



Top Stories

Taiwan to violate Tamiflu patent due to shortage

A shortage of the avian flu vaccine prompts health agency to plan domestic production without patent rights out of concerns to protect public health.

Leaked poll finds 45% of Iraqis support suicide bombers who attack allied forces

A poll conducted by an Iraqi university research team concluded that 45% of Iraqis support suicide bombers.

Featured story

Kaczynski elected as the new president of Poland, according to polls

Lech Kaczyński has been elected as the new president of the Republic of Poland, according to first polls. He gained about 53,7% of votes, while his rival, Donald Tusk gained 46,3% in the run-off Polish presidential election.

Wikipedia Current Events

• Ireland's Sunday Independent and other newspapers, and the United Kingdom's The Observer face massive public criticism for wrongly claiming that the woman with disgraced Irish politician Liam Lawlor when he was killed in a Moscow car accident was a teenage prostitute. She was in fact his 32 year old translator. The editor of the Sunday Independent apologises, while the National Union of Journalists

Wikipedia Current Events

demands the creation of a press council.

•Escalating a 'minor diplomatic crisis' between Russia and Norway, two Russian fishing trawlers are taken into custody by the Norwegian Coast Guard after allegedly having done illegal reloading of their vessels near the Norwegian Sea island of Bjørnøya. The incident happens only days after the chasing of a similar trawler from the Svalbard area towards Russian waters. The Russian ship had fled from the Coast Guard with two Norwegian fishery inspectors still aboard, to avoid arrest.

•Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Two Palestinian militants have died following an Israeli raid into the West Bank area of Tulkarm.

•2006 World Cup: Gordon Strachan is named as FIFA/SOS Ambassador for Scotland (joining Wayne Rooney for England) for the 2006 World Cup.

•11 Nepali Sherpa and 7 French mountaineers are feared dead by an attempt to climb 6000 metre (20000 feet) Mount Kanguru in north-west Nepal.

•U.S. President George W. Bush nominates Ben Bernanke to succeed Alan Greenspan as chair of the Federal Reserve Board.

22.2% of secondary school students in Ireland drop out before the Leaving Cert

New figures released last week by the government show a

surprisingly high school drop out rate in Ireland.

The retention rates report released by Education Minister Mary Hanafin shows that just 77.8% of the 64,000 students who began their secondary education in 1996 completed the Leaving Cert in 2001/2002.

The worst areas in the country appear to be urban areas, particularly in Dublin where 26 schools had drop out rates above 50%. Among these were several schools how had a retention rate of less than 60% up to Junior Cert level.

Broken down by gender, the retention rate for girls was 83.8% and boys was 72.1%.

Poor funding and large class sizes are being blamed for the high drop out rates. Seperate OECD figures put Ireland 21st out of 27 developed countries in terms of spending per secondary level student.

Grand Jury investigation of Plame leak nears end

The two year investigation involving the leak of CIA operative Valerie Plame's secret identity seems to be coming to an end.

Special Counsel Patrick Fitzgerald's grand jury, which has been investigating the "outing" of Plame's secret status to columnist Robert Novak and other reporters, concludes its work on October 29. The U.S. Department of Justice

has established a web site for the purpose of making any communication public. However, Fitzgerald's office will not comment on the timing of any indictments which may be filed.

Many individuals inside and outside the White House have apparently been interogated. Two high level White House Chiefs of Staff, Karl Rove to President Bush, and I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby to Vice-President Cheney, are part of the focus of the investigation. Both Rove and Libby testified before the grand jury; Rove 4 times, and Libby at least twice. Rove and Libby have been informed that they may be in serious legal trouble.

Bush administration critics suggest the outing of the CIA operative Plame was an effort by the administration to prop up the credibility of pre-war claims that Iraq possessed WMD. The Bush administration has responded that the charge lacks any credibility.

Valerie Plame's husband, Joseph Wilson, was a former diplomat to Niger who went public in July 2003 with an Op-Ed column that called evidence linking Niger uranium to Iraq bogus. The Wilson column was written after the President Bush 2003 state of the union address alleging that Iraq sought to purchase uranium from Niger.

Today in History

- 1415: Hundred Years' War: Henry V of England and his lightly armored infantry and archers defeated the heavily armored French cavalry in the Battle of Agincourt (pictured).
- 1854: Charge of the Light Brigade: Lord Cardigan led his cavalry to disaster in the Battle of Balaclava during the Crimean War.
- 1944: The Battle of Leyte Gulf

- sealed the defeat of the Imperial Japanese Navy in the Pacific Theater of World War II.
- 1971: People's Republic of China replaced the Republic of China as China's representative at the United Nations.
- 1983: Operation Urgent Fury: The United States and Caribbean allies invaded Grenada, six days after Bernard Coard seized power in a violent coup d'état.
- October 25 is Republic Day in Kazakhstan; Retrocession Day in the Republic of China

Quote of the Day

"The world is a comedy to those that think, a tragedy to those who feel." ~ Horace Walpole

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