



Top Stories

Iraqi PM Nouri al-Maliki says U.S Troops can leave when they want

The Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki on Saturday stated that "U.S Troops could leave anytime they wanted", with Iraqi police and soldiers replacing the U.S troops on the front lines if necessary.

Osama bin Laden praises martyrdom in video

Osama bin Laden has appeared in a new but undated video praising martyrdom. "The happy (person) is the one chosen by Allah to be a martyr," he could be seen saying.

Featured story

Canadian judge strikes down marijuana possession laws as unconstitutional

A judge in the province of Ontario, Canada dismissed marijuana possession charges against a Toronto man, ruling that Canada's laws governing possession are unconstitutional.

Wikipedia Current Events

- A Somalian peace conference in Mogadishu gets off to a bad start as it is disrupted by mortarshells.
- Shimon Peres is sworn in as the President of Israel.
- Two scientists Gert van der Heijden and Eugene Starostin claim that they have solved the Moebius strip.
- Australia extradites Antun Gudelj to Croatia for the 1991 murder of Josip Reihl-Kir, the police chief of

Wikipedia Current Events

Osijek and two associates - this event fueled tensions during the Croatian War of Independence.

- Pro-Taliban militants in Pakistan's North Waziristan region say they have ended their truce with the government.
- Two suicide bombings in northwestern Pakistan kill at least 31 people.

First computer game in Piedmontese language

Freecol, a free software (under the GNU General Public License) has been released in Piedmontese. This makes the game, clone of Sid Meier's Colonization the first game to have been released in this language which is only spoken by about 2 million people.

Freecol, the simulation of the historical process that lead to the Declaration of Independence in North America, is the first computer game to be localized in Piedmontese language. The players need to perform the administrative and political actions to reach the goal of the game.

Version 0.7.0 in Piedmontese was released on 13 July 2007. Speakers of regional languages hope this will an examplar, so that more localizations of the game in other regional languages will be released over time.

The localization was done on Betawiki, the platform which is also used for the localization of the

Mediawiki software.

Suicide bombers kills 31 in Pakistan

On Sunday two separate suicide bombing attacks killed up to 31 people. The first attack took place when a police-army convoy was hit by two roadside bomb in the mountainous region near the Pakistani-Afghani border. The second bombing took place when a suicide bomber detonated in front of a police headquarters in Dera Ismail Kha killing 17 police recruits who were taking a test to join the local police force. Since the Red Mosque siege began there have been 67 people killed in bombing and shooting in Pakistan

On Saturday 24 soldiers were killed when a suicide bomber crashed into two army vehicles in the town of Swat along the Afghani border. In that attack 3 civilians were killed 39 people were wounded most of them critically

Lady Bird Johnson buried today

The funeral procession, which departed from state capitol in Austin, Texas, slowly moved up Austin and Hill County roads which were lined with hundreds of admirers of Lady Bird Johnson holding flowers, waving American flags or holding up the "hook 'em Horns" sign in honor of her years as a student at the University of Texas and former UT System regent as the hearse carrying her body passed inroute to the LBJ ranch located in Stonewall, TX.

Mrs Johnson will be buried in the

family cemetery next to her late husband and ex-president Lyndon Baines Johnson who died in 1973. The funeral for Mrs. Johnson was held on Saturday at the Riverbend Centre, attended by over 1,800 people including family, friends along with former presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. There were five current or former first ladies present, Laura Bush, Rosalynn Carter, Nancy Reagan, Barbara Bush and Hillary Rodham Clinton.

North Korea shuts down nuclear reactor

Kim Myong Gil, the North Korean minister to the United Nations in New York City, claims his government has shut down its infamous reactor located in Yongbyon and is ready to start dismantling its nuclear programmes as long as the United States keeps its promise to remove all sanctions and remove North Korea from the terrorism list.

The 10 members of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspection team will be going to North Korea to verify the shut down has taken place. The inspectors were forced to leave North Korea in late 2002 when when this crisis began. The South Korean government has sent the North 50,000 tons of fuel oil as a reward for starting to dismantle its nuclear programmes and will send one million tons more.

The South Korea's nuclear envoy Chun Yung-woo called the shut down of the Yongbyon a milestone event but said the next phase will be more difficult than the reactor shut down.

2007/08 T-Mobile Bundesliga Matchday 2

The 2nd matchday of the Austrian

Bundesliga has been completed on Sunday. LASK Linz leads the Bundesliga after 1-1 draw with Austria Vienna. Rapid Vienna's match with SV Mattersburg was postponed due to the fact they played a UEFA Intertoto Cup match on Saturday.

Iraqi PM Nouri al-Maliki says U.S Troops can leave when they want

The Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki held a news conference on Saturday to addressing the Iraqi government's headway in response to a report given Thursday to the U.S President and U.S Congress on his government failures to comply with some of the 18 benchmarks the Iraqis are required to comply with in order to maintain U.S troops presence in Iraqi.

The Prime Minister stated that it would take time and effort to accomplish the political reforms that Washington recommended considering the natural turmoil in the country. On the subject of the Iraqi military Al-Maliki expressed his belief that his military could conduct military operations without U.S forces and that "U.S Troops could leave anytime they wanted" saying if necessary Iraqi police and soldiers would replace the U.S troops on the front lines.

One of Al-Maliki top aids accused the U.S of embarrassing his government by violating human rights of Iraqis and treating his country like U.S lab experiment. This all came after a vote passed on Thursday by U.S. House of Representatives to withdraw all troops from Iraq.

Osama bin Laden praises martyrdom in video

Osama bin Laden has appeared in a new but undated video praising martyrdom. "The happy (person)

is the one chosen by Allah to be a martyr," he could be seen saying.

The video had the insignia of the As-Sahab group, considered the media production house of Al-Qaeda. The background looked similar to that of older videos, known to have been filmed in Afghanistan.

The video, entitled "Winds of Paradise", features speeches by five suicide bombers and Al-Qaeda leadership. SITE Institute, a non-profit organization which tracks the online activity of terrorist organizations, said that the footage was old, but did not give an estimated date.

Tour de France: Michael Rasmussen wins stage 8

Michael Rasmussen has won stage 8 of the 2007 Tour de France and has captured the overall lead. He blew away David Arroyo of Spain and Stéphane Goubert on the final climb. Iban Mayo took second. In the end, Arroyo and Goubert were overtaken by the chase group.

Rasmussen, the Danish mountain specialist who has won the King of the Mountain's polka dot jersey the last two years, maximized the number of points he could collect in today's mountain stage.

Michael Rogers of Australia had looked to be in position to take the yellow jersey, when he hit a barrier and hurt his wrist the the crash. Stuart O'Grady also crashed and is out, leaving only two Australians in the Tour.

This, the third-shortest road stage in this year's Tour, was very tough. The climbing started from the outset, with two small climbs in the first 25 km. At 75 km out, the first big test was Cormet de Roselend (a 19 km climb at 6%).

This was followed by the Montée d'Hauteville - the start of the Col du Petit Saint-Bernard - and the climb up to Tignes (18 km at 5.5%) for a very difficult finish at a height of 2068 m.

Mark Cavendish of United Kingdom withdrew 35 km into today's stage. The sprinter had already planned to pull out, but not this soon.

Stage 8 results

1. Michael Rasmussen (Den / RAB) 4 hrs 49 mins 40"
2. Iban Mayo (Spa / SDV) +2:47"
3. Alejandro Valverde (Spa / CDE) +3:12"
4. Christophe Moreau (Fra / AG2R) +3:13"
5. Fraenk Schleck (Lux / CSC) s.t.
6. Cadel Evans (Aus / PDL) s.t.
7. Andrey Kashechkin (Kaz / AST) s.t.
8. Alberto Contador (Spa / DSC) +3:31"
9. Denis Menchov (Rus / RAB) +3:35"
10. Carlos Sastre (Spa / CSC) s.t.
- 11.

Overall classification

1. Michael Rasmussen (Den / RAB) 39:37:42"
2. Linus Gerdemann (Ger / TMO) +43"
3. Iban Mayo (Spa / SDV) +2:39"
4. Alejandro Valverde (Spa / CDE) +2:51"
5. Andrey Kashechkin (Kaz / AST) +2:52"
6. Cadel Evans (Aus / PDL) +2:53"
7. Christophe Moreau (Fra / AG2R) +3:06"
8. Alberto Contador (Spa / DSC) +3:10"
9. Fraenk Schleck (Lux / CSC) +3:14"
10. Denis Menchov (Rus / RAB)

+3:19"

Former Flemish Minister Paul Akkermans dies at 83

Former Flemish Minister Paul Akkermans died in Antwerp on Thursday at the age of 83.

Paul Akkermans became a Senator for the Christian People's Party (Dutch: Christelijke Volkspartij or CVP, now CD&V) in 1965 and joined the government in 1979, first as Secretary of State and from 1981 to 1987 as Minister in the Flemish Executive of Gaston Geens.

As a Minister of the Flemish Executive, he was first responsible for Spatial Planning and from 1985 onwards for Housing.

AFC Asian Cup: Saudi Arabia edge out Indonesia, Uzbekistan trounce Malaysia

Saudi Arabia has scored in injury time to defeat Indonesia 2-1 in their 2007 AFC Asian Cup Group D fixture.

Saudi Arabia took the lead after twelve minutes, when Yasser Al-Qahtani headed home a cross from the right hand side of the field by Ahmed Al Bahri. His header was driven low and to the left of the Indonesian goalkeeper Yandri Christian Pitoy, who dived but failed to get his right hand to the ball.

Indonesia struck back and levelled eight minutes later, when Elie Aiboy rounded Saudi goalkeeper Yasser Al Mosaimem and calmly slotted the ball into the empty net. Elie recieved a through-ball from Budi Sudarsono and kept his composure, going to the left of the advancing goalkeeper and taking an extra touch before putting the ball into the back of the net.

Both goalkeepers made saves to keep their sides level, with Mosaimem making two late in the first half to keep Saudi Arabia level at the break. Pitoy made a couple of excellent saves late in the second half, and Indonesian defender Maman Abdurrahman made a precise sliding tackle to stop a one-on-one opportunity for Al Qahtani on seventy-eight minutes.

The 88,000 predominantly-Indonesian fans inside the Bung Karno Stadium, Jakarta were silenced by a Saad Al-Harhi goal in the ninety-second minute. A swinging free kick from the left hand side saw Al-Harhi leap and head the ball beyond goalkeeper Pitoy's grasp to give Saudi Arabia all three points and the lead of Group D. Korea Republic play Bahrain this afternoon (UTC) in the fourth Group D fixture.

In Group C, Uzbekistan has defeat Malaysia 5-0 at the Bukit Jalil Stadium, Kuala Lumpur. It is Malaysia's second consecutive five-goal defeat, after they lost to China 5-1 in their other Group C fixture.

Maksim Shatskikh opened the scoring after ten minutes with a back-post header. Timur Kapadze then doubled Uzbekistan's advantage on twenty-nine minutes, before Ulugbek Bakaev converted a penalty kick just before half time to make the score 3-0.

After the break, Malaysia dug in and didn't concede again for forty minutes. On eighty-five minutes, Aziz Ibragimov broke through to score. Shatskikh completed his double and the 5-0 result in the eighty-ninth minute

The result leaves Uzbekistan on

top of Group C on three points, equal with China and Iran. The latter two play each other this afternoon (UTC).

Doughnut on display in Springfield, New Zealand

An oversized delight has been erected in the small town of Springfield, Canterbury, New Zealand, as part of the 20th Century Fox massive worldwide marketing campaign for The Simpsons Movie.

The giant, pink frosted doughnut was made locally, and the locals are celebrating the fact that their town shares a name with the fictional town of Springfield in the hit Fox cartoon series.

The series screens on both TV3 and Sky 1 locally, with the movie set for release nationwide on July 26, 2007. However, the movie will not be screened locally, with residents having to travel to Christchurch to watch the movie.

Springfield Township Committee chairman William Townshend says not to get too excited about the piece as it only has a resource consent that allows it to be erected for two months. He also said those hoping for a piece would be disappointed. "It is definitely not edible."

Ainslie Burton, spokesperson for the visitor information centre, says the doughnut will be hard to miss.

An estimated 3,000 people attended today's unveiling at midday (NZST), Springfield's 2001 population was 219.

Canadian judge strikes down marijuana possession laws as unconstitutional

A judge in the province of Ontario, Canada dismissed marijuana

possession charges against a Toronto man, ruling that Canada's laws governing possession are unconstitutional.

The unidentified defendant, 29, had been charged with possession after police had found him carrying 3.5 grams of marijuana.

Since July 30, 2001, Canada has allowed a medical exemption for the possession and growing of marijuana, under Health Canada's Marijuana Medical Access Regulations. The regulations describe eligible persons as those "suffering from grave and debilitating illnesses." Canada contracts a company, Prairie Plant Systems, to cultivate and package seeds and/or dried marijuana for shipping of a monthly supply to eligible patients. A packet of 30 seeds costs CA\$20, plus taxes. Dried marijuana costs patients CA\$150 for 30 grams (slightly more than one ounce).

The defendant in the legal case was not suffering from an illness and was not in need of an exemption from the possession laws. The man put forth a defence that questioned the legality of the medical exemption since it was only a regulation, not a law. He argued that all possession laws, therefore, should be struck down.

The judge presiding over the case, Howard Borenstein, agreed with the argument. "The government told the public not to worry about access to marijuana," said Judge Borenstein. "They have a policy but not law. In my view that is unconstitutional."

The defendant's lawyer, Brian McAllister, felt that the ruling may have significant consequences for possession laws throughout the province. "Obviously, there's

thousands of people that get charged with this offence every year," said McAllister. He suggested that Ontario residents can cite the new ruling as a defence for possession charges. "That's probably why the government will likely appeal the decision," he said.

Judge Borenstein will make his ruling official in two weeks time. Prosecutors in the case have said that they will appeal the decision soon.

In related news, a Liberal senator from the province of British Columbia, Larry Campbell, said Wednesday that the federal government should decriminalize marijuana and "tax the hell out of it". He said the government should use the revenue for health care priorities. Sales should be controlled by government, he stated, in the same way that alcohol is sold. He noted that organized crime is pulling in large profits on the growing and sale of the drug.

Senator Campbell also suggested that too many resources are placed on the criminal prosecution of people for possession of small amounts of marijuana. "This is not a drug that causes criminality," he said. "People are getting criminal records for essentially nothing."

A recent UN survey, the 2007 World Drug Report, has determined that marijuana use in Canada is the highest among developed nations. Some 16.8 percent of Canadians between the ages of 15 and 64 used marijuana in 2004, compared to 12.6 percent of Americans, 8.7 percent for Britain, 8.6 percent for France, 6.9 percent for Germany, and 0.1 percent of Japanese.

York University law professor Alan Young, said the report's numbers may be skewed higher for Canadians due to the willingness of Canadians to discuss the issue. "It's become a large part of youth culture in Canada, and more importantly, 50 percent of marijuana smokers are over the age of 30," he said. "So it's really gone to all age groups, all class groups. There's no question about it that there is less stigma in Canada."

Only four other countries ranked ahead of Canada on marijuana use: Papua New Guinea, Micronesia, Ghana, and Zambia.

The UN data for harder drugs such as amphetamines and ecstasy showed relatively low use among Canadians.

Today in History

622 – The epoch of the Islamic calendar occurred, marking the year that Muhammad began his Hijra from Mecca to Medina.

1796 – Spanish friar Junípero Serra founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá, the first Franciscan mission in the Alta California region of New Spain.

1945 – Manhattan Project: "Trinity", the first nuclear test explosion, was detonated near Alamogordo, New Mexico, United States.

1979 – Saddam Hussein replaced the resigning Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr as President of Iraq.

1994 – The planet Jupiter was hit by fragments of the Shoemaker-Levy 9 comet.

July 16 is Marine Day in Japan (2007).

Quote of the Day

Love is the extremely difficult realisation that something other than oneself is real. Love, and so art and morals, is the discovery of

reality. ~ Iris Murdoch

Word of the Day

coy; adj

1. Pretending shyness or modesty.
2. (archaic) Quiet, reserved, modest.

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http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page

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