



### Top Stories

#### Zacarias Moussaoui to serve life in prison

Zacarias Moussaoui, convicted for his involvement in the September 11 attacks, has been officially sentenced to serve life in prison.

#### Voting day for local elections in England

Voters in England will take to the polls today to elect local councils in what will be seen as a test for Prime Minister Tony Blair.

### Featured story

#### Soft drink companies to stop high school soda sales

Most U.S. soft drink companies will stop selling their soda products at high schools across the nation as part of a soft drink industry deal that aims to reduce childhood obesity.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Manasseh Sogavare is re-elected Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands. Sogavare was Prime Minister in the previous government, before Snyder Rini's brief holding of the office.
- In Israel, a new Cabinet under Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is sworn in.
- A tsunami warning was issued for Fiji and New Zealand following a magnitude 7.9 earthquake in Tonga which occurred at 15:26 UTC (04:26 May 4, local time). The warning was canceled when it was found that the earthquake did not produce a tsunami.

### Wikipedia Current Events

• Picasso's Dora Maar With Cat is sold in an auction for US\$95,216,000, becoming one of the most expensive paintings in the world.

#### Zacarias Moussaoui to serve life in prison

U.S. District Judge Leonie Brinkema has agreed to a federal jury's recommendation that Zacarias Moussaoui, convicted for conspiring with al-Qaeda in the September 11 attacks, spend life in prison. He will serve his life term in a federal maximum security prison, in Florence, Colorado.

"God curse America. God save Osama bin Laden. You'll never get him," said Moussaoui moments before Judge Brinkema read her sentence.

Brinkema responded, "You came here to be a martyr and die in a big bang of glory. But to paraphrase the poet T.S. Eliot, instead you will die with a whimper."

The jury, which consisted of three women and nine men, announced their verdict after one week of deliberation and a trial that lasted only six weeks.

"America, you lost! I won!," said Moussaoui after the verdict was read.

At least three jurors came to a conclusion that Moussaoui did not

know enough about the attacks, three said that his role in the attacks were minor, three said that as a child, Moussaoui suffered from racism, nine said that his father abused him, and the other jurors said that the "dysfunctional family" forced him to leave his home.

This verdict "represents the end of this case but not an end to the fight against terror," said U.S. President George W. Bush. "Mr. Moussaoui got a fair trial. The jury convicted him to life in prison, where he will spend the rest of his life. In so doing, they spared his life, which is something that he evidently was not willing to do for innocent American citizens. It is really important for the United States to stay on the offence against these killers and bring them to justice."

Carie Lemack, the daughter of a September 11 victim, said "there's absolutely nothing in this country that all 9/11 family members are going to agree upon except that the attacks should never happen again, and I respect everyone's opinion. I think what's important is that we make sure Moussaoui not get what he wants, which is to become a martyr and go down in history being someone bigger than he was. I'm glad that the jury looked at the evidence and realized he's just an al-Qaeda wannabe."

**Celebrations for the time**  
**01:02:03, 04/05/06**  
Fans of quirky numbers

everywhere celebrated recently as the clock struck 01:02:03, 04/05/06 (using the DD/MM/YY date convention). This once-in-a-century event was highlighted in advance by webloggers and websites such as Boing Boing. For countries where the MM/DD/YY convention is more common, the event happened a month ago on 5th April.

The date attracted numerous comments when posted to the news website Digg, and the special date has been mentioned by hundreds of thousands of websites, according to a Google search.

Blogger Robert Scoble exclaimed "the things geeks care about!"

Whilst 01:02:03, 04/05/06 won't happen again for another hundred years, those who missed out might want to celebrate 06:06:06, 06/06/06 in just over a month's time.

### **Soft drink companies to stop high school soda sales**

Most U.S. soft drink companies will stop selling their soda products at high schools across the nation as part of a soft drink industry deal that aims to reduce childhood obesity.

The agreement, announced Wednesday morning by the William J. Clinton Foundation, means that the nation's biggest beverage distributors, Coca Cola Co., Pepsico, Cadbury Schweppes PLC, and the American Beverage Association, will pull their soda products from vending machines and cafeterias in schools serving about 35 million students, according to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, a joint initiative between the Clinton Foundation and the American

Heart Association.

"This is an important announcement and a bold step forward in the struggle to help America's kids live healthier lives," said Bill Clinton, according to a press release from the foundation. "These industry leaders recognize that childhood obesity is a problem and have stepped up to help solve it. I commend them for being here today and for taking this important step. There is a lot of work to be done to turn this problem around but this is a big step in the right direction and it will help improve the diet of millions of students across the country."

Under the agreement, high schools will still be able to purchase drinks such as diet and unsweetened teas, diet sodas, sports drinks, flavored water, seltzer, and low-calorie sports drinks for resale to students.

The companies plan to stop soda sales at 75 percent of the nation's public schools by the 2008-2009 school year, and at all schools in the following school year. The speed of the changes will depend in part on school districts' willingness to change their contracts with the beverage distributors, the release said.

California had already banned soda sales at Logan and other state high schools, starting in July 2007, under a bill signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "California is facing an obesity epidemic," he said at the time. He said he plans for the ban to be the first step in creating a healthier California.

The bill banning soda sales, SB965, was introduced last September by Senator Martha Escutia of State Senate District 30

in Southern California. SB965 is one of several bills signed into law to "eliminate junk food and soda from campuses, and to increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables available to students," said Schwarzenegger. The new law will go into full affect by July 1, 2007.

State law already bans soda sales at the lower grade levels.

Elsie Lee Szeto, the director of Food and Nutrition Services of New Haven Unified School District in Union City, California, said that, under the new law, no less than 50 percent of all beverages sold to students between a half hour before school begins and a half-hour after school will have to meet specific criteria that include alternatives like fruit based drinks that are comprised of no less than 50 percent fruit juice and have no added sweeteners. All milk sold will be two percent fat milk, soy milk, and other similar non-dairy milk.

About 16 percent of our nation's children and adolescents are overweight or obese – nearly four times more than forty years ago, according to the Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

According to the Center of Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), a non-profit advocacy group in Washington D.C., two out of three teenagers in California drink soda everyday. The average intake for males 13 to 18 is three or more cans of soda a day.

A recent study by researchers of Children's Hospital Boston showed a connection between consumption of sugary drinks and childhood obesity.

Children's Hospital Boston's Cara

Ebbeling, PhD, and David Ludwig, MD, PhD led a controlled trial for 103 children ages 13 to 18. Half of the teens, picked randomly, were sent non-caloric beverages of their choosing. The remaining teens were asked to continue their regular eating and drinking habits as a control group.

After six months, the group that had received the calorie-free drink deliveries had an 82 percent decrease in the consumption of sugary drinks, while the control group continued unaffected. The body mass index of the drink delivery group decreased, while the control group had a slight increase. Other factors such as exercising and television viewing did not change in either group.

Ebbeling concluded that one 12-oz sugary drink every day converted to a one pound weight gain over 3 to 4 weeks. "It should be relatively simple to translate this intervention into a pragmatic public health approach. For example, schools could make non-caloric beverages available to students by purchasing large quantities at low costs," she said.

The agreement announced today "is really the beginning of a major effort to modify childhood obesity at the level of the school systems," said Robert H. Eckel, president of the American Heart Association.

### **Lava flows from Mount Merapi**

Scientists warn that Mount Merapi, or "The Mountain of Fire," a large Indonesian volcano on the island of Java is likely to erupt. Molten lava and shallow volcanic earthquakes were recorded on Wednesday, as well as further tremors on Thursday morning.

Mount Merapi is the most active of

130 volcanoes in Indonesia. It is a strato-volcano with an active summit lava dome. It has small eruptions every 3-4 years and larger eruptions every 10-15 years. It has produced more pyroclastic flows, popularly known as heat cloud and magma, than any other volcano in the world. The last fatal eruption happened in 1994, killing 60. During the eruption in 1930, 1,300 people died. Historians say that Mount Merapi has been erupting for 10,000 years.

Mount Merapi is considered very sacred by the locals. According to the local folk-lore the volcano's eruption is the result of spirits being angered by not receiving sufficient offerings or by a disrespectful attitude among the people in slopes. 27,000 locals in 3 villages could be affected by this eruption. Scientists have given the warning of eruption fortnight back and asked for immediate evacuation. The nearest city is Yogyakarta. The awesome sight of the erupting volcano has attracted many tourists and locals.

### **States challenge to Australian Work Choices Act begins**

The High Court challenge against the Australian federal government's Work Choices legislation has begun in Canberra today. The challenge was initiated by the governments of New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and Victoria and joined by the Australian Workers Union and Unions NSW.

The states claim that the legislation, passed by parliament in December last year, is unconstitutional. The federal government will argue that the legislation is permitted under Section 51(xx) of the Australian Constitution, commonly known as

the "corporations powers". The states argue that this section was never intended to be used for industrial arbitration.

Today, the court heard New South Wales' challenge to the laws. Solicitor-general of NSW, Michael Sexton, SC, said that the legislation would have been considered unconstitutional since federation over 100 years ago. He questioned whether or not the authors of Australia's constitution intended for the corporations provisions to extend to employees.

"What we do say is that this legislation would have been considered beyond a commonwealth power for most of the last century" he told the court.

Another lawyer for New South Wales, Bret Walker, SC, said states had been given the power of industrial relations, not the commonwealth government.

Some of the submissions made by New South Wales were attacked by Justice Haynes, the judge presiding over the case as being sloppy and ill-prepared.

Justice Haynes said that the definitions in the constitution need to be read in context of the 1890s, which were boom and bust times for corporations in Australia. He said that today, corporations are different to in the past. He also said that the authors would have been aware that there could be changes in the way the constitution was interpreted.

The premier of Queensland, Peter Beattie is concerned that if the states lose their case that the powers between the states and commonwealth would need to be revised.

"We will need a constitutional convention to reshape the powers between the states and the Commonwealth" he said.

### **Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey meet in Thessalonika**

The Greek Premier Kostas Caramanlis and his counterpart of Turkey, Rejep Tayyip Erdogan, had a meeting, for 45 minutes, in Thessaloniki, northern Greece, in the sidelines of the Inter-Balkan Cooperation Summit. Caramanlis and Erdogan had the opportunity to discuss the bilateral issues between Greece and Turkey, such as the Cyprus Issue, the dispute between the two countries in the area of Aegean Sea as well as the process of Turkey's efforts to become a member of the European Union. Today, the Prime Minister of Turkey will have the opportunity to visit the Turkish Consulate of Thessaloniki; the house in which the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Kemal Ataturk, was born.

Except from the Caramanlis-Erdogan meeting, important discussions took place in Thessaloniki between the leaders of Southeast Europe countries. The Bulgarian Prime Minister denied the reports in Bulgarian Media, whereby the Bulgarian public sector was backing out of the Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipe construction. In addition, the leaders welcomed the signing of the agreement for constructing a state-of-the-art railroad network in Southeast Europe, which as he said, would modernise rail transport, reduce travel time and increase the quality of the services provided in the region.

Japan, a major contributor to Balkan reconstruction projects, has guest status at the meeting, represented by Deputy Foreign

Minister, Akiko Yamanaka. The Summit focused on the European prospects of the Southeast European countries, economic relations, the issue with Kosovo, and the political crisis in Serbia, following the failed arrest of wanted General Mladic and the freezing of negotiations with the European Union.

### **Picasso's painting sold for \$95.2 million**

Picasso's famous portrait of his lover has been auctioned for \$95.2 million at Sotheby's in New York on wednesday. 1941 masterpiece "Dora Maar with cat/ Dora Maar au chat" was sold to an anonymous buyer. This is the second highest amount ever paid in an auction. The highest amount paid so far for a painting is \$104 million ( "Boy with a pipe/ Garcon a la pipe" by Picasso,1905 ),which was auctioned in 2004. Vincent Van Gogh's "Portrait with Dr. Gachet" was sold at \$82.5 million.

Dora Maar, herself an artist, believed to have helped Picasso in the execution of the famous masterpiece "Guernica", which depicted the horror of Spanish civil war. They had a relationship which lasted for a decade.

Picasso was born in Malaga, Spain on 25 October, 1881. He died at the age of 92 in 1973.

### **Former Victorian Premier considers political comeback**

Former Victorian Premier, Jeff Kennett said that he will consider returning to politics over the next 48 hours following the resignation of Liberal party leader, Robert Doyle. Mr Kennett was premier of Victoria from 1992 until 1999, when he was narrowly defeated by the Steve Bracks Labor government.

Mr Doyle has resigned following his approval rating sinking to a low of 15 percent.

There have been rumours of Mr Kennett returning to politics after the liberal party lost its second election in 2002 election. These have now been heightened by Mr Doyle's resignation. Mr Kennett said he has been approached by numerous people over the past few months about a return to politics. "I have received over the last few months significant numbers of approaches from both political and non-political people" he said.

It is expected that transport spokesman, Terry Mulder and planning spokesman Ted Baillieu may also run for the position of Victorian Liberal party leader. The new leader will be decided at a party meeting on Monday, when Mr Doyle will formally resign from the position.

If the party selects Mr Kennett as its leader there may be a number of interesting scenarios played out as Mr Kennett is not currently a member of parliament. He may be endorsed as leader immediately (in which case he would be an "outsider"), an acting leader may be elected until Mr Kennett returns to parliament at either the November 25 election or by winning a by-election. If the party decides to endorse Mr Kennett immediately, it would be the first time since 1993 that a party has had a leader who has not been a sitting member of parliament.

Mr Kennett has the support of John Howard, Australia's Prime Minister and most senior liberal party figure. A spokesperson for Mr Howard said that Mr Howard would welcome Mr Kennett's return to politics.

## Voting day for local elections in England

Voting day, Thursday 4th May, has begun for the local elections taking place in England. The elections will appoint local councillors, and, in some boroughs, local Mayors. Council elections include all 32 London boroughs, 36 metropolitan boroughs and 88 non-metropolitan districts. Mayoral elections will be held for Hackney, Watford, Newham and Lewisham. In the non-London council areas, the voting will affect either a third or half of the total number of councillors. In London, all council seats are up for election. Some council areas are not taking part in the election.

Polling stations will open between 07:00 and 22:00. Many voters will also have had the opportunity to apply for a postal vote. Counting begins once the polls close, with the results typically available in the early hours of the next morning.

The Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties have all launched major campaigns, as have some smaller parties such as the Green Party, UKIP (United Kingdom Independence Party), Respect and the BNP (British National Party).

## Rescue attempts continue for Tasmanian miners

Rescuers are continuing their efforts to reach the trapped miners in the Beaconsfield mine in northern Tasmania.

A five tonne borer drilling machine has been secured in place to drill a one metre hole through the remaining 12-16 metres of rock that fell into the main shaft.

Since drilling began at 7pm last night, the machine has made a

2cm wide pilot hole half way to the miners.

The trapped miners have been given egg sandwiches and yogurt, and have received MP3 players to pass the time and drown out the sounds of the drilling.

Meanwhile on the surface, the ever-growing media frenzy in Beaconsfield has forced the mine operators to enforce bag checks of rescuers entering the mine to ensure that no recording devices are taken into the mine.

## Earl Woods, father of Tiger Woods, dies at age 74

Today, in Cypress, California, Earl Woods, the father of Tiger Woods, died today in his house at the age of 74. Woods died of prostate cancer, which returned to his body after a previous bout with prostate cancer from 1986-1998, but it was treated with radiation. Although Earl was sometimes posed as an overwhelming, bossy father, Tiger treated Earl as "an amazing dad, coach, mentor, soldier, husband and friend." Tiger also posted that "I wouldn't be where I am today without him, and I'm honored to continue his legacy of sharing and caring." Tiger skipped this week's PGA Tour event, the Wachovia Championship, to be with his father. Two of his closest friends, Mark O'Meara and John Cook, followed suit. Woods, who grew up as an African-American child in rural Kansas, played baseball as a high-schooler and in the Negro Leagues, withstanding racism the whole way. During his two trips in the Vietnam War as a Green Beret, Woods met his lifelong friend, Tiger, who he named his son after, and his wife, Kutilda Punsawad.

## Today in History

1789 - French Revolution: The Estates-General convened in Versailles to discuss a financial crisis in France.

1862 - Cinco de Mayo in Mexico: Troops led by Ignacio Zaragoza halted a French invasion in the Battle of Puebla.

1904 - Cy Young of the Boston Americans pitched the first perfect game in the modern era of baseball.

1949 - The Council of Europe was formed.

1950 - Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej was crowned in Bangkok as King Rama IX of Thailand, currently the world's longest-serving head of state.

May 05 is Buddha's Birthday in Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea (2006); Liberation Day in Denmark, Ethiopia, and the Netherlands; Children's Day in Japan and South Korea.

## Quote of the Day

"Once you label me you negate me." ~ Søren Kierkegaard

## Word of the Day

hyperbole; *n*

Definition

Extreme exaggeration; especially, exaggeration as a literary device.

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