



Top Stories

School children and teachers taken hostage in Philippines

The head of a day care centre in Manilla, Philippines, has boarded a bus containing 32 children and 2 teachers from the centre and is currently holding them hostage, demanding better education rights and better housing for them.

UK freezes business arrangements with Iran; detained sailors and marines shown on TV

The United Kingdom has frozen all bilateral business deals with Iran until all 15 British sailors and marines, which were detained by Iranian forces on March 23, 2007, be released and the sailors and marines recently appeared on Iranian TV.

Featured story

Mass wedding held against racism in Belgium

In February, three couples refused to pledge their wedding vows in front of the black alderman of the city of Sint-Niklaas, because of the colour of his skin. So he decided to organise a mass wedding, to send a positive signal against racial discrimination in Belgium.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The President of Guinea Lansana Conte names a new government led by the Prime Minister of Guinea Lansana Kouyate.
- Arab and Middle East leaders meet in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to discuss reviving the Middle East peace process.
- The U.S. military reports that insurgents with two chlorine truck bombs have attacked a local government building in Fallujah.
- 2007 Tal Afar bombings: Gunmen kill dozens of people in Tal Afar a day after approximately 50 people die in suicide bombings.
- Sydney Harbour Bridge Ferry Disaster. A Sydney Ferries jetcat collides with a private charter vessel beneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge in the waters of Port Jackson, Sydney, Australia, killing three people with another person missing.
- The Movement for Democratic Change says its leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, has been arrested by police. He was later released but other activists remained in police custody.
- The Southern African Development Community holds an emergency summit in Dar-es-Salaam to discuss the crisis.
- The British Ministry of Defence has published exact co-ordinates of the location of the Royal Navy personnel when they were seized by Iran. According to this data the soldiers were 1.7 nautical miles within Iraqi waters at the time of their capture.

2007 Cricket World Cup: Sri Lanka vs South Africa

South Africa beat Sri Lanka by 1 wicket (with 10 balls remaining) in a dramatic finish in the Super 8 phase of the World Cup at the Providence Stadium, Georgetown, Guyana.

South Africa looked to be cruising to victory at 206-5, before Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga set a new World Cup record - and also international level record - with 4 wickets from 4 balls. Nevertheless, South Africa held their nerve to scrape home by one wicket.

This was both teams' first game in the Super 8 stage, although Sri Lanka already had 2 points on the board, thanks to their victory over Bangladesh in the group stage. South Africa entered empty-handed, having lost to their fellow group qualifiers, Australia.

Toss: Sri Lanka won, and elected to bat first.

UEFA Euro 2008: March 28th qualification game roundup

Another Full day of matches occurred Wednesday in the qualification rounds of the 2008 Euro. Big games of the day included Italy taking on Scotland, and Sweden visiting Northern Ireland.

Group A

Azerbaijan played host to second place Finland, and Azerbaijan earned their first win of the tournament with a goal from Emin

Imamaliyev giving them the 1-0 win. Poland played host to last place Armenia, and the group leaders came out on top 1-0. Portugal jumped past Finland into second place with a 1-1 draw with Serbia. Tiago scored after only 5 minutes to give Portugal the lead, but a thirty-seventh minute goal by Bosko Jankovic tied the game for the Serbs.

Group B

Georgia defeated last place Faroe Islands by a scoreline of 3-1, while the Ukraine pulled out a 1-0 win at home to Lithuania. In one of the biggest group matches, Scotland travelled to Italy to take on the Azzuri. A brace from Luca Toni gave Italy a 2-0 win, giving the Italians a great chance of qualifying.

Group C

Hungary jumped over Malta into fifth place with a 1-0 win over Moldova, while Malta lost to visiting Greece by the same scoreline. Group leaders Turkey battled back from a 2-0 deficit to earn a 2-2 draw against fourth place Norway, leaving Turkey one point clear of Greece.

Group D

The Czech Republic squeaked by Cyprus 1-0, giving the Czech's commanding control of second in Group D. The Republic of Ireland kept in close contention for a place in the Euro finals with a 1-0 win over Slovakia. The win leaves the Irish two points back of the second place Czech's. Wales put three past San Marino to give their Euro campaign a boost. A goal after only three minutes by Ryan Giggs was all they needed to win, but defender Gareth Bale and Jason Koumas scored to ensure the points for the Welsh.

Group E

Israel thumped Estonia 4-0 with

Chelsea youngster Ben Sahar earning a brace three minutes apart in the second half. In the only other game in the group, England visited Andorra in an attempt to quiet the critics over head coach Steve McClaren. Though the game went into the break 0-0, two goals by Steven Gerrard after the restart and a stoppage time marker by David Nugent lifted England to a convincing away win. The win puts England on 11 points, equal to both Israel and Russia, but the Russians have a game in hand.

Group F

Mario Frick's goal in the seventeenth minute was enough to lift Liechtenstein over Latvia, giving them their first win of the Euro campaign. Northern Ireland came back from a 1-0 deficit to defeat Sweden by a score of 2-1. Both goals scored for Ireland were by David Healy, who has scored 5 in his past two games. The win pushes Northern Ireland into first over Sweden. A goal in the eighty-first minute by Andres Iniesta lifted Spain over Iceland 1-0. The win lifted Spain past idle Denmark into fourth place.

Group G

Bulgaria and Albania played out to a stalemate, while Romania put three by Luxembourg to jump into second spot in the group. A goal in the 86th minute by Giovanni van Bronckhorst gave the Netherlands a 1-0 win over Slovenia, and leaves Holland three points clear of Romania at the top of the group.

UK freezes business arrangements with Iran; detained sailors and marines shown on TV

The United Kingdom has frozen all bilateral business deals with Iran until all 15 British sailors and marines, who were detained by Iranian forces on March 23 are

released.

"We will therefore be imposing a freeze on all other official bilateral business with Iran until this situation is resolved. We will keep other aspects of our policy with Iran under close review and continue to proceed carefully," said British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett to the House of Commons.

Further evidence was also presented that the U.K. says proves that the 15 sailors and marines were in fact inside Iraqi waters when they were detained.

"The position was 29 degrees, 50.36 minutes north; 48, 43.08 minutes east, and this places her 1.7 nautical miles inside Iraqi territorial waters," said Vice Admiral Charles Style who also said that Iran provided the British government with two different sets of coordinates, the first of which showed the British boats in Iraqi waters, but then the second set of coordinates, which had shown corrections, had shown the boats to be in Iranian waters.

Mohammad Reza Bahonar, the deputy speaker of the Majlis of Iran has stated that if it is determined that the British sailors were in Iranian water, then the country would expect the British to apologize for the incident.

"If it is proven that a mistake has been made the issue will be resolved with an apology from the British government. If it is proven to be intentional, the British government should explain its aim and clarify how it is going to compensate," he said.

Footage of all 15 British sailors and marines have been broadcast on Iranian TV, with one of the sailors, Faye Turney, 26, saying that the

soldiers were in Iranian waters at the time of their detainment, a move in which Britain calls "completely unacceptable." Turney was wearing a black "head scarf" which is a traditional wearing for Iranian women.

According to the Iranian Foreign Minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, the female sailor will "be released very soon," but did not state when the other 14 sailors and marines would be released.

Officials in Britain have not confirmed the reports that any of their servicemen and women would be released and British Prime Minister Tony Blair called the detention of the sailors "wrong and illegal."

2007 Cricket World Cup: Australia vs West Indies

Australia beat West Indies by 103 runs in the first game of the Super 8 phase in the World Cup at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda.

Yesterday, Australia posted their innings of 322. As the teams went for lunch, the heavens opened and rain prevented any more play.

West Indies' innings therefore was delayed until today.

Toss: West Indies won, and elected to field first.

School children and teachers taken hostage in Philippines

The head of a day care centre in Manila, Philippines, has boarded a bus containing 32 children and 2 teachers from the centre and is holding them hostage, demanding better education rights and better housing for them.

Jun Ducat and one other armed individual took the party hostage

while they were going out on a trip with the day care centre.

The bus has been surrounded by armed Filipino police, and through negotiation, the hostage takers agreed to release all the remaining children on the bus at 11:00am BST (10:00am GMT), but the deadline for this has now passed with no sign of the remaining children being released as per the agreement.

One child has been released from the bus and taken away by police and emergency medical services suffering from a high fever.

Mr Ducat said that he had no intention of harming the people aboard the bus in any way, and indeed, the seige has ended with his surrender.

"I accept that I should be jailed because what I did was against the law," Ducat said in an interview with Associated Press. No child was reported physically injured, but they are undergoing medical checkups and psychological debriefings.

Major Pakistan newspaper under government pressure

The publisher Dawn Group has been under increasing pressure from the government to stop negative coverage of events happening on the troubled Pakistan-Afghanistan border as well as recent events in the troubled province of Balochistan.

A series of emails written last week by Hameed Haroon, the managing CEO of Dawn Goup and Pakistan's biggest English language newspaper, the Dawn, have been circulated over the Internet. The emails allege that the government

is depriving the newspaper of advertising revenue as a means of placing increasing pressure on it.

Mr. Haroon wrote, "It has always been difficult for governments to coexist with a free and independent press in Pakistan. Of late, however, the government headed by President Musharraf has become increasingly intolerant towards criticism in the press and towards the publishing of news that reflects poorly on the performance of his government on security matters." according to AsiansInMedia.org.

The allegations came recently after the offices of the Geo TV network and its affiliates, a media group unrelated to Dawn Group, were stormed by Islamabad police while the network was airing live video coverage of unrest caused by the dismissal of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry.

The President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf has denied his government is targeting the media, and in the controversy sparked by the revelations insisted that he supports press freedom. "I granted freedom which the (Pakistani) media enjoys today," he said in a speech delivered Saturday in Pakpattan.

US to seek less than 20 years for Hicks

The United States will reportedly seek a jail sentence of less than 20 years for Australian David Hicks. He pleaded guilty to providing material support for terrorism, but not an act of terrorism. Hicks may be sentenced by the end of the week. He could be returned to Australia to serve out his sentence, with credit for the years at Guantanamo Bay.

Global stock markets are lower US stocks fell on Tuesday starting another round of global selling, as

worries about the US housing market and weaker consumer confidence. Lennar Corp., one of the largest US home builders reported that profits fell 73%. Wednesday, Asia markets opened steady to higher, but fell as rising oil prices and the geopolitical standoff between Britain and Iran made investors seek the safety of government bonds. European and North American markets are trading lower in the Wednesday trading session.

Gunmen kill 50 overnight in Sunni district in Iraq

In an apparent reprisal for bombings in Shi'ite areas, gunmen went on a rampage in a Sunni in Tal Afar, Iraq, killing about 50 people. There have been reports that the gunmen included police.

UK releases GPS data in dispute with Iran

The United Kingdom has made public GPS data that it says proves that the 15 navy personnel were well inside Iraqi waters when they were seized by Iran. Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said the dispute would be solved "based on rules and regulations" and that the female sailor would be released soon.

First black airmen in US Airforce to be honored

Surviving members of the 332d Air Expeditionary Group and 99th Pursuit Squadron, widely known as the Tuskegee Airmen, will be honored on Thursday by President Bush at a ceremony at the US Capitol. They will receive the Congressional Gold Medal for fighting both the Nazis abroad and racial segregation at home.

Today in History

1638 - Swedish settlers founded New Sweden near Delaware Bay, the first Swedish colony in America.

1809 - At the Diet of Porvoo, the Four Estates of Finland pledged allegiance to Tsar Alexander I of Russia, commencing the secession of the Grand Duchy of Finland from Sweden.

1831 - Bosniak general Husein Gradaščević began an uprising against Sultan Mahmud II and the Ottoman Empire.

1871 - The Royal Albert Hall in Albertopolis was officially opened by Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom.

1974 - NASA spaceprobe Mariner 10 flew by the planet Mercury.

Quote of the Day

We should not be simply fighting evil in the name of good, but struggling against the certainties of people who claim always to know where good and evil are to be found.

~ Tzvetan Todorov

Word of the Day

- jactitation; n
1. Bragging or boasting, especially in a false manner to another's detriment.
 2. (medicine) Restless twitching or tossing in bed.

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