



Top Stories

Scientists say genetic building blocks are from out of this world

A team of scientists from the United States, United Kingdom and the Netherlands have determined that chemicals in a meteorite that form the building blocks of DNA and RNA had formed before the meteorite fell to Earth.



Guinea coup trial defendant names co-conspirators

Testifying in court about a plot to overthrow the government of Equatorial Guinea, Simon Mann named Sir Mark Thatcher and Chelsea-based Lebanese billionaire Ely Calil as major players, while describing himself as a junior member.



Phoenix lander confirms presence of water ice on Mars

For the first time ever, NASA has confirmed the presence of water ice on Mars. The Phoenix lander which landed on Mars on May 25, has confirmed to scientists that the white substance it found while digging a trench on June 15, is water ice.



Featured story

Jason-2 satellite launched to measure sea levels

The Ocean Surface Topography Mission (OSTM), or Jason-2, satellite, has been launched into low Earth orbit. A Delta II rocket carrying the satellite lifted off from Space Launch Complex 2W at the Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, United States, at 07:46 GMT this morning. Spacecraft separation occurred around an hour later, and the solar panels on the satellite have deployed.



Wikipedia Current Events

Militants in Pakistan fire mortars on a NATO base and Afghan army base.

- An employee for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Somalia is kidnapped.
- The Government of the Central African Republic signs a peace deal with two rebel groups which promises amnesty for rebel soldiers.
- Militants in Delta State, Nigeria, blow up a Chevron oil pipeline leading to a cessation of production by Chevron in Nigeria.
- The death toll in the Philippines from Typhoon Fengshen rises to at least 20 from flooding and landslides. Ten people drown after the Rifao River overflows its

Wikipedia Current Events

- banks and sweeps away three houses in South Upi, Maguindanao.
- At least four people die with the balance missing when the ferry MV Princess of the Stars, carrying 700 passengers, sinks near Sibuyan island in the wake of Typhoon Fengshen.
- South Korea renegotiates its beef import deal with the United States following widespread protests at the original deal due to concerns over mad cow disease.
- Four ISAF soldiers are killed by a bomb in Afghanistan.
- Sudan Airways is grounded for a month by the Civil Aviation Authority of Sudan for violations prior to their most recent crash.
- Euro Cup 2008: Russia beat Netherlands 3-1 after extra time, advancing to the semi-finals.

Sudan Airways grounded

Sudanese flag carrier Sudan Airways has been grounded by the Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The airline's Air Operators Certificate will be revoked starting from Monday.

CAA director of safety and flight operations Mohamed Hassan al-Mujammar said that the grounding was not directly connected to the crash of Sudan Airways Flight 109 at Khartoum International Airport, which has 30 confirmed fatalities. However, he did say that the airline said it was unable to make

urgent improvements suggested by the CAA in a safety audit last month because they were too preoccupied with dealing with the disaster's aftermath.

"It is high time to stop this type of non-compliance with international standards," said Mujammar.

Sudan Airways now has one month in which to appeal the decision or make the requested improvements. The airline had previously complained of trouble acquiring spare parts and pilot training because of sanctions imposed by the United States on Sudan. The airline says even parts for European-manufactured Airbus planes are affected.

The airline operates mainly routes in the Middle East and the Gulf.

Euro 2008: Netherlands vs. Russia

Netherlands 1 – 3 Russia

The Netherlands lost to the Russia national football team in a quarter-final match of UEFA Euro 2008.

Roman Pavlyuchenko opened the scoring in main play, a goal that was matched by Ruud van Nistelrooy after only 30 minutes.

Then it was a hardy play-off for both teams, especially the Dutch, but Torbinsky and Arshavin scored goals, effectively put an end to the match. Arshavin was declared the Man of the Match.

Now it will be the first major semi final for Russia since the break up of the USSR.

12 dead following police raid of Mexican night club

Mexico City, Mexico – At least 12 people have died and 32 have been injured because of a human stampede in the night club News

Divine in Mexico City. About 1,000 people tried to leave the club at the same time through the only accessible door during a police raid. The establishment's owner, Alfredo Maya Ortiz, told those in the club to leave due to the authorities' appearance.

The Secretaría de Seguridad Pública (Public Safety, SSP) police officers arrived at the club at 5pm after being informed of alcohol sales to minors. During the raid, Ortiz used the sound system to make an announcement asking everyone to evacuate. Everyone did so simultaneously.

Three minors are confirmed dead following the incident, as well as six teenagers between 18 and 22 years old and three policemen. Some of the victims lost their lives because they were flattened by the doors being opened. Others perished after falling to the floor and getting trampled by the stampede. There were a number of deaths due to cars unintentionally running over people. All bodies were moved to the GAM 5 territorial coordination.

"Everybody began to run to the door desperately, in that moment somebody fell to the floor; others where arrested by the police when they crossed the door. Some of them where hit and moved to some buses. When they [the police] weren't looking at us, I took one of my friends and started to run", said a reserved source. He or she also confirmed that drugs where sold there and the club was only a "small two-storey club that was always crowded".

In addition to the owner, club employee Mariana de la Cruz Gayoso and an unidentified person have been arrested. The head of SSP, Joel Ortega Cuevas,

confirmed the destitution of the policemen who organized the raid in order to optimize the investigation.

News Divine has been open for three years and in that time has been closed three times by the law. Most recently, it was closed earlier this year. There have been many reports and complaints of drug sales, fights and aggression around the club.

Poison sue Capitol Records and EMI Music Marketing over royalties

United States glam metal band Poison is suing Capitol Records and EMI Music Marketing over an alleged breach of contract. Poison claim the two companies have underpaid them royalties for years.

The band claims Capitol miscategorized various record sales and miscalculated every possible expense since the 1980s. They say when attempting to check company records they received no co-operation and are now asking a judge to order the firms to reveal their records so the band can determine how much they are owed.

Capitol and EMI have refused to comment.

'Pregnancy pact' grabs international attention for small Massachusetts town

A supposed "pregnancy pact" at Gloucester High School in Gloucester, Massachusetts has drawn international attention to the small Massachusetts fishing city which is considered to be one of the oldest settlements (1623) in the American continent.

The story, which was broken by TIME magazine and the Boston

Globe, involved the fact that 17 girls, all sixteen years old or younger, got themselves pregnant as part of a "pregnancy pact", so that the teenage mothers could raise their babies together.

According to the magazine article, school officials at the 1,162 student school became concerned starting as far back as October when a uncommonly large amount of girls began to enter the school's health clinic to see if they were pregnant.

As of earlier this May, seven girls returned more than once seeking pregnancy tests and upon hearing results, "Some girls seemed more upset when they weren't pregnant than when they were," according to James Sullivan, the principal of the school. Some smiled, others cried, and one declared, "Sweet!", according to the Globe upon hearing their results.

Local officials, including the mayor, are uncertain whether there really was a "pact", however. Mayor Carolyn Kirk called it a "blip" in the pregnancy rate and noted many factors playing into it, such as glamorization of teen pregnancy including the announcement around the same time that Britney Spears's sister, Jamie Lynn Spears had given birth to a baby, and last year's critically acclaimed movie, Juno, a comedy about a 16-year-old girl who gets pregnant and other movies, such as Knocked Up.

There is some concern over what might be statutory rape, as it has been reported that most of the men are older, including one report that one of the fathers is a 24-year old homeless man. In the Massachusetts, the age of consent is 16, therefore it is illegal for anyone to have sexual intercourse with anyone under 16.

Other teen mothers however have criticized the new mothers. Two such girls are Alivia Fidler and Meaghan Orlando, childhood friends and sophomore students at the high school, the girls were 16 years old when they became pregnant unexpectedly.

Orlando noted, "If I could go back in time I would want to wait and have the same baby later. You can't do stuff that normal teens do," who is now 17 and has a 3-month old son named Jayden, "They don't know what they're getting themselves into."

Meaghan's friend, Alivia, also now 17, said the pact idea is "ridiculous." Noting, "They're not going to be friends very long. You have to take care of your baby. It's frustrating. I don't have a lot of support." Fidler is no longer with the father of the baby, 5 month-old Xavier Fidler-Aguiar and recently lost her job at McDonalds.

One other teen mother, Amanda Ireland, who recently graduated from the school, also gave a warning to the mothers, "Don't try to get pregnant. People say they know what it's like because they have younger siblings, but they really have no idea."

Ireland also noted, "They're so excited to finally have someone to love them unconditionally. I try to explain it's hard to feel loved when an infant is screaming to be fed at 3 a.m."

46 year-old Gloucester resident Lori Mitchell, whose daughter dropped out of high school at 16 to raise a child said there are worse things than being a teenage mother, "They could be junkies or prostitutes. You try to protect them as much as you can, but it's

up to them to do the right thing."

Greg Verga, the chairman of the Gloucester School Committee called the pact, "disturbing", as he himself was once a teen father.

"They are going to have a rude awakening. It was no picnic. People don't realize there's 3 a.m. feedings ... it's a lifestyle change. It's not a possession you can play with and stick on the shelf. That's why I fear for these girls."

48th International Children's Festival in Šibenik - 2008

For two weeks, from Saturday June 21 to Saturday July 7 2008, Šibenik, Croatia will be welcoming the whole world at the 48th International Children's Festival. Musicians, actors, film-makers, poets, puppeteers and other performance artists will perform for the young spectators.

Performances generally take place in the evening, while budding artists will have access to numerous workshops during the day.

At the peak of summer, children will be able to train their creativity in the cool yard of a Baroque hotel, explore the mysterious network of the wells and tanks of an old city or launch an attack on the numerous strongholds which once protected the city, the first one constructed by the Croatian kings.

Today in History

168 BC – Third Macedonian War: Roman forces defeated Macedonian King Perseus at the Battle of Pydna.

1854 – The British Parliament abolished feudalism and the seigneurial system in British North America.

1911 – George V was crowned

King of the United Kingdom at Westminster Abbey in London.
 1941 – World War II: While the Lithuanian underground government started an uprising to liberate Lithuania from Soviet occupation, Nazi Germany began to invade the Soviet Union.
 1978 – Working at the United States Naval Observatory, American astronomer James W. Christy discovered Charon, then thought to be the largest moon of Pluto.
 2002 – An earthquake measuring 6.5 Mw struck Iran, killing at least 261 people and injuring 1,300 others, and eventually causing widespread public anger due to the slowness of the victims receiving aid and supplies.
 June 22 is Teachers' Day in El Salvador

Quote of the Day

If we glance at the most important revolutions in history, we are at no loss to perceive that the greatest number of these originated in the periodical revolutions of the human mind.
 ~ Wilhelm von Humboldt

Word of the Day

curdle v

1. To form curds so that it no longer flows smoothly; to cause to form such curds.
2. To clot or coagulate; to cause to congeal, such as through cold.

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