



Top Stories

UN reports Rwandan refugees repatriated by force

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is reporting that thousands of Rwandan asylum seekers who fled to neighbouring Burundi over the last few months have been forced to return home. Trucks laden with people have been seen leaving the camp, and some people have broken limbs after allegedly jumping to avoid returning to Rwanda.

Aid group 'denied access' to Rwandan refugee camp in Burundi

The international medical aid group Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has claimed in a press release that its medical staff have been prevented from accessing their clinic inside the Songore transit camp. The camp holds almost 7,000 Rwandan asylum seekers, who were receiving more than 100 medical consultations a day from MSF staff. MSF claims that the camp is now guarded by the Burundese military.

Canadian military hosts first gay military wedding

Details emerged on Tuesday that the Canadian military hosted the first gay military marriage in North America at an airbase in Nova Scotia in May. A sergeant and a warrant officer, who didn't want to be identified, were married on May 3 by a United Church minister in front of about 45 guests at Greenwood airbase.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Spanish police arrest 17 suspected Islamic extremists in a series of raids around the country. Eleven are alleged to be associated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and 5 are alleged to be connected to the Madrid train bombings of 11 March 2004.

•The Israeli Shin Bet (SHABAK) states that one month ago it arrested an alleged eight-member Palestinian militant cell in Nablus that included four teenage would-be suicide bombers. It claimed that the cell was part of Fatah (the ruling party in the Palestinian Authority), and that the Lebanese group Hezbollah was behind it.

•A memo from 1998 from an executive of Cotecna Inspection S.A. suggests that Kofi Annan was aware of their bid to participate in the Oil-for-Food Programme, reawakening suspicions of a conflict of interest.

•In Russia, explosion and fire in an oil depot near Moscow kills two.

•Catholic Archbishop Chaput warns Europe about growing anti-Semitism and intolerance.

House votes to limit Patriot Act

Today the U.S. House of Representatives voted to cut back some power of the Patriot Act by stopping the FBI and Justice Department from searching library and book store records. Although President Bush has promised a veto, the motion was passed with a majority of 238-187. The Senate has yet to vote on the matter.

The House's vote comes with the "sunset" provision set by Congress that will cause 15 parts of the Patriot Act, a controversial anti-terror bill championed by the Bush administration, to expire at the end of 2005.

16 American contractors detained for firing upon marines and civilians in Iraq

Sixteen employees of the Zapata Engineering company were detained in Fallujah last Wednesday by U.S. forces. The Marines accuse the contractors of firing at them as well as at civilians. The contractors deny the allegations and alledge they were mistreated while in custody.

Zapata Engineering is a small company based in North Carolina made up of approximately 50 employees. Zapata has a contract with the United States government to provide explosive management services.

Canadian PM survives confidence vote

Canada's scandal-plagued Liberal party survived a series of 15 confidence votes late last night ensuring Canadians won't be forced to head to the polls in a snap election this summer.

The minority government's win came amidst uncertainty over whether backbench MPs would force an election over the contentious issue of same-sex marriage.

But Prime Minister Paul Martin has yet another hurdle to jump with a key vote on Thursday over the government's second budget bill.

The bill is an amendment that came about as a result of a deal reached with the NDP Party in April, when the party's leader, Jack Layton, offered to support the Liberals if they would amend the budget to cancel corporate tax cuts due to be phased in over several years.

The budget deal with the NDP outlines \$4.6 billion in spending for infrastructure,

education, foreign aid and the environment.

Martin's government has been plagued by a sponsorship scandal over irregularities in public advertising contracts dating back to the 1990s awarded by the previous administration.

Autopsy reveals that Terri Schiavo was in a persistent vegetative state

An autopsy on the body of Terri Schiavo has revealed that her brain was half the size of a normal female adult's, suggesting that the woman was in a vegetative state, just as her husband, Michael, had argued in court and before the press.

Doctors also tell the press that the autopsy revealed that Ms. Schiavo was blind and that her disability was not caused by any sort of abuse.

The Terri Schiavo case, another chapter in court cases over a person's right to die, sparked attention from the international media. The case was caused by a dispute between husband Michael Schiavo and the parents of Terri over whether the disabled Ms. Schiavo, who could not communicate with anyone, desired to die. Courts that examined the case ruled in favor of Michael Schiavo's proposition to remove Ms. Schiavo's feeding tube. The removal of the tube caused the dehydration and eventual death of Ms. Schiavo, doctors say.

The Terri Schiavo Foundation's web site had previously claimed that Terri Schiavo was not in a persistent vegetative state (PVS) and that she was responsive to human emotion. Those statements have since been taken offline.

Aid payments to be withdrawn by UK following violence in Ethiopia

The UK has suspended £30m (\$54m) of aid payments to Ethiopia following the deaths of 36 people in protests over disputed elections.

The UK Development Minister, Hillary Benn, announced the move after talks with

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi in Addis Ababa.

Benn said that Ethiopia should allow the Red Cross access to detainees, and that they either be charged or released.

Ethiopia has said it has started releasing people, but has not provided figures on the number imprisoned. Opposition groups estimate the number to be 3,600.

UK Prime Minister Tony Blair telephoned Zenawi on Sunday to express his concern at the shootings. Ethiopia has stated that it has begun releasing many of those arrested during the protests, however, Human Rights Watch says those being held are at risk of abuse.

On Tuesday, Ethiopia's leaders signed a declaration to try to end violence and launch an investigation into election complaints.

Red and processed meats linked to bowel cancer

A large-scale study has demonstrated a risk of bowel cancer associated with the consumption of large amount of red or processed meats.

The European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition study was set up ten years ago to investigate the affects of nutrition on cancer. Funded by the British Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, and the International Agency for Research on Cancer, half a million people aged between 25 and 70 across Europe were studied from 1992 to 1998. The results are being published in the latest edition of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

After an average of five years, people who had eaten more than two portions of red and processed meats a day (160g) were 35% more likely to develop bowel cancer than those who only ate one portion a week.

Eating one or more portions of fish a day (over 80g) was associated with a

reduction of 20% in risk compared to people who only ate fish once a week.

Red meat was defined as beef, lamb, pork and veal while processed meat was mostly pork and beef that were preserved by methods other than freezing. These include ham, bacon, sausages, liver pate, salami, tinned meat, luncheon meat and corned beef.

In the UK, bowel cancer is the second most common cancer for women and third most common for men. In England and Wales, currently about 1 in 18 men and 1 in 20 women will be diagnosed with the disease. Some 50% of bowel cases are cured - rising to 80% if caught early enough.

Bombing in Iraq kills US Marines and civilians

"Five marines were killed in action Thursday when their vehicle hit an explosive device while conducting combat operations near Haqlaniyah," the United States Military said in a statement on Friday evening.

The attack itself came hours after reports that up to 17 bodies had been found killed in the same province. Reports say that the bodies were killed "execution style" and were near Anbar.

In Baghdad, up to three Iraqi civilians were killed and several others were wounded in a car bomb blast, that exploded near a busy marketplace in the mainly Shia district of Shula.

President Bush says U.S. will defend Taiwan if attacked by China

On Friday, June 10, 2005, U.S. President George W. Bush said that the United States will defend the Republic of China (Taiwan) if it is ever attacked by the People's Republic of China (mainland China). The President expressed this position in an interview with Neil Cavuto in Fox News Channel's Your World with Neil Cavuto.

CAVUTO: Do we still stand by an agreement, Mr. President, that if Taiwan

is ever invaded, we will defense Taiwan?

BUSH: Yes, we do. It's called the Taiwan Relations Act. The policy of the U.S. government is this: We're for a One China policy based upon what they call the Three Communiqués, and that we adhere to the Taiwan Relations Act, which means this: Neither side will unilaterally change the status quo. In other words, neither side will make a decision that steps outside the bounds of that statement I just made to you. If China were to invade unilaterally, we would rise up in the spirit of Taiwan Relations Act. If Taiwan were to declare independence unilaterally, it would be a unilateral decision that would then change the U.S. equation.

EBay UK bans sale of Live 8 tickets

The UK division of eBay announced yesterday that it was removing all listings for sale of tickets for Live 8 from its eBay.co.uk site. Whilst asserting that "resale of tickets is not illegal", it stated that it was banning them in response to community pressure, and it was "absolutely the right thing to do". No similar announcements were made for any other of eBay's web sites, such as eBay.com, and no particular restrictions on the sales of event tickets with respect to Live 8 are included in eBay's resale policy.

Bob Geldof had labelled the advertising for sale of the the tickets "sick profiteering". He described the community reaction as people realising that "the weakest people on our planet" were being exploited, and being "sickened by that". In response to an earlier offer by eBay to hand over to the Live 8 charity its fees from the sales, Geldof had said "It is not acceptable that a giant electronic company that makes billions upon billions then morally says 'we will just hand over our take to a charity'. It is filthy money made on the back of the poorest people on the planet. Stick it where it belongs."

Boy dies on Space Mission ride at Disneyworld

A 4-year-old-boy named Daudi Bamuwamye from Sellersville, Pennsylvania, died yesterday after collapsing on the Mission: SPACE ride in Epcot at the Walt Disney World Resort, Florida. His mother carried him off the ride, and after attempts to revive him at the theme park by paramedics, he was declared dead in hospital. The ride was closed after the death yesterday but, after an inspection by company engineers concluded that the ride was operating normally, re-opened. No changes were made to the ride or to the restrictions upon who may ride it.

A Disney official said in a statement that Disney officials were "providing support to the family and are doing everything we can to help them during this difficult time.". Disney spokeswoman Jacquee Polak said that "We believe the ride is safe in its current configuration."

Sheri Blanton of the medical examiner's office in Orlando said that the autopsy yesterday showed no trauma, that further tests will be done, and that the cause of death may not be known for several weeks. The sheriff's office in Orlando said that the boy met the minimum height requirement (44 inches) for the ride.

The ride features 2 Gs of acceleration. While this is not abnormal for rides, several people had complained of nausea from the ride and airsickness bags had been installed on the ride itself. Houston-based theme park consultant Randy King, a former safety director at Six Flags, said "Two Gs is not that big a deal."

Earthquake hits Chile

A major earthquake hit Chile on Monday with a 7.9 magnitude strength. According to the Reuters news service, the earthquake caused a major displacement of homes and caused major power outages. So far, there have been 11 dead in the quake and aftermath.

The epicentre was 115 km at the northeast of the of Iquique, close to the border with Bolivia, and it happened Monday, at 6:45 p.m. local time (22:45

UTC).

Right after the occurrence of the earthquake, schools were evacuated, panic was generalized and the electrical power has been cut. The earthquake could be felt at the south of Peru and Bolivia, but there are not information about victims or damages in these countries. A very small earthquake was felt in some cities in Brazil, with no damages or victims apparently.

Tsunami bulletin issued from Pacific coast of California-Mexico border to Vancouver, Canada

On Tuesday night, the National Weather Service issued a tsunami bulletin for the Pacific coast from the California-Mexico border to Vancouver, Canada.

The warning has now been cancelled.

Details of the earthquakes which have taken place in the past week (including the three major earthquakes which have taken place in, or close to, the Americas over the last 24 hours) can be found at <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/>

Bombings reported in southeastern Iran

Three separate explosions have been reported in Zahedan, a city in southeast Iran near the Afghan and Pakistanian borders. Reports indicate that the bombings gave minor injuries to three people and caused some damage to houses. One of the blasts reportedly occurred at approximately 4:30 am, with the other two preceding shortly before.

The attack is part of a series of bombings that have occurred shortly before the Iranian presidential election. Blasts in Tehran and the southwestern city of Ahvaz on Sunday killed a total of 10 people. Despite these grave attacks, Iranian officials are asserting that the turnout for the election will not be impaired. At a Monday press conference, intelligence minister Ali Younessi said, ""[The] Sunday morning and evening [attacks] in Ahvaz and Tehran are not

going to have any effect on people's presence at presidential election polls."

Today in History

1487 - The Battle of Stoke Field, the final battle of the Wars of the Roses, was fought.

1745 - During King George's War, British colonial forces led by William Pepperrell captured the French stronghold at Fortress Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island after a six-week siege.

1846 - Pius IX was elected pope, beginning the longest reign of all popes since the days of the apostles.

1963 - Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space.

1976 - Police in Soweto, South Africa opened fire on schoolchildren protesting against the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in township schools, triggering a series of nationwide demonstrations, strikes, riots and violence.

June 15 is Bloomsday in Dublin, Ireland; Youth Day in South Africa

Quote of the Day

"Talent perceives differences, Genius unity." ~ William Butler Yeats

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