



Top Stories

Explosions rock Egyptian resort town of Dahab

Three explosions on Monday night rocked the Egyptian resort city of Dahab and at least 63 people were killed in the blasts. Another 160 were injured.

South Thailand election reruns hit by violence

One driver was killed as insurgents attempted to stop the rerun of the South Thailand elections. The mostly Muslim insurgents cite unfair opposition as their reason.

Featured story

Lawsuit sends Buffalo, N.Y. hotel proposal to New York Supreme Court

Arthur J. Giacalone has filed a lawsuit in New York State Supreme Court against the city of Buffalo's Common Council and Planning board. According to Giacalone the city approved the proposal "without giving meaningful consideration to either the impact on the adjoining residential neighborhood, or the unique character of this section of Elmwood Avenue."

Wikipedia Current Events

- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad unexpectedly lifts a 27-year ban on female attendance of public sporting events. They still need permission of the male head of the household to attend and they

Wikipedia Current Events

will sit in a special female-only section.

- In Nepal, hundreds of Maoist rebels stormed the town of Chautara, attacking government offices and a prison. BBC. King Gyanendra orders the recall next Friday of the parliament which he suspended in 2005 – a key demand of the protestors.

- 2006 Dahab bombings: Witnesses reporting hearing three explosions in the Egyptian Sinai resort town of Dahab at about 1715 UTC. Dr. Said Essa, who runs the Sinai Peninsula rescue squad, estimates there were at least 100 dead or wounded.

- Pope Benedict XVI is reported to have agreed to a relaxation of rules for the use of condoms.

- Dubai International Finance Centre, owner of the Dubai stock exchange, announces that it has increased its equity stake in Euronext NV, which runs stock exchanges in four European capitals. There are rumors of an impending take-over bid.

- Ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka: Two suspected Tamil Tiger rebels are shot dead in Batticaloa while being caught planting mines, after rebels reportedly hacked a young mother to death. In the eastern part of the island, two Sinhalese guards are killed as they returned from a funeral and one Tamil is shot dead by unidentified gunmen.

Tennis player Rafael Nadal crowned "King of Clay"

At the start of the tournament 19 year old Rafael Nadal of Spain was seeded as the second favourite to take the Monte Carlo Masters clay court title, ranked only behind the current world number one, 25 year old Roger Federer of Switzerland. The final in question, the first 1-2 seed final since 1985, was won in four sets; 6-2, 6-7, 6-3, 7-6, just eleven minutes short of a match time of four hours.

As the matchtime suggests, the match was a see-saw battle with both players looking as though they would go on to win at different points of the match. At times, it was difficult to see who was the more experienced. Nadal, the more successful of the two on a clay tennis surface, played to Roger Federer's weakness. Roger Federer didn't give up without a fight, but his best, which is capable of beating anybody on his day, seemed to remain in the locker room as Roger Federer's aggression came a rare second to Nadal's accurate baseline style.

Nadal wins the Monte Carlo Masters for a second consecutive time. Nadal can celebrate his unexpected but much welcomed victory in Monaco, if only for a little while ahead of the next tournament in the clay court series.

Microsoft and EU face off in Luxembourg court

Today, court proceedings in the European Union's Court of First

Instance in Luxembourg began as Microsoft Corporation filed an appeal against the European Union Commission's decision in an anti-trust case, commenting that the Commission made several mistakes in its decision to fine Microsoft 497 million euros, or approximately 613 million dollars concerning several allegations that Microsoft used its majority share in desktop software to also take over the video and media player business. The Commission also forced Microsoft to produce a version of Windows XP that did not include Windows Media Player. Only 1,787 copies were ordered through March 31st. Microsoft has also alleged that the proposed punishment of 2 million euros per day is too severe. The EU has also proposed that Microsoft's upcoming operating system, Windows Vista will also exclude rivals through bundling programs. Although a decision is not expected for at least several months, analysts have predicted that a verdict in favor of Microsoft would destroy the EU Commission's prestige as well as any case against Microsoft.

Oil prices drive new investment in clean technology

Investors are rushing to fund new ventures in renewable energy as Americans continue to see rising gasoline prices at the pump. The price for crude oil continues to rise to new record highs (\$75 per barrel of crude oil on NYMEX as of Friday's close). According to the results of a survey reported by the San Francisco Gate, in the 1st Quarter of 2006 investments in the clean technology sector has increased by 13% to \$3.36 Billion in the US. In addition to attracting venture capital, clean technology companies are receiving a buzz from high profile investors.

Bill Gates, Founder of Microsoft, announced last week that his venture group (Cascade Investments) initiated the purchase of 25.5% ownership in Pacific Ethanol Inc. Pacific Ethanol is an ethanol production company that plans to expand operations by opening a new facility in California. Gates is not alone in high profile investments into the clean energy market, Bob Metcalfe (Founder of 3COM and Inventor of Ethernet), who acts as the managing partner of Polaris Ventures, announced the VC's first investment into the energy market. Polaris, which manages over \$3 Billion in funds, invested \$6.8 million into GreenFuel Technologies Corporation of Cambridge, MA. GreenFuel Technologies is an emissions to biofuels company, that utilizes natural algae in their patented bioreactors to turn greenhouse gas emissions from power plants into rich bio fuel. Polaris's investment into GreenFuel was part of the company's \$18 Million Series B financing round that also included a high profile venture capital investor: Draper Fisher Jurvetson. When asked about the new industry venture, Bob Metcalfe said, "Energy has got to be one of the top five problems the world faces, and it's been frustrating to watch activists and politicians fail to solve the problem,...Now it's time for the entrepreneurs and scientists to give it a try."

According to the International Energy Association, demand for renewable energy fuels will more than quadruple in the next decade. The current jump in oil prices is fueling investment into this relatively new market as investors view clean technology as an emerging opportunity rather than a public relations campaign. As gasoline prices continue to rise,

alternative fuels become respectively cheaper and more attractive. In his latest State of the Union Address, President Bush outlined a plan to direct new investment into ethanol production and other clean technologies. According to a poll conducted by CBS News, Americans now see gas prices as one of their top three main concerns. With pressure coming from constituents, politicians are beginning to exert pressure on new spending on renewable technology to promote energy independence. Yet another front in this debate is that of environmental concern. With global warming on the rise, and many European governments eagerly searching for a Carbon Dioxide solution, the promise of reducing these emissions by 46% (as claimed by GreenFuel's bio reactor system) begins to resonate as a promising environmental and business opportunity.

Explosions rock Egyptian resort town of Dahab

Three explosions rocked the Egyptian resort city of Dahab and killed at least 63 people. Another 160 were injured. According to unconfirmed reports, at least 90 or over 100 deaths. A doctor who runs an Egypt's Sinai Peninsula rescue squad told the press at least 100 bodies had been found, this was not yet confirmed.

The blasts came at the height of the tourist season, officials said. The blasts, from time bombs, occurred in a busy restaurant and in a market area in the Red Sea resort city within a span of five minutes.

Dahab is located on the Gulf of Aqaba on the eastern side of the Sinai Peninsula.

In a early written statement

attributed to the Egyptian Interior Ministry, the number of dead was put at 23, which included 20 Egyptians and three foreigners: a German child and two victims of unknown nationality.

The statement said the 20 foreigners who were wounded include three Danes, three Britons, two Italians, two Germans and one each from the United States, France, Korea, Lebanon, Israel and Australia. The nationalities of the other victims were not specified.

By-elections fail to provide way out of Thai political crisis

With the Bangkok Post reporting indications that 14 unopposed candidates failed to meet the requirement of receiving votes from 20% of eligible citizens, Thailand's Constitutional court may be asked to consider breaching the constitution and convening the new parliamentary session without quorum.

The April 2 general election saw caretaker Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's populist Thai Rak Thai (lit: Thais love Thais) party win the controversial election, but a significant boycott and use of the abstention option on ballot forms forced Thaksin to announce he will not assume the post of PM in the parliament's next session. The three main opposition parties had refused to participate in the snap election leading to a significant number of constituencies where TRT stood unopposed. Over 40 candidates failed to meet the 20%-of-eligible-voters requirement forcing yesterday's by-elections.

Thailand's snap election was the PM's response to ongoing demonstrations and accusations of malfeasance, particularly in relation to his family's sale of their

interest in Shin Corp, a major Thai company, to Temasek Holdings which is described by Wikipedia as "the investment arm of the Singapore government." The mass rallies that ensued, organised by the self-styled People's Alliance for Democracy, and the mainstream opposition boycott damaged the PM's attempt to use an election to renew his mandate.

Today in History

1719 - Robinson Crusoe, a novel by Daniel Defoe, was first published.

1792 - Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle composed La Marseillaise, now the national anthem of France.

1953 - Molecular structure of Nucleic Acids: A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid by James Watson and Francis Crick was published in the scientific journal Nature.

1974 - The song Grândola Vila Morena by Zeca Afonso was broadcast on radio, signalling the start of the Carnation Revolution, a bloodless coup against the Estado Novo regime in Portugal.

1986 - Mswati III was crowned King of Swaziland, succeeding his father Sobhuza II.

April 25 is Holocaust Remembrance Day in Israel (2006); ANZAC Day in Australia and New Zealand; Liberation Day in Italy; Flag Day in the Faroe Islands; Red Hat Society Day.

Quote of the Day

"The speed of communications is wondrous to behold. It is also true that speed can multiply the distribution of information that we know to be untrue."
~ Edward R. Murrow

Word of the Day

orthogonal; adj

Definition

1. Of, or relating to right angles; perpendicular to.
2. Statistically independent, with reference to variates.
3. Able to be treated independently of each other.

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