



### Top Stories

#### Jacques Chirac announces he will not pursue a third Presidential mandate



The President of France, Jacques Chirac, announced during a radio and television broadcast that he will not seek a new mandate.

#### Zimbabwe police break up rally, detain leaders

Zimbabwe police broke up a prayer rally protesting government policy on Sunday, arresting over 100 people, including the leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, Morgan Tsvangirai.



### Wikipedia Current Events

arrested for defying a ban on protest rallies in Harare. Riot police shoot one activist dead.

- The President of France Jacques Chirac announces that he will not be seeking a third term.
- Voters in Russia go to the polls in elections in 14 regions including Saint Petersburg. The elections have been widely criticised by the Opposition.
- The Ariane 5 rocket carrying the new generation Skynet 5 military satellite system is launched successfully from Kourou in French Guiana at 22:03 GMT.
- Mauritanian voters go to the polls to elect a new President to replace Colonel Ely Ould Mohamed Vall who took power in a coup d'état two years ago. It is likely that a runoff election will be held as there is no clear frontrunner.
- The ninth Cricket World Cup opens in Trelawny Stadium, Montego Bay, Jamaica. The 2007 championship will feature cricket matches staged in various locations across the Caribbean.

#### Seven players added to lineup for United charity match

Coach Marcello Lippi has recently added 7 new players to his European XI squad for the March 13th charity match against Manchester United at Old Trafford. Four stars from Italian Club AC Milan join the star studded lineup, along with a player from each of Valencia, Roma and Real Madrid. The players join other European

stars such as Ronaldinho, Henrik Larsson, Juninho and Gregory Coupet.

Paolo Maldini:

Current Club: AC Milan

Age: 38

A veteran of the Italian game, Maldini has been playing since 1985 for AC Milan. His awards list is long, and includes 7 Serie A trophies, 5 Italian Super Cups, and 4 Champions League medals.

Genaro Gattuso:

Current Club: AC Milan

Age: 29

The defensive midfielder was part of Italian World Cup winning team in 2006, and is sure to add both defensive and offensive elements to the play of the Europe XI.

Andrea Pirlo:

Current Club: AC Milan

Age: 27

Pirlo is regarded as one of the best midfielders in the Serie A. He is an accurate passer, and a skilled playmaker. He has won several trophies with Milan, as well as with the Italian national squad.

Ronaldo:

Current Club: AC Milan

Age: 30

The Brazilian born striker is the top scorer of all time in the FIFA World Cup, and has won the award twice with his country. He was signed in January by Milan from Real Madrid of the Spanish Primera League.

Mancini:

Current Club: AS Roma

Age: 27

### Featured story

#### Bug in Microsoft antivirus deletes users' e-mails

Microsoft's officials admitted that the company's Windows Live OneCare security suite has been deleting by accident e-mails of those users that worked with Outlook and Outlook Express.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Leading opponents of Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, including Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, and four other members of parliament and party activists, are

Another Brazilian born player, Mancini is often overlooked for his national team. His latest contribution for Roma was a sensational goal against Lyon in the Champions League, which involved 5 quick stepovers, and a blasted shot into the top corner of the net to guarantee Roma a spot in the quarterfinals.

Íker Casillas:

Current Club: Real Madrid

Age: 25

Casillas is currently the number one goal keeper for both Real Madrid and the Spanish National team. He has won both the Spanish League and the Champions League twice with Madrid in his 8 years with the club.

Miguel:

Current Club: Valencia

Age: 27

The Portugese defender is a regular to his national team, and played in the 2006 FIFA World Cup for Portugal. He won the Portugese Championship in 2005 with Benfica.

Coach Marcello Lippi will be checking on all the players fitness on Sunday night, and will announce the entire squad in Brussels, Belgium the next day. 70,000 tickets have already been sold for the match, setting a record for a non-competition match at Old Trafford. This means only 2,000 tickets remain for the game at the 76,000 seat stadium, as capacity has been set lower to accomodate two giant screens for pre-match entertainment. All proceeds to the match will go the Manchester United Fund, and will be used to help children all over the world.

### **National Hockey League suspends Simon for season**

The National Hockey League (NHL) has handed down a season-long suspension, including the playoffs,

to Chris Simon of the New York Islanders. The suspension, for a minimum of 25 games, is a ruling for a hit Simon laid on Ryan Hollweg of the New York Rangers during a March 8 game at Nassau Veterans' Memorial Coliseum.

In a press release earlier today, the NHL indicated that they considered Simon's hit on Hollweg, with a stick to the face, to be a deliberate intent to injure. "The National Hockey League will not accept the use of a stick in the manner and fashion in which Mr. Simon used his Thursday night," said Colin Campbell, NHL Senior Executive Vice President and Director of Hockey Operations.

The incident occurred at 13:29 of the third period. After receiving a hard check from Hollweg, Simon swung his stick and delivered a two-handed blow to Hollweg's upper body, causing a cut on Hollweg's chin. Simon was assessed a match penalty.

Based on his \$1-million contract, which expires at the conclusion of the 2006-07 season, Simon forfeits a minimum of \$80,213.90. The money goes to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

The suspension could carry over into the 2007-2008 hockey season, depending on how far the Islanders advance into the playoffs. According to the NHL press release, if the Islanders do not qualify for the 2007 playoffs, or play fewer than 10 playoff games in the 2007 playoffs, Simon would serve additional games at the start of the 2007-08 regular season to satisfy the minimum term of the suspension.

Garth Snow, General Manager of the Islanders, indicated his support for Simon in a brief press release.

"I spoke with Colin Campbell this morning and he informed me of his decision. Chris Simon has played a major role in our success this season and we will miss his presence in our lineup. His regret is clearly evident in the statement he released last night. Our entire organization supports Chris every step of the way."

In a statement March 10, prior to the verdict, Simon expressed regret for his actions. "After watching the tape the morning after Thursday's game, I was disgusted. There is absolutely no place in hockey for what I did. I want to apologize to Ryan Hollweg. I was grateful to learn that Ryan is okay and that he returned to the game. My hope is to reach out to him in the near future."

Simon explains that his behavior may have been influenced by a hit he received less than a minute before his stick swinging incident. "I do not remember much about Thursday's incident. When I saw the tape on Friday morning, it explained a lot to me when I saw the look on my face after being hit into the boards. I was completely out of it."

Simon didn't appear to let it excuse his hit on Hollweg. "I need to make clear that this is not justification for the danger I put Ryan Hollweg in and the damage I have caused the game. I understand disciplinary action will be taken."

The Associated Press indicated that criminal charges against Simon are being considered. According to a spokesperson for Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice, "no decision has been reached" on bringing charges, but that "prosecutors would review the tape."

### Jacques Chirac announces he will not pursue a third Presidential mandate

"I will not seek your votes for a new mandate." With these words, the President of France, Jacques Chirac (74) announced during a radio and television broadcast at 20:00 UTC that it's time for him to serve his country in a different way.

The announcement was widely speculated about and did not come as a surprise. The official announcement gives the candidate from the majority party UMP, Nicolas Sarkozy, more freedom during the next six weeks that remain before the Presidential elections in France. Although Sarkozy is from the same party as Chirac and hopes to receive an endorsement from him, the President has not yet expressed his support for a particular candidate to succeed him, and he did not refer to Sarkozy during any moment of his speech.

In his 4 decades in French politics, Chirac has occupied several posts as Minister and was Prime Minister twice before being elected President in 1995, and being re-elected in 2002. Shortly after taking office, he acknowledged the role of France in the deportation of 75,000 Jews during World War II. After he called for new elections in 1997, he had to work with a Socialist Prime Minister, Lionel Jospin for 5 years. In 2001, France became the first country to declare slavery a crime against humanity, and Chirac decided May 10 would be a day to commemorate the abolition of slavery.

In 2003, Chirac threatened to veto a resolution in the U.N. Security Council that would approve of an invasion of Iraq. Consequently, the United States overthrew Saddam Hussein without support from the

United Nations. In 2005, Chirac couldn't convince the French to approve the European Constitution in a referendum. At the end of that year, minority youths in France's suburbs rioted for three weeks.

During his address, the President also discussed the democratic values of France, his role and responsibilities, Europe and the environment.

In the polls, Sarkozy has a slight benefit over Ségolène Royal, the candidate from the Socialist Party. François Bayrou, the candidate from the centrist party UDF, has improved his positions in the polls during the last few weeks, coming up in third position by only a few points. If none of the candidates reach an absolute majority during the first round on April 22, a second round between the two candidates with the most votes will be organised. In the polls, at least 40% of voters have said they are yet undecided about their vote in the upcoming ballot.

### Chelsea strike late to force FA Cup replay

Premiership title hopefuls Chelsea were forced to battle back for a draw earlier today at Stamford Bridge. Tottenham seemed to have a spot in the semifinals of the FA Cup all wrapped up before two late strikes from Lampard and Kalou ruined the day for Spurs. Chelsea were again without the heart of their defence, John Terry, and it showed for much of the game as Tottenham broke through the Blues lines far too easily on several occasions. Chelsea came out to win though, and nearly all their main stars were on the pitch to start the match, including Shevchenko, Ballack, Drogba, and Lampard. Martin Jol's Tottenham also fielded a strong attacking side, even without the use of the injured

Robbie Keane. Defoe, Berbatov, and Lennon lead the way for Spurs instead, with Canadian Paul Stalteri and Englishman Michael Dawson on defence. Tottenham also had to use their backup keeper Radek Cerny, as their number one Paul Robinson is with Keane on the injured list.

Tottenham came out fast and hard, scoring after only 5 minutes. Jermain Defoe cut in from the left and attempted a pass to Hossam Ghaly, but Aaron Lennon pick up the ball instead and sent it in to the Bulgarian striker Dimitar Berbatov. Chelsea keeper Petr Cech sprinted out in an attempt to block, but Berbatov spun and volleyed the ball high into the back of the net, giving the visitors the early lead. Tottenham pressed for a second, and two chances presented themselves to Defoe and Lennon, but the crosses from Berbatov and Defoe were out of the players reaches. Chelsea would strike back though, and the goal would be against the run of play. Ballack received a chested down ball from Shevchenko after a Drogba cross, and the German blasted the ball low and hard. The shot was off target, but Frank Lampard was able to react quickly enough to fling out his leg and deflect the ball into the back of the net. Tottenham continued to run at the shaky Chelsea defence, and were rewarded with a goal when Aaron Lennons seemingly harmless cross was knock into Chelsea's net by Michael Essien, who was attempting to cover back on defence. Tottenham then nearly gave Chelsea an own goal of their own as Michael Dawson knocked Arjen Robbens cross toward his own net, but Paul Stalteri raced back to clear off the line. After the near tying goal, Jose Mourinho made an early change by replacing Paulo Ferreira with Shaun Wright-Phillips. Another defensive error

would see Chelsea two behind soon after though, as Ghaly beat three defenders to a high ball, and slotted the ball past Cech from 12 yards out. Chelsea had a few more chances as they tried to grab a lifeline before the break, but nothing truly troubled keeper Cerny.

Chelsea came out of the dressing room much more positively after the break, and had 3 chances to score from 2 Ballack free kicks, and a well taken shot by Lampard. Cerny did well to keep the game at 3-1 however. Spurs nearly put the game away on the counter attack, but Cech came out quick to stop Aaron Lennons run, and Defoe could not find the net after the ensuing cross by Ghaly. Chelsea then made 2 changes in just over 5 minutes, as Boulahrouz and Kalou took to the pitch. On the 70th minute, Chelsea earned a corner, and Arjen Robben stepped up to take the set piece. A goulmouth scramble occured from the curving corner and the ball landed nicely at Lampard's feet. The Englishman blasted it home, cutting the deficit to one. Chelsea equalized 4 minutes from time through substitute Salomon Kalou. Didier Drogba headed the ball to his fellow countryman Kalou, and the Ivorian volleyed the ball into the back of the net. Jermain Defoe had a chance to be the hero for Tottenham only minutes later as he beat out three defenders and struck the ball hard past Cech, but not past the crossbar. The game ended drawn, and the replay will be held at White Hart Lane on March 19th.

### **Sex tour operator pleads guilty in Cleveland court**

With an affidavit filed by U.S. Special Agent Peter Decensi, Russell Herman, the operator of [www.asianadventures4u.com](http://www.asianadventures4u.com) changed his plea to guilty at the

last moment. The charges against Herman were that he arranged and facilitated travel for the purpose of illicit sexual conduct.

Originally Herman's website was investigated by Decensi for counterfeit goods labeled as "replica" merchandise, using such brand names as Rolex. Various guided tours of Thailand were also on offer at the website, either aimed at contacting the sources of counterfeit goods or "marriage agencies where you can marry a beautiful young Thai girl between 18- 24 years old regardless of your age."

From June to late October of 2006, posing under the screen name of "david77" and claiming to be from Ohio Special Agent Decensi exchanged emails with Herman who was on his seventh trip to Thailand. Herman assured that he knew all the "pick up" spots where young girls could be found. When Decensi inquired about girls aged 10-14 years he was cautioned by Herman that it was dangerous and illegal in Thailand, explaining that the punishment in Thailand would be severe. However, Herman went on to explain that he knew where to find what Decensi was looking for, and gave a cell phone number to call upon his arrival in Bangkok.

Instead of flying to Thailand, Agent Decensi passed the online persona of "david77" onto Assistant Attaché Gary Kiernan in Bangkok who phoned Herman. After declining an offer to go to Cambodia the two arranged to meet in Udon Thani. Offering to take Kiernan to brothels where girls of 15 were kept having been illegally brought into the country from Laos. On a tour of a number of brothels Assistant Attaché Kiernan saw girls with ages ranging from 12 to 17.

Telling Herman that he must fly back to the U.S., Decensi avoids anything more than his tour of brothels. Assuring Herman he will return when an urgent job has been done he establishes that Herman will return to the U.S. on December 12.

Initially filed in Herman's home town of Las Vegas the case was transferred to Cleveland where Herman was detained. At present he remains in custody pending sentencing. The charge, Facilitating Travel to Engage in Illicit Sexual Content carries a sentence of up to 30 years. According to the Bangkok Post he is likely to receive a sentence between four and five years.

### **Quinn shows off for NFL Scouts**

Former Notre Dame quarterback Brady Quinn gave NFL scouts an up-close view of what he did at Notre Dame and hopes to do in the NFL, the Associated Press reported. Quinn threw 63 passes, completing 58 of them. Vikings coach Brad Childress and Browns coach Romeo Crennel were both impressed with Quinn's performance. Quinn could have been 62 out of 63 but the receivers could not catch a few of the passes. Quinn will show NFL scouts his speed at Notre Dame's next pro day.

### **Australian Muslim organization gags five clerics**

The Lebanese Muslim Association has sent a letter to five imams, telling them to "pause and desist" from talking to media. The reason cited in the letter was the "immeasurable damage" the imams have caused the Australian Muslim community. If they do not comply, the imams could lose their status as spiritual leaders, the LMA letter threatened.

Sheikh Al Hilali was the first to flout

the ban. "I'm friends with media. Media is our eyes, our heart, our blood. No worries," he said.

### Today in History

1881 - Andrew Watson made his debut with the Scotland national football team and became the world's first black international football player.

1930 - Mahatma Gandhi began the Dandi March, a 24-day, 320-km walk to defy the British tax on salt in colonial India.

1938 - Anschluss Österreichs: Austria was occupied by the Wehrmacht, and subsequently became Ostmark, a province within the German Reich.

1940 - The Moscow Peace Treaty was signed, ending the Winter War between Finland and the Soviet Union.

2003 - Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić was assassinated in Belgrade.

March 12 is Commonwealth Day (2007); Independence Day in Mauritius (1968); Arbor Day in China.

### Quote of the Day

They danced down the streets like dingedodies, and I shambled after as I've been doing all my life after people who interest me, because the only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones that never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes "Awww!"  
~ Jack Kerouac

### Word of the Day

congeries; n

1. A collection or aggregation of disparate items.

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