



### Top Stories

#### President Bush vetoes CIA waterboarding ban

U.S. President George W. Bush vetoed a bill that would have banned harsh interrogation techniques such as "waterboarding" used by the Central Intelligence Agency.



#### Spanish PM condemns killing of councillor

A politician from the ruling Socialist Party has been killed in Spain's northern Basque region, just two days before the general elections. The councillor was shot outside his house in front of his wife and daughter and was taken to hospital, where he died of his wounds. After the shooting the main parties announced a halt to campaigning. According to the polls, the two parties are neck and neck in the race for the election.



#### Missing five year old found dead in Spain

Mari Luz, a five year old girl missing from Huelva, Spain for nearly two months, has been found dead.



#### Vietnam bans pet hamsters

Fearing that their growing population might spread disease and destroy crops, Vietnam has banned the sale and possession of hamsters, which have launched somewhat of a subculture among the country's youth.



### Wikipedia Current Events

- United States presidential election, 2008: Illinois Senator Barack Obama wins the Wyoming Democratic caucus.
- The Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt becomes the first foreign minister to visit Kosovo since the country declared its independence.
- Police in Memphis, Tennessee make an arrest in connection with the killing of four adults and two children.
- Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica resigns, dissolving a coalition too divided over the loss of Kosovo to carry on governing.
- Voters in Malta go to the polls for the Maltese general election, 2008.
- Vietnam bans ownership of pet hamsters.
- Malaysians go to the polls for the Malaysian general election, 2008. The Barisan National party secures another term in government.
- The United States and Iraq

### Wikipedia Current Events

commence talks about the future of relationships between the two nations including a longer term US military presence in Iraq.

#### Nightwish added to billing of UK's Bloodstock Open Air festival

Finnish symphonic power metal band Nightwish have been added to the billing of the United Kingdom's Bloodstock Open Air (BOA) festival.

The annual three day festival will take part through August 15-17. Established in 2005 as a spinoff of the original Bloodstock festival, BOA 2008 also features Dimmu Borgir, Opeth, Soilwork, Iced Earth and Helloween, amongst others.

The event, being held in Derbyshire's Catton Hall, will also feature a stage devoted to unsigned bands.

#### BBC Outside Broadcasts to be sold to Satellite Information Services

Satellite Information Services Limited (SIS), the racecourse television company part-owned by William Hill and Ladbrokes, has been named by the BBC as the preferred bidder for its Outside Broadcasts division, one of three active businesses within BBC Resources Ltd.

SIS Chief Executive David Holdgate would not comment on the terms of the deal, thought to be around £50m, but said it would

be "an ideal acquisition for SIS" and "a perfect fit with our existing SISLink and sports coverage". The company has long-term contracts with other leading broadcasters, such as Sky and ITV and provides satellite links for live sport and news.

In a statement, the BBC said that it intended to exchange contracts and transfer the Outside Broadcasts business and staff in the near future, with Andy Thornton, BBC project director for the sale of the division, saying that "SIS offered the BBC a good deal and best value for licence fee payers". Mark Tugwell, Director, BBC Outside Broadcasts, added "it's time for our business to flourish under new ownership, without the constraints of BBC ownership".

#### *BBC Studios*

On 7th March 2008 the surprise announcement was made that the studios operation (employing around 350 staff at Television Centre and Elstree) would remain in BBC ownership after failing to attract a suitable bid .

#### *BBC Post Production*

The fate of this third business has yet to be announced with the BBC continuing negotiations with the preferred bidder "understood to be a company based in west London".

#### *BBC Costume and Wigs*

Was not included in the privatisation - in early October 2007 it was announced that the business was to close within six months and the entire stock sold as a complete collection. The sale fell through, and on 14th February 2008 it was announced that the department would cease trading with a BBC spokeswoman adding that "the arrangements [the corporation] was pursuing have

not worked out and BBC Resources is currently inviting interested parties to consider making an offer to purchase."

BBC Costume and Wigs - which had been trading as part of BBC Studios - was the second largest collection of its kind in the UK, after the leading suppliers Angels The Costumiers.

#### *Background to the Resources sale*

The Resources business-to-business unit was formed in 1998 and operates television studios, post-production and outside broadcast facilities for it's parent share-holding company, the BBC. It does not own any studios or premises, its assets being staff and equipment.

Advertised for sale on 16th August 2007 in the Financial Times, The Times and Broadcast and in 2006-07 making profits of £5.2 million with a revenue of £126 million, the disposal — led by Ernst & Young — invited expressions of interest for the whole division or for each of its three operations separately. The BBC has yet to release the name of the preferred bidder for BBC Post Production.

BBC Resources was the first of the BBC's commercial business-to-business divisions to be set up as a limited company and will be the last to be sold, the BBC having previously divested itself of BBC Technology and BBC Broadcast — BBC Worldwide, formerly BBC Enterprises, remains in-house as does BBC Studios.

It had been intended to float Resources back in 2005, but this was postponed for two years following strike action and ACAS talks in June 2005 — the BBC giving an undertaking that there would be no preparations made to

sell the company until January 2007, and no sale allowed before July 2007. It had been hoped to dispose of all three divisions by the end of this month.

#### **President Bush vetoes CIA waterboarding ban**

United States President George W. Bush has vetoed a bill that would have banned the Central Intelligence Agency from using harsh interrogation techniques such as waterboarding, he said in his weekly radio address Saturday.

"Because the danger remains, we need to ensure our intelligence officials have all the tools they need to stop the terrorists," Bush said. "The bill Congress sent me would take away one of the most valuable tools in the war on terror - the CIA program to detain and question key terrorist leaders and operatives."

The bill, which passed the House of Representatives in November and the Senate in February despite warnings that it would be vetoed, established guidelines for intelligence activities. One of these guidelines would limit the CIA to only using interrogation methods allowed in the U.S. Army Field Manual.

The relevant text of the bill reads: "No individual in the custody or under the effective control of an element of the intelligence community or instrumentality thereof, regardless of nationality or physical location, shall be subject to any treatment or technique of interrogation not authorized by the United States Army Field Manual on Human Intelligence Collector Operations"

Among the methods prohibited in

the manual are stripping prisoners naked, forcing them to perform sexual acts, beating, electrocuting, or burning them, staging mock executions, withholding food and medical attention, and the controversial technique known as waterboarding.

Waterboarding involves pouring water over a prisoner's cloth-covered face in a simulation of drowning. It is condemned as torture by many nations, human rights groups, and members of Congress.

Although Bush did not specifically mention waterboarding in his address, he did hint to it in some of his statements. "The bill Congress sent me would not simply ban one particular interrogation method, as some have implied," he said. "Instead, it would eliminate all the alternative procedures we've developed to question the world's most dangerous and violent terrorists."

Bush said that the methods used by the military are designed for interrogating "lawful combatants captured on the battlefield", not the "hardened terrorists" normally questioned by the CIA. "If we were to shut down this program and restrict the CIA to methods in the Field Manual, we could lose vital information from senior al Qaida terrorists, and that could cost American lives," Bush said.

Massachusetts senator Edward Kennedy described Bush's veto as "one of the most shameful acts of his presidency". In a statement released Friday, he said, "Unless Congress overrides the veto, it will go down in history as a flagrant insult to the rule of law and a serious stain on the good name of America in the eyes of the world."

### **Mari Luz, missing child from Huelva, Spain, found dead**

Five year old Mari Luz, missing from Huelva, Spain since she left her home in the El Torrejón area of the city on 13th January for a short trip to the local sweets kiosk, has been found dead.

El Mundo said her body was found on Friday evening in Huelva province's Torrearenilla marshland, in a river close to the Cepsa refinery installations, by an employee of the petroleum company. It's understood that Mari Luz's body was found with the clothes she was wearing when she disappeared , and that her body was badly decomposed.

There was news last week that the family of the five year old had received a ransom demand for two million euros, via an anonymous caller who demanded the money to release the child. While it was thought to be a hoax, the family said they were prepared to negotiate in the case of serious calls. Mari Luz's uncle, Diego Cortés, said at the time that the family would personally go to rescue his niece if necessary, but said they would only be able to raise around 300,000 €.

El Mundo said Mari Luz's parents, Juan José Cortés and Irene Suárez, had arrived at the scene to identify their daughter's body, and that Juan José López Garzón, the central government delegate for Andalucía, was also en route to the site where Mari Luz's body was found.

### **Vietnam bans pet hamsters**

Fearing that their growing population might spread disease and destroy crops, Vietnam has banned the sale and possession of hamsters, which have launched somewhat of a subculture among

the country's youth.

Starting Monday, the fine for trading or owning a hamster will reach up to 30 million dong (1,875 US dollars), the Ministry of Agriculture said. They express concern that hamsters have been imported illegally from China, Thailand, or Taiwan, and are left unlicensed and unchecked for diseases.

"Traders illegally carry hamsters across borders and do not register with customs to quarantine these animals," said a senior official of the Animal Health Department.

Although the Animal Health Department has said they will kill any hamster that has been imported illegally, there are no plans for a mass elimination of hamsters.

"Destroying them all is really a big problem," agriculture ministry official Nguyen Thanh Son said. "I think the Vietnam animal health department should take some samples, conduct tests, and see how dangerous the hamsters in Vietnam really are."

Hamsters arrived in Vietnam years ago for use in scientific research, but have only become popular recently. The rodents' increasing popularity with youngsters has been attributed to 2008 being the Year of the Rat in the Chinese Zodiac. Their adoration can be seen online, where there are numerous forums allowing hamster owners to talk about their beloved pets. The craze has even spawned offline "hamster clubs".

### **International arms dealer Viktor Bout arrested in Thailand**

Viktor Bout, an international arms dealer, has been arrested in

Thailand. Bout was arrested by the Royal Thai Police on Thursday, after checking in at a Sofitel luxury hotel in the Si Lom district of Bangkok.

Viktor Bout is suspected of supplying arms to the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, FARC, as well as combatants on both sides of African civil wars. He has been dubbed the "Merchant of Death" by the press as well as the book *Merchant of Death: Money, Guns, Planes and the Man Who Makes War Possible* by Douglas Farah and Stephen Braun.

At a press conference held by Thai police they said that Bout is being investigated for "procuring weapons for terrorists and conspiring with terrorists." According to Maj. Gen. Surapol Thuanthong, Bout said "The game is over" when he was arrested.

"This multi-country operation culminating in the arrest of Viktor Bout in Thailand is a model for how suspected dangerous international criminals need to be investigated, charged and brought to justice in the 21st century," said Interpol Secretary General Ronald Noble.

Federal prosecutors in the United States hope to get Bout extradited for prosecution on charges of conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization.

The 2005 film, *Lord of War* has been said to have been inspired by Viktor Bout.

### **South American leaders end border dispute**

An exchange of handshakes at a Latin American summit Friday marked the end of the bitter dispute that had taken place

between the nations of Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela over the past week. The presidents of each country agreed to end the conflict, and said political ties would be reinstated.

"With the commitment of never attacking a brother country again and by asking forgiveness, we can consider this very serious incident resolved," said Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa, as the other Latin American leaders applauded.

The Rio Group summit, which included 20 Latin American nations, was originally planned to discuss other issues such as energy, but it soon erupted into a series of verbal attacks between Correa and Colombian president Álvaro Uribe. The dispute was over Colombia's air strike against FARC rebels, which Ecuador accused of entering their territory. As a result, Ecuador and their ally Venezuela had sent troops to their borders and severed ties with Colombia.

At the summit, Uribe charged Correa's government of having links with the FARC rebels, a charge that Correa quickly denied. "I cannot accept Uribe's lies," he said. "These hands are not tainted with blood." He admitted there had been communication with the FARC, but only regarding the release of hostages held by the rebels, including French-Colombian politician Ingrid Betancourt.

Uribe insisted that Ecuador has not done enough to fight the rebels, which was the reason the operation had to remain a secret, he said. "We have not gotten cooperation from President Correa in the fight against terrorism." Correa then advocated the creation of an international peacekeeping force to control the

border, saying that Ecuador has become a victim of the fighting in Colombia.

Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, who was initially a central figure in the conflict, urged the leaders to stay calm. "We still have time to stop a whirlpool which we could regret," he said. "Let's reflect, let's be cool-headed." He also denied claims that he had supplied FARC with \$300 million and offered to give them rifles. "I could have sent a lot of rifles to the FARC," Chávez said. "I will never do it because I want peace."

Finally, it was Dominican president Leonel Fernandez plea for peace that ended the feud. He requested that the presidents shake hands with each other, which they did, in a televised gesture viewed live across Latin America. Nicaragua's president, Daniel Ortega, also agreed to reinstate diplomatic ties with Colombia after shaking hands with their president.

The leaders at the summit later approved a declaration in which Uribe apologized for the military operation and vowed never again to violate another nation's sovereignty. It also mentioned a commitment to fight against threats posed by "irregular or criminal groups."

### **National Hockey League news**

There were 5 games played in the National Hockey League on March 7, 2008.

#### *Tampa Bay Lightning @ New Jersey Devils*

Zach Parise scored the first goal for the Devils at 12:16 into the first period. Michel Ouellet tied the score late in the second period with a power play goal. The game remained tied through the rest of regulation, so it went to overtime.

With less than a minute left in the 5 minute 4-on-4, Patrik Elias scored the game winner, giving the Devils their second straight win. The Lightning lost their fourth straight. The Devils outshot the Lightning 33-22. Martin Brodeur made 21 saves, earning his 37th win of the season. Elias had 2 points, assisting on Parise's goal.

#### *Edmonton Oilers @ Columbus Blue Jackets*

Edmonton broke a scoreless tie 11:02 into the second period when Fernando Pisani scored on an Oilers power play. With less than a second remaining in regulation, Dan Fritsche put a puck past Mathieu Garon, sending the game to overtime. Andrew Cogliano scored the game winner 1:53 into OT, giving the Oilers their 5th win in 6 games. The Blue Jackets have lost their third straight. Garon made 30 saves for the Oilers. The Blue Jackets outshot the Oilers 31-17.

#### *Minnesota Wild @ Atlanta Thrashers*

Brian Rolston scored the first goal of the game for Minnesota on a power play 10:47 through the first period, giving them a 1-0 lead they would hold through the second period. In the third period, Colby Armstrong tied the score for the Thrashers. Minnesota retook a lead with 2:22 left in the third period, but Ilya Kovalchuk pushed in a puck that trickled along the goal line behind Niklas Backstrom, to retie the score and send the game into overtime. In the shootout, Erik Christensen scored the only shootout goal of the night. Johan Hedberg made three stops, giving the Thrashers their first win in franchise history against the Minnesota Wild. The Thrashers also snap an 8 game winless streak. Minnesota has now lost their last three games.

*San Jose Sharks @ Chicago*  
Brent Seabrook scored the first goal for Chicago on their first power play early in the first period. The Sharks tied the score just 17 seconds later when Jonathan Cheechoo scored his 22nd of the season. Kyle McLaren put the Sharks in the lead with his goal at 12:45 in the first period. Jonathan Toews scored his 19th goal of the season with 1:51 left in the first period, to re-tie the score going into the first intermission. Patrick Marleau retook the lead for the Sharks at 14:31 in the second period. Chicago thought they tied it up late in the third period, but the goal was reviewed and nullified because it was deflected in by Rene Bourque's glove instead of his stick. Evgeni Nabokov made 17 saves for the Sharks in his 38th win of the season. Blackhawks goalie Patrick Lalime made 20 saves. Joe Thornton had 3 points, assisting on all 3 San Jose goals.

#### *Nashville Predators @ Calgary Flames*

Craig Conroy scored an unassisted goal, breaking a scoreless tie over halfway through the second period. In the third period, Scott Nichol scored at 8:58 to tie the score. About two minutes into the sudden death overtime, J.P. Dumont scored to give the Predators the win. Dan Ellis stopped all but one of the Flames' 30 shots, and improved his record to 18-7-2. Miikka Kiprusoff had 34 saves for Calgary.

#### *Player of the Day*



Today's Player of the Day is Joe Thornton of the San Jose Sharks. Thornton assisted on all three of San Jose's goals in his team's 3-2 win over the Chicago Blackhawks. He currently leads the league in assists with 62, and is

third in points with 81.

#### **Today in History**

1841 – The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that captive Africans who seized control of La Amistad, the trans-Atlantic slave-trading ship carrying them, had been taken into slavery illegally.

1842 – Nabucco, an opera by Italian Romantic composer Giuseppe Verdi, premiered at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan.

1862 – American Civil War: In the world's first major battle between two powered ironclad warships, the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia fought to a draw at the Battle of Hampton Roads near the mouth of Hampton Roads in Virginia.

1945 – World War II: A bomb raid on Tokyo by American B-29 heavy bombers started a firestorm, killing over 100,000 people.

1959 – Barbie, the world's best-selling doll, debuted at the American International Toy Fair in New York City.

March 09 is Baron Bliss Day in Belize.

#### **Quote of the Day**

If you're a singer you lose your voice. A baseball player loses his arm. A writer gets more knowledge, and if he's good, the older he gets, the better he writes.

~ Mickey Spillane

#### **Word of the Day**

trepidation n

1. A fearful state; a state of hesitation or concern.

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