



Top Stories

Israeli court orders controversial wall rerouted

The Israeli High Court has unanimously ruled that the controversial wall separating Israel from the West Bank should be rerouted. The panel of nine justices gave their ruling on a petition submitted by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel and ordered that alternative routes be investigated around the settlement of Alefei Menashe. The court ruling orders that the existing wall in the area be demolished and rebuilt nearer to the settlement.

Panic-buying as petrol protests sweep Britain



Three days of fuel tax protests are starting today as panic buying causes shortages at petrol stations

petrol stations

Featured story

US peace activist to be deported from Australia



A US peace activist and history teacher, Scott Parkin, has been arrested in Melbourne after his visa was revoked on grounds of character. He was deemed "a threat to national security" by the Australian Department of Immigration, according to a spokesperson from Anti-Deportation Alliance

Wikipedia Current Events

- At least 26 Iraqi police die following two car bombs in the Baghdad. Elsewhere, 3 Shia pilgrims are shot dead by a passenger in a passing car traveling to Karbala, two Iraqi police members are killed near Kirkuk and three civil servants die following an attack on the Ministry of Industry in East Baghdad.
- The Australian Broadcasting Corporation rushed to air its interview with former Labor Party Opposition leader Mark Latham after fending off legal challenges from News Corporation, publishers of The Australian and the Herald Sun.

Imperfect immune systems help avoid autoimmune disease

The body's immune system is less effective at quashing disease than it could be - but if it were better the immune system might do more harm than good, according to new research by Michael Deem and colleagues of Rice University in Houston. The immune system has apparently evolved to be mildly inefficient so that it achieves a balance between quick response to disease and decreased probability of autoimmune disease, a condition in which the immune system attacks healthy tissue. The authors drew their conclusions from a model of the dynamics of antibody evolution. Their simulations show that while there are mechanisms that would allow the immune system to develop

antibodies that respond faster and more strongly against invading pathogens, those mechanisms would also create antibodies that are likely to attack the body's own healthy cells. The model also bolsters controversial suggestions that chronic infections could lead the immune system awry, ultimately resulting in rheumatoid arthritis or other autoimmune ailments. The study will be detailed in a forthcoming issue of the journal Physical Review Letters.

Delta, Northwest airlines file for bankruptcy



Delta Airlines and Northwest Airlines, the third and fourth-largest US airlines filed for bankruptcy on Wednesday. Together with United and US Airways, the are now four of the seven biggest US carriers operating under bankruptcy protection.

The file ocured due to rising fuel price, high labour expenses and competition from the low-fare carriers.

Delta and Northwest both said that bankruptcy would cause no changes for passengers in their flight schedules and frequent-flyer schemes. However, analysts say that cuts int the home flights can be expected in the future.

After Delta and Northwest announcement, 51% of the US flying capacity became held under bankruptcy protection.

Were New Orleaners caught in political crossfire?

In the aftermath of the disaster in New Orleans, questions have arisen as to whether the Bush administration withheld the deployment of troops and other assistance pending an agreement by the Louisiana Governor, Kathleen Blanco, to authorize the invocation of the Insurrection Act, which would have legally allowed Bush to declare martial law and take control of the rescue and rebuilding effort.

The NY Times on Sept. 8 reported that "As New Orleans descended into chaos last week and Louisiana's governor asked for 40,000 soldiers, President Bush's senior advisers debated whether the president should speed the arrival of active-duty troops by seizing control of the hurricane relief mission from the governor." But how this step would have improved the response time is not clear.

It is also unclear as to why such a move would be considered at all as no legal requirement was at issue, leading to the question of whether this was what some fear to have been a political power grab.

The same Times article quotes unnamed official(s) saying that "no active-duty forces could have been sent into the chaos of New Orleans on Wednesday or Thursday without confronting law-and-order challenges." But though the law does bar US Military forces

from law enforcement duties absent a declaration of martial law, there are no restrictions on their use in other capacities. Bush eventually did authorize 7,200 regular duty soldiers for deployment to New Orleans on Sept. 3rd.

The National Guard, which remains under the authority of the Governor of the state, are legally authorized and trained for law enforcement duties and the Times article goes on to say that "Pentagon officials said even the 82nd Airborne, which has a brigade on standby to move out within 18 hours, could not arrive any faster than 7,000 National Guard troops, which are specially trained and equipped for civilian law enforcement duties."

The Louisiana National Guard was conspicuously absent following the flooding and four days passed without relief. Several states offered emergency supplies, equipment and units from their National Guard. "New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson offered Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco help from his state's National Guard on Sunday, the day before Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana. Blanco accepted, but paperwork needed to get the troops en route didn't come from Washington until late Thursday."

Similarly, FEMA has been roundly criticized for its own failure to fulfill its emergency command and control mandate during the same period of time. Though on-site before the hurricane struck, many stories of manpower, equipment and supplies being refused have surfaced. Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard has accused FEMA of cutting their local communication lines in the midst of the crisis. FEMA chief Mike Brown was ultimately removed from his

post on Friday Sept. 9th.

Also on Friday National Guard units arrived in force and brought food and water, medical personnel, and quickly quelled the rampant looting that had beset the city during the previous days.

Without a full investigation, it is impossible to say what caused these delays. This disaster was unprecedented in scope and hit an area long known to be exceptionally vulnerable to catastrophic damage from a hurricane. But the length of the delay and the breadth of the failures have been widely condemned and demands for an explanation have come from both sides of the political aisle.

Seven face deportation after UK dawn raids

In dawn raids ordered by the UK Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, seven people have been detained in London and Greater Manchester.

The seven, who are believed to all be Algerian, are thought to include some of those allegedly involved in an earlier ricin poisoning plot.

The Home Secretary ordered the raids based on information provided by police and other security forces. Those seized may appeal against deportation, but are deemed a "threat to national security" by the Home Office. According to officials, those detained were done so using powers granted under the Immigration Act of 1971, not under the recently passed legislation aimed at removing radical muslim clerics from the country.

US state of Texas executes

woman convicted of murdering family

Frances Newton was put to death by lethal injection in the US state of Texas on Wednesday, September 14, 2005, for the murder of her husband and two children in April of 1987.

Her parents watched the execution in Huntsville where a few dozen demonstrators gathered outside to protest. Frances Newton was the first state-sponsored execution of an African-American female in Texas since the civil war. Newton is the third woman put to death by the state of Texas since capital punishment resumed following the end of a US national moratorium on the death penalty in 1982.

According to the police, the motive for the murders was collection of \$100,000 in life insurance. Newton stated that a drug dealer committed the killings. Prosecutors say that gunpowder residue was found on Newton's skirt. Ballistics tests also backed up police claims that the pistol in question was the murder weapon. The defense rebuffed this by saying that police had, in fact, found two weapons. The defense also stated that the residue could have come from standard garden fertilizer.

In 1998 hundreds protested the execution of Karla Faye Tucker, the first woman put to death in Texas since the Civil War era. Rick Perry, the Governor of Texas, had postponed Newton's sentence to allow further investigation of evidence. Once the governor was convinced the state's case was solid, he allowed the execution to proceed.

Frances Newton of Texas was 40.

Israeli court orders controversial wall rerouted

The Israeli High Court has unanimously ruled that the controversial wall separating Israel from the West Bank should be rerouted.

The panel of nine justices gave their ruling on a petition submitted by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel [3] and ordered that alternative routes be investigated around the settlement of Alefei Menashe. The court ruling orders that the existing wall in the area be demolished and rebuilt nearer to the settlement.

The rerouting of the wall will result in the Palestinian village of Qalqilya, and four others, being on the West Bank side of the barrier.

The barrier has been a contentious issue between Israelis and Palestinians since construction began. Israel's government ignored last year's non-binding ruling by the International Court of Justice which declared the barrier illegal.

National plant materials center goes native in Washington, DC

Among its many ongoing research studies, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) National Plant Materials Center (NPMC), in Beltsville, Maryland, is researching native, ornamental, perennial plants which are tolerant of hot, droughty conditions. The end result of this research is to promote city gardening in the Washington/Baltimore metro area and to eventually expand to the entire mid-Atlantic region.

"The use of native plants are beneficial to the region in that they are already adapted to the

cultural conditions present in city environments and are unlikely to displace other native-plant communities," said Shawn Belt, Horticulturalist at the NPMC. "And, not only do these native plants add to the diversity of inner-city plant materials they encourage wildlife as well."

Working with NRCS conservationists for Washington, DC, the NPMC has recently installed a "butterfly garden" a native-plant garden at the Myrtilla Miner Elementary School in NE Washington DC. According to Belt, Washington, DC typically has poor soils so this site will be a good evaluation for hot, dry conditions.

"Since there are no farms in DC to award contracts for the various NRCS cost share programs, NRCS does award cost share for schools in order to educate students to the benefits of using native plants in city landscapes," said Belt.

NRCS conservationists have been encouraging teachers to install butterfly gardens with cost-share money from the Environmental Quality Incentives Programs (EQIP) to help with the costs of installing these gardens.

While working with the school to install the native-plant garden, NRCS employees will evaluate the performance of the plants over the next 3 years. Additionally, evaluations will be continued in other areas of Washington, DC in order to replicate the "experiment" in differing locations.

Tauranga bomb threat politically motivated

Parts of central Tauranga city in New Zealand were evacuated around lunchtime today after a man threatened to detonate a

bomb unless he was allowed to speak to the Prime Minister, Helen Clark.

The man is said to have entered the Devonport Towers hotel at around 11:15 am. When hotel staff attempted to remove him, he claimed that his backpack was packed with explosives.

Police are negotiating with the man via telephone. Tauranga resident Erin Cornwall said that police have been called in from Auckland to help deal with the situation. It appears that the man is a foreign student who has a grievance related to the expiry of his residence permit.

Tauranga is one of the most hotly contested electorates in the New Zealand parliamentary general election to be held this Saturday. The result of the electorate voting for Tauranga will decide whether MP Winston Peters retains his long-held seat. If Peters loses Tauranga and his NZ First party fails to get 5% of the party vote, then NZ First will not be represented in the next parliament.

The Prime Minister has been informed of the situation, but has declined to speak to the man. She is currently in Auckland campaigning for the Labour Party.

In an ironic turn of events, Winston Peters, well known for his intolerant views on immigration, is reported to have offered to negotiate with the man.

Telstra sale legislation passed by Australian Senate

The three bills previously debated in the House of Representatives which enable the full sale of Telstra was passed by the Senate,

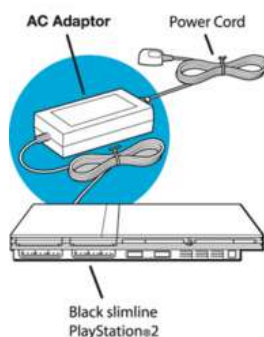
September 14.

The use of the so-called "guillotine" was used and Australian Labor Party, Australian Greens, and the Australian Democrats senators criticized the Government for not informing other parties that they intended to do so; Senator Andrew Bartlett of the Democrats said in the chamber today that the Liberal senators actions were "arrogant" and that these senators used the guillotine "because [they] can". Senator Bob Brown of the Greens had said "This is a disgraceful day for democracy."

Opposition members attempted to move amendments or motions to try and extend debate, furthermore Democrats senators moved amendments based on advice from the ACCC, but these were defeated in another sequence of several divisions.

Later in the day (after debate was suspended due to Question Time and other matters), the bills passed the third reading by a majority of two votes.

Sony recalls Playstation 2 power adaptors



Sony has announced that they are recalling 3.5 million PlayStation 2 power adaptors world wide. A small component in the power adaptors is vulnerable to overheating. Sony advises

customers using a unit covered by the recall to unplug it and wait until a replacement AC adaptor is provided.

This recall affects only the AC adaptors that were manufactured between August 2004 and December 2004 for the black slimline PlayStation 2, with the product identification code HP – ATH048H03. Users with an affected unit should visit the AC Adaptor Replacement Programme website.

In North America, two people have suffered minor burns, one person suffered a minor shock and four people have reported property damage from the power adaptor overheating. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, reported Sony has received 38 reports of adaptors overheating. Only four cases of overheating have been reported elsewhere.

Sony is not the only games console manufacturer to suffer from AC adaptor related issues. In February, Microsoft recalled 14 million power adaptors for the Xbox due to a similar overheating problem.

Blackwater mercenaries used in New Orleans

As of September 1, 2005, Blackwater USA sent equipment and security forces to the Hurricane Katrina disaster area, including a SA-330J Puma helicopter, with the stated purpose of assisting in the evacuation of citizens from flooded areas. A later press release on Blackwater USA's web site confirms that their privately contracted forces are on the ground in New Orleans, being used to secure petrochemical facilities and provide security services for the federal

government.

Private citizens are also reported to be hiring Blackwater "military warriors" and bodyguards to protect them and/or their expensive homes in New Orleans, such as in the Garden District, despite the repeated mandatory evacuation orders of all civilians by local, state, and federal authorities. One publication has reported that the number of soldiers for hire could be in the hundreds, as told to them by the commander of Blackwater's operations in the city. Israeli mercenaries from the firm known as ISI were also seen guarding a gated community, and were wearing full military gear including bulletproof vests and M16 assault rifles.

Blackwater has a history of being employed by the U.S. government and by private contractors across Iraq over the last two years to protect civilian and military convoys and provide security and bodyguarding services.

About Wikinews

We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including **you**) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. All stories on Wikinews are in the public domain. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.

Got news and no computer?

Call the Wikinews Hotline

+1-866-653-4265
(toll-free in the U.S.)
+1-202-742-5918
(outside the U.S.)

Audio Wikinews

Audio Wikinews is a public domain, non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily.
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio>

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit:
<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print>

Wikinews Back Page

Today in History

1597: Twelve Korean ships commanded by Admiral Yi Soon Shin sank 31 enemy ships and defeated a Japanese invasion.

1810: Miguel Hidalgo, the parish priest of Dolores, Guanajuato, delivered the Grito de Dolores to his congregation, instigating the Mexican War of Independence against Spain.

1941: Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Persia, was forced to abdicate in favour of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

1963: Malaya, North Borneo, Sarawak and Singapore merged to form Malaysia.

1982: A Lebanese militia led by Elie Hobeika carried out a massacre in the Palestinian refugee camp of Sabra and Shatila.

September 16 is Dieciséis de septiembre in Mexico (1810), Independence Day in Papua New Guinea (1975), Constitution Day in the United States

Quote of the Day

"A planned life is a dead life." ~ Lauren Bacall

