during McCain's 2000 presidential bid.

McCain has not performed well in recent opinion polls. He usually trails Rudy Giuliani, Mitt Romney, Fred Thompson, and Ron Paul, pulling only single digits in some surveys.

Last week, McCain announced financial information for his campaign. The US\$11.2 million that were raised in the last three months placed him third among Republicans. The US\$2 million the campaign reported as cash-on-hand was viewed as a relatively small sum by analysts.

### **Plane crash in Florida kills five**

At least five people have been

killed, and several others injured, after a Cessna 310 crashed into a neighborhood in Sanford, Florida, in the United States. Two people on the plane and three others on the ground were reported to be killed in the crash.

The plane was attempting to make an emergency landing at the Orlando-Sanford International Airport when it crashed into two houses, causing a massive fire. The aircraft is registered to Competitor Liaison Bureau Inc. of Daytona Beach, and is linked to NASCAR's late chairman. The plane was traveling from Daytona Beach to Lakeland in Florida when the pilot declared smoke in the cockpit, and attempted an emergency landing.

The 310 is a twin-engine plane that is often used for air taxi services, and for personal use. It seats six people, including the pilot.

### **Polish Deputy Prime Minister Andrzej Lepper sacked**

Andrzej Lepper, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, as well as Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, was sacked on Monday over a corruption investigation.

Jarosław Kaczyński, the current Prime Minister, explained the reasons of dismissal in an interview for public television channel TVP1: "There are serious reasons to believe they [members of Lepper's party] may have been involved in criminal activities."

Kaczyński was referring to two people arrested by the Central Anticorruption Bureau on Friday. One of them, Andrzej R., told the Bureau that he was linked with Lepper. It is widely rumoured that a bribe in the amount of 3 million

złoty was involved.

Mr. Lepper insist he is innocent, but he also told news-channel TVN24 that the coalition is over. Lepper is the leader of the Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland party, which is the second largest in the government coalition.

"I am not going back into this government."

The coalition's break-up means that there is no majority in the Polish parliament at the moment. Self-Defence has 46 deputies in the 460-seat Sejm, the lower house of the Parliament. However, it may not mean early elections – the Opposition has too few votes to dissolve the Parliament.

### **Pakistani army storms Red Mosque; Ghazi is killed**

After failed last-minute negotiations, Pakistani troops have moved in to end the nearly one-week standoff at the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in Islamabad. There have been reports of an initial round of explosions early Tuesday morning (4:00 a.m. local time) followed by sounds of ongoing gunfire. As many as 1,800 clerics and followers had remained in the mosque.

"The militants are using small arms and grenades," said Major-General Waheed Arshad, a Pakistani military spokesman. "They are in the basement, we have covered the rooftop." According to Major-General Arshad, five Pakistani troops had been wounded in the military incursion. He expected the operation to be wrapped up in three or four hours.

Up until the latest military procedure, as many as 21 people had been killed in violence related to the standoff, which began a

week ago when Pakistani forces first moved on the mosque.

Tensions had been rising between mosque clerics and the Pakistani government for the past few months as militants at the mosque led a movement, in Islamabad, pushing for implementation of sharia law. Tensions reached a peak when students of the mosque detained seven Chinese nationals that they alleged had been working in brothels.

Several people, including former prime minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, intervened and tried to broker a deal to end the standoff. "I am returning very disappointed," said Hussain on his return from the mosque.

At least 50 militants and eight soldiers have been killed or injured as result of the military offensive. Abdul Rashid Ghazi's body has been found, according to interior ministry spokesperson, Javed Iqbal Cheema.

### **NASA readies Mars lander for launch**

NASA technicians are beginning final launch preparations on the Phoenix Mars Lander spacecraft destined for the planet Mars. The unmanned spacecraft is scheduled to launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on Florida's east coast on August 3, at around 5:35 a.m. EST (9.35 UTC). Phoenix will land in the Red Planet's northern polar region to search for signs of life, and analyze the Martian climate from a polar perspective.

The launch period for Phoenix extends from August 3, 2007 until August 24, 2007 and consists of two launch windows per day. A Delta II rocket will carry the spacecraft into Earth's orbit to begin its 122 million mile journey

to Mars.

The journey is expected to last about 9 months, ending around May 28 at a landing site called Vastitas Borealis in the northern arctic plains region of Mars. The site was identified in 2002 by the Mars Odyssey orbiter as having large amounts of water ice just below the surface. The high concentration is necessary to ensure that Phoenix will find water ice within reach of its instruments after landing.

Phoenix will remain on the surface of Mars for about 92 Earth days examining the water ice expected to lie a few inches beneath the rocky surface. The lander contains instruments that will help scientists to determine if life as we know it has ever existed, or currently exists, on this barren planet. The lander will study the atmosphere, surface and subsurface to determine if the Martian arctic soil could have ever supported life. A detailed analysis of the weather will help scientists determine the Martian climate as well as aid in planning future unmanned and eventually manned missions to our planetary neighbor.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- A Cessna 310 registered to the Competitor Liaison Bureau, an arm of NASCAR, attempting an emergency landing at Orlando Sanford International Airport crashes into two homes in Sanford, Florida. Three people in one of the homes are critically injured, and a fourth person, a four-year-old girl, is missing; an off-duty firefighter that first responded to the scene was also injured. Five are killed, including the pilot and passenger in the Cessna; the passenger is believed to be Dr. Bruce Kennedy, husband of International Speedway Corporation president Lesa Kennedy and brother-in-law of NASCAR chief Brian France.
- Al-Qaeda in Iraq threatens war with Iran in a newly released audio tape. State-run Press TV of Iran complains that the U.S. has "deliberately refused" to comment on the threats, claiming the US and Al Qaeda are linked through "a tacit agreement."
- Julian Moti is appointed as the Attorney-General of the Solomon Islands despite being wanted in Australia on child sex charges.
- Simón Trinidad, a high-ranking member of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, is found guilty of conspiracy to hold three Americans hostage by a U.S. court.
- Thailand's highest court rules that a corruption case may proceed against former Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Shinawatra.
- China executes the former head of the State Food and Drug Association Zheng Xiaoyu for corruption.
- A Tamil man from Sydney is charged with multiple terrorism charges over alleged links with

**Today in History**

- 1302 – Flemish infantry successfully halted a French invasion near Kortrijk in the Battle of the Golden Spurs.
- 1789 – French Revolution: Jacques Necker was dismissed as Director-General of Finances and ordered to leave France at once.
- 1804 – U.S. Vice President Aaron Burr mortally wounded former U.S. Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton during a duel in Weehawken, New Jersey.
- 1957 – Prince Karīm al-Hussaynī succeeded Sultan Mahommed Shah as the Aga Khan, becoming the 49th Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims.
- 1995 – Bosnian Genocide: Bosnian Serb forces under Ratko Mladić began the Srebrenica massacre in Potočari, Srebrenica, eventually killing an estimated total of 8,000 Bosniaks.
- July 11 is Naadam in Mongolia begins.

**Quote of the Day**

The only true voyage of discovery, the only fountain of Eternal Youth, would be not to visit strange lands but to possess other eyes, to behold the universe through the eyes of another, of a hundred others, to behold the hundred universes that each of them beholds, that each of them is.  
 ~ Marcel Proust

**Word of the Day**

- invidious; adj
1. Prompted by or expressing or adapted to excite envious dislike or ill will; offensively or unfairly discriminating.
  2. Envious; causing or arising from envy.
  3. Hateful; odious; detestable.

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