



Top Stories

First results from Italian election

Voting in the Italian Parliamentary elections started yesterday, and the first exit poll results have now been published. The election pitted the center-left L'Unione coalition led by Romano Prodi against the center-right House of Freedoms coalition led by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

State Bank of India employee strike settled

Negotiations between the State Bank of India and its employees over pension benefits have resulted in a settlement, ending a seven-day strike.

Featured story

Detroit woman dies after child's 911 calls are neglected

The family of a Detroit, Michigan woman plans to file a wrongful death lawsuit against the city of Detroit after her six-year-old son's calls to emergency operators were allegedly dismissed as prank calls.

Wikipedia Current Events

• Preliminary results from the general election in Peru shows Ollanta Humala leading, but certain to face a runoff election in late May or early June. Alan Garcia is narrowly leading Lourdes Flores for second place and a spot in the runoff.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Non-violent demonstrations for immigrant rights are held in dozens of U.S. cities today in opposition to H.R. 4437, which would classify illegal aliens as felons.
- Shedden massacre: Ontario Provincial Police announce that five people have been arrested and charged with first-degree murder in connection with the slayings of eight people found dead in southwestern Ontario. The OPP also confirms that the deaths were connected to an "internal cleansing" of the Bandidos biker gang.
- Matthias Platzeck resigns from the Chair of Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) after suffering a major hearing loss in March 2006 because of occupational stress. The next SPD chairman will be Kurt Beck (Minister President of Rhineland-Palatinate).
- Italian general election, 2006: Romano Prodi declares victory in a tight election as preliminary results show The Union ahead of Silvio Berlusconi's House of Freedoms by 0.1 percent in the Chamber of Deputies, but Berlusconi refuses to concede.
- The government of France announces the withdrawal of its youth employment law. The proposed law had catalyzed more than a month of sometimes-violent protests on the streets of Paris and other cities.

NASA plans to send probe into moon's surface

NASA, the United States' space agency, has announced that its next mission to the moon will not only orbit the moon, but also send two craft crashing into its surface. The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO), whose main mission pertains to mapping the moon, will send a spent fuel stage and an impactor probe towards a crater on the South Pole. The crater seems to be rich in Hydrogen and possibly ice.

The mission is part of the run-up to trying to land astronauts back on the moon, and perhaps keep them there for a longer period of time than the Apollo missions did. Scott Horowitz, NASA's associate administrator for the Exploration Systems Mission Directorate, had this to say: "What this mission buys is an early attempt to know what some of the resources we're going to have ... we know for sure that for human exploration to succeed we're going to have to essentially live off the land."

Twice before, with the Pentagon's Clementine spacecraft and with the Lunar Prospector, scientists have seen hints of ice on the moon's surface. It is NASA's hope that this mission may provide better answers to the question of water ice on the moon. This would prove useful to the agency's goal of a four-astronaut mission to the moon by 2020.

The name of the project is the Lunar Crater Observation and

Sensing Satellite, or LCROSS for short. It will launch with the LRO in October 2008 and use its onboard cameras and spectrometers to watch the impact of its upper stage into the surface. The upper stage roughly resembles an SUV in mass - around 4,409 pounds.

The project manager, Daniel Andrews said: "We will create a substantial plume and excavate some sample material, some of which we think will be water ice." After the first crash, LCROSS will attempt to fly through the plume of debris, taking readings and sending them back to Earth. Once done, it will itself crash into a different region of the crater, allowing both the LRO and stations on Earth to observe the plume that it creates.

Voyager 1 signal received by radio amateurs

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The Probe

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First results from Italian election

On 9 and 10 April 2006, Italians voted to elect members of Parliament as well as the country's next Prime Minister.

The election was fought mainly between coalitions: the centre-left L'Unione (The Union), led by

Romano Prodi, and the currently-ruling centre-right House of Freedoms, led by incumbent Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. Initial polls do not indicate a clear winner.

The main party in L'Unione is the Federation of the Olive Tree, and the House Of Freedoms' main party is Berlusconi's Forza Italia party.

It is expected that no party will obtain an outright majority of seats. Polls closed on Monday at 3:00 p.m. local time (1300 UTC).

According to Italian law, the Prime Minister must have the support of both houses of Parliament: the Senate (the upper house) and the Chamber of Deputies (the lower house).

Exit Polls

First Exit Polls of Nexus published by major newspapers at 15:00 (local time) give the following partial results:

L'Unione (The Union) Chamber (of Deputies): 50% - 54%

L'Unione (The Union) Senate: 50% - 54%

House of Freedoms Chamber (of Deputies): 45% - 49%

House of Freedoms Senate: 45% - 49%

Later exit polls showed House of Freedoms in the lead in both houses.

These are based on mock voting booths outside 1,050 polling stations across the country that are expected to be representative samples, where people can anonymously indicate how they voted. The margin of error on Nexus's exit polls is 2 percentage points.

France to replace controversial youth worker law

French President Jacques Chirac has announced that the new youth job law that has fueled protests for the past few weeks is to be replaced by other measures to attack unemployment amongst young adults.

Students and unions protested the new law, which would have given employers the right to fire youth workers under the age of 26 without reason during a two-year "trial period". The prospect had sparked somewhat violent protests across the country in the past two months.

Union leaders have given government officials until Easter to withdraw the existing law or face yet another general strike.

Defense systems of Air Force One exposed on the Internet

A website has released a document it says is from the United States government, and which it claims contains information related to Air Force One's anti-missile defense system. An Air Force base website is believed to be the source of the information, but was not identified in the document, however.

"Having information about a target's countermeasures does two things. It gives you an opportunity to choose a different weapon and to choose a different attack style... perhaps choosing to launch a salvo attack, or choose a missile that uses an active beam," said Daniel Goure of the Lexington Institute.

Air Force One is the primary form of transportation for the President of the United States, George W. Bush. The U.S. Air Force maintains two Boeing 747-200B series

aircraft that are used only for the transportation of the President.

"It is not a good thing. We are concerned with how it got there and how we can get it out. This affects operational security," said director of public affairs for the Air Mobility Command's 89th Airlift Wing at Andrews Air Force Base, Lt. Col. Bruce Alexander.

The document also is said to include detailed maps of the interior of the two planes, the locations of Secret Service agents and the location of the plane's medical center, detailing where the oxygen tanks are kept. This would assist snipers to target and detonate them.

As of Friday, the document was still available online.

State Bank of India employee strike settled

Negotiations between the State Bank of India and its employees over pension benefits have resulted in a settlement, ending a seven-day strike.

The bank, which is based in Mumbai and majority-owned by the nation's central bank, is India's largest commercial bank, with over 9000 branch offices.

The settlement calls for workers whose final monthly salary was up to 21,040 rupees (US\$471) to receive half that amount as pension; workers with salaries larger than that would receive 40%. The bank's previous pension maximum was 4,250 rupees (US\$95)

The bank's 200,000 employees will return to work Monday.

Farmhouse raided as investigation into Ontario

massacre continues

Ontario Provincial Police raided a farmhouse on Sunday, continuing an investigation into what is called Ontario's "biggest massacre".

On Saturday, eight bodies were found in or around vehicles near the village of Shedden, approximately 30 kilometres from London, Ontario. Police would not identify the victims, but believed they knew each other and were from the Toronto area. They also refused to comment on any possible links between the deaths and organised crime.

Neighbours believed the house was owned by a former leader of a motorcycle gang. Police have closed off a 15 square kilometre area while they search for clues.

Police would not comment on the reason for the raid.

Detroit woman dies after child's 911 calls are neglected

The family of a Detroit, Michigan woman plans to file a wrongful-death lawsuit against the city of Detroit after her six-year-old son's calls to emergency operators were allegedly dismissed as prank calls. The family released the tapes of the emergency calls to the media on Friday.

Sherrill Turner, 46, died on February 20 of complications from an enlarged heart. Her son Robert made two calls to 911 to report the emergency.

"My mom is passed out," said Robert Turner when he called 911 the first time.

"Where's Mister Turner at?" asked the operator. Robert replied that his mother was unable to speak.

"Okay, well, I'm going to send the

police over to your house to find out what's going on," added the operator, before hanging up on the boy. However, the police never came, and an ambulance was never dispatched to the home.

The boy called 911 three hours later, and reports say the operator who answered the call, may have been the same operator that answered the first call. The operator asked to speak to the mother saying "before I send the police over there." Then she said to the boy, "You shouldn't be playing on the phone. Now put her on the phone before I send the police over there to knock on the door, and you're going to be in trouble."

"It was taking too long," said Robert.

Delaina Patterson, the boy's older sister, who lives in Novi, Michigan, said that after 9:00 p.m. help did come, but only the police and no EMS or medical personnel.

The operator, whose name has not been released, remains on the job pending an investigation by city officials.

Today in History

1241 - Mongols led by Batu Khan and Subutai crushed the Hungarian army of King Béla IV in the Battle of Mohi.

1945 - World War II: The Buchenwald concentration camp was liberated.

1951 - Korean War: General Douglas MacArthur was relieved of overall command in Korea.

1965 - Fifty-one tornadoes struck six states in Midwestern United States during the Palm Sunday Tornado Outbreak.

2002 - President Hugo Chávez was forced to resign during a military coup attempt in Venezuela.

April 11 is Fast of the firstborn in Judaism, Mawlid in Sunni Islam (2006)

Quote of the Day

"A writer writes not because he is educated but because he is driven by the need to communicate. Behind the need to communicate is the need to share. Behind the need to share is the need to be understood. The writer wants to be understood much more than he wants to be respected or praised or even loved. And that perhaps, is what makes him different from others."

~ Leo Rosten

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