



Top Stories

Columbine High School evacuated following bomb scare

The Columbine High School has been evacuated following a bomb scare, just two months before the eighth anniversary of America's most deadly school shooting.

Airbus announces job cuts of 10,000

Airbus, Europe's biggest aircraft manufacturer, has announced 10,000 job cuts over the next four years.

Featured story

Billboard holds benefit Oscar party for Children Uniting Nations

Professional photographer John B. Mueller was at the Children Uniting Nations/Billboard Academy Awards afterparty red carpet, taking photos for Wikinews. It is one of the largest events, following only the Vanity Fair and Elton John AIDS Foundation Party in size.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Dozens of people are arrested in Copenhagen as the police evict squatters from a former theatre in the centre of the city.
- The Turkish government orders an investigation into claims that the Kurdish separatist leader Abdullah Ocalan was poisoned.
- A tornado strikes southern Missouri killing a seven year old girl. Tornadoes in Alabama kill at

Wikipedia Current Events

least 13 people including eight students at Enterprise High School. It is part of a larger tornado outbreak.

- Senegalese election officials confirm that Abdoulaye Wade has been re-elected as the President of Senegal.
- The United States formally charges David Hicks with aiding the Taliban. He will be the first person tried under the new law for military commissions.
- Eight people die in a landmine explosion in Chhattisgarh, India.
- A New South Wales coroner issues a warrant for the arrest of Indonesian politician Yunus Yosfiah for failure to appear to give evidence in the coronial inquest into the death of the Balibo Five in Balibo, East Timor in 1975.
- The fourth International Polar Year, a \$1.5 billion research program to study both the North Pole and South Pole is launched in Paris, France.

Blackburn defeat Arsenal in FA Cup

Another FA Cup replay occurred last night, featuring Blackburn and Arsenal at Ewood Park. The previous game was played to a 0 - 0 draw, with defensive strength showing on Blackburn's side.

This game went much the same way, with Arsenal controlling the game, but not delivering any potent strikes. Arsenal had an appeal for a

penalty when keeper Brad Friedel brought down Jermie Aliadiere in the box, but referee Graham Poll dubbed the challenge fair. Arsenal's best chance came through Julio Baptista, who tried to head in a Denilson free kick, but the attempt sailed over the crossbar, not troubling Brad Friedel. Blackburn had their own chance on 53 minutes, but Morten Gamst Pederson's shot flew wide of the post after he did well to make space in the box. 10 minutes later, Blackburn made two substitutions, putting Benni McCarthy and David Dunn into the match at the expense of Tugay and Nonda. Arsenal made a change several minutes later, as Clich replaced Traore. Baptista continued to threaten the Blackburn goal, but a great save from Friedel and a misplaced header kept the game tied. As the game drew close to extra time, Benni McCarthy produced a wonderful goal, as he beat out Senderos and curled the ball into the top left corner. Arsenal attempted to strike back, but they left it too late, as Blackburn advanced to the next round.

Blackburn will play Manchester City in the next round of the FA Cup.

Toxic chemical spills in the Ohio River

At least 10,300 gallons of a toxic chemical, Cumene, also called isopropyl benzene, which is generally used in paint thinner, fuels, and rubber, spilled from a barge after it hit a wall of an underwater moveable dam in the Ohio River between Illinois and

Kentucky, according to the United States Coast Guard.

"There's a tremendous volume of water going through there, so there's a dilution factor, and this will be taken into consideration as they try to take measures to contain it," said a spokeswoman for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Maggie Carson.

The barge, which had at least 960,000 gallons of the chemical on board, hit the dam in Brookport, Illinois. Kirby Marine owns the moveable dam. The waterway is open only to traffic going in one direction, in both directions, for at least one mile as the barge is still in the river.

Authorities have stated that the drinking water is okay to drink and that as of the moment the toxin has not been found in any water pumps in the area.

"I would say it's not particularly dangerous. Any spill is serious ... but my answer would be that there would not be a risk to human health," said a spokesperson for Kirby Marine, Mark Buese.

It is not known what the environmental impact might be, but according to U.S. Coast Guard Lt. Wayne Chapman, the chemical floats on the surface of water so it will evaporate quickly.

Exposure to the chemical can cause headaches, eye irritation, nose and throat irritation, as well as some dizziness. Any animals that have been exposed directly to the chemical could also be at risk.

It is still not known what caused the crash.

Columbine High School evacuated following bomb scare

Reports say that an evacuation has taken place at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado after a bomb threat was phoned into the school.

"All we know at this point is that there is a bomb threat and that the school has been evacuated. Most of the threats that have been associated to that school made reference to past events that occurred there. But a bomb threat to a school is as serious at any school as it is at Columbine," said Jacki Kelley, spokeswoman for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Kelley added that all people evacuated from the school were initially sent to a park near the school, and that more than one threat was made against the school.

Kelley also added that the threats began at about 9:30am local time (4:30 PM UTC).

According to Reuters, police have found no evidence of explosives at the scene. However, the bomb squad is still searching and bomb-sniffing dogs are also being used to search the school.

According to Marlene Desmond, spokesperson for Jefferson County Schools, there are over 1,850 students at the high school. The entire school was evacuated upon receipt of the bomb threat.

In 1999, the school was the scene of a massacre when Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, students at the school, shot and killed 13 people before taking their own lives. This is the 10th threat of a series of threats against the school since 1999. This is the second threat that caused the school to be evacuated

and students sent home.

In an exclusive interview Jim Shires, Public Information Officer for the Jefferson County Sheriff told Wikinews that it is unknown if this incident was referenced in the current bomb threat.

"We won't know more until we speak with the people who actually took the call," Shires said. He added that the school would be closed for the remainder of the day while the investigation continues.

Taliban leader: Osama bin Laden is "still alive" and "Taliban ready to strike Americans"

Mullah Dadullah, a high ranking official for the Taliban in Afghanistan has said that the leader of al-Qaeda Osama bin Laden is "still alive" and that "messages are exchanged to share plans" with Bin Laden. Dadullah also said that they "go to the battlefield together."

"Only his comrades see him; we exchange messages with each other to share plans. We also go to the battlefield together. We actually meet very rarely, just for important consultations. It's hard for anyone to meet Bin Laden himself now, but we know he's still alive," said Dadullah.

Dadullah also claims that there are "hundreds" of suicide bombers that are prepared and ready to hit the NATO peacekeeping forces in Afghanistan and that "Americans will "reap the crop for a long time" also saying that the Taliban and al-Qaeda will get "revenge" on the United States either inside or outside Afghanistan.

"The Americans have sown a seed. They will reap the crop for quite a long time. We will get our revenge

on them, whether in Afghanistan or outside," said Dadullah.

The suicide martyrs, those willing to blow themselves up, are countless. Hundreds have registered their names already and are ready to go and we have hundreds more on the waiting list. Each is anxious to be the first to be sent," added Dadullah.

Dadullah also says that Islam "is more important than anything."

"For the Taliban, Islam is more important than anything else. It's our religious duty to shelter any Muslim brother who's on the run from the infidels, even at the cost of our government."

So far, the U.S. has not been able to confirm or deny the information and Dadullah has not stated where bin Laden may be hiding.

Professional athletes in US linked to online steroid ring

A steroid distribution network exposed by a New York prosecutor is reported to have connections to a number of high-profile professional athletes, including retired boxer Evander Holyfield and current Los Angeles Angels outfielder Gary Matthews, Jr.

Federal agents raided two pharmacies in Florida and Alabama which were tabbed by a prosecutor in Albany County, New York as having links to illicit distributors of steroids. Eight people have been arrested in connection to this ring, and up to 24 people are individuals of interest to federal agents and may be arrested before the investigation is over.

According to records seized during the raids, customers of the pharmacies included Holyfield, Matthews, former baseball star

Jose Canseco, and former pitcher Jason Grimsley. Investigators reportedly have found evidence that performance-enhancing drugs were prescribed to a number of professional athletes as well as international bodybuilders. Further evidence showed that Dr. Richard Rydze, team doctor of the Pittsburgh Steelers, purchased \$150,000 worth of human growth hormone on his personal credit card. Calls to Dr. Rydze were not immediately returned.

Those arrested include Stan and Naomi Loomis, owners of Signature Pharmacy in Orlando, Florida. Two other employees of the pharmacy (including Loomis's brother, Mike) were arrested as well. P. David Soares, Albany County prosecutor, indicated in filings from his office that Signature is believed to be a "producer" of anabolic steroids. Grimsley and Rydze were reported to be customers of Signature Pharmacy. Holyfield, Matthews, and Canseco were allegedly on customer lists from Applied Pharmacy Services in Mobile, Alabama. Both pharmacies and their owners are implicated in the steroid ring.

According to SI.com, Matthews received shipments of Genotropin, a synthetic growth hormone. The shipments were sent to the address of one of his former minor-league teammates in Mansfield, Texas. Matthews claimed he did not know why his name was on Applied Pharmacy's customer list. He did not comment further on the situation, stating that he was not "in a position to answer specific questions."

On Wednesday, Holyfield indicated that he was "not overly concerned about the situation." He did mention that the only purchase of medical supplies that can be

attributed to him were medications for his father, who died of a heart ailment in January. Later that evening, Holyfield released a more pointed denial, stating, "I do not use steroids. I have never used steroids. I resent that my name has been linked to known steroid users by sources who refuse to be identified in order to generate publicity for their investigation."

Yahoo!7 and Xtra New Zealand's website launched

The partnership between New Zealand's monopolistic ISP, Xtra and Microsoft New Zealand, XtraMSN has expired today and has been replaced with a partnership between Xtra and Yahoo!7, YahooXtra. Yahoo!7 is also a partnership, between Yahoo! and the 7 television station in Australia.

The partnership's website was launched today, as well as a new MSN New Zealand homepage.

Yahoo!Xtra are trying to become the homepage of all New Zealanders with the claim the partnership will beef up content, as well as being the biggest website in New Zealand in terms of revenue. Kevin Kenrick, Telecom's consumer products chief operating officer, who own Xtra, said the aim of Yahoo!Xtra was to, "Yahoo!Xtra aimed to bring the best available international content and technology into a New Zealand context." "We do think Yahoo!Xtra will become an extension of New Zealanders living rooms."

Chief executive of Yahoo!7, Ian Smith, said that two to three percent of all the advertising market was from online advertising. In Australia, that number is around eight percent, which Mr Smith expects to become the number for New Zealand.

Mr. Smith said: "Yahoo!Xtra will be the best of New Zealand linked to the best the rest of the world has to offer, and puts us in a prime position to capitalize on changing trends in media consumption and media usage."

Yahoo!7 will own 51% of the partnership, with Xtra owning the other 49%. Mr Smith will chair the board that will be created.

The partnership also means that current Xtra subscribers will receive a new e-mail messaging platform, but current e-mail addresses will remain the same. This will mainly happen because of the mail technology currently offered by Yahoo!

Other services owned by Yahoo!, such as Flickr and Answers, will also be brought into the new portal.

Mr. Kenrick and Mr. Smith both denied to disclose how much money from either sides has been invested, but do say that it will be profitable in the near future.

Other ventures between Yahoo! and telecommunication ISP's have occurred internationally as well.

BBC denies "conspiracy" over 9/11 video

Yesterday, Richard Porter, an editor from BBC News, wrote a blog entry to respond to a controversy that has erupted overnight in the blogosphere. "We're not part of a conspiracy," he assures his readers. "We didn't get told in advance that buildings were going to fall down. We didn't receive press releases or scripts in advance of events happening."

At the heart of the controversy is a video that surfaced on Google Video and YouTube. It is a segment taken from the BBC's own archive

of their news coverage of the events of September 11. In it, reporter Jane Standley reports the complete unexpected collapse of WTC 7. However, she presented this information half an hour before it actually happened. In fact, while she is reporting the demise of WTC 7, it is clearly visible right behind her. During the course of the broadcast, the studio loses the connection with her, and when she returns, the building is gone.

During the first part of the broadcast, she gives specific details about the building, how many floors it has, who owns & leases it, and the fact that nobody was inside at the time of the collapse. All of the facts that Ms. Standley presented were 100% accurate.

In Porter's 5-point response, he insists that his organization was the victim of chaos, not conspiracy. Unfortunately, Porter says, none of the reporters involved remember exactly what happened, and they have lost all of the original archive tapes, making it impossible to check. He concludes that, at worst, they simply made an error — an error that happened to be prophetic. He signs off by quoting a flippant comment from YouTube: "Whoa, that totally proves conspiracy...".

Directly beneath Porter's blog are two-dozen comments from BBC News readers. The comments are less than appreciative.

Prodi wins vote of confidence

Romano Prodi, prime minister of Italy, won a confidence vote in the Italian Senate, after attempting to resign last week. His victory means that the l'Unione coalition of leftist parties will remain in power. The vote was 162-157.

Justice minister Clemente Mastella

reacted in an interview: "This government is like the Tower of Pisa. It leans, leans, but never falls."

The expected vote in the Chamber of Deputies on Friday is expected to be only a formality, since Prodi has a much more comfortable coalition there.

Prodi faced competition from the opposition centre-right Casa delle Libertà coalition, led by former prime minister and media magnate Silvio Berlusconi. Despite the win, l'Unione's hold on the Senate is weak, due to the narrowness of its majority.

Prodi had tendered his resignation to Italian president Giorgio Napolitano on February 21, but Napolitano rejected the resignation on February 24, leading to a vote of confidence for Prodi in the Italian Senate.

Main contentions between the coalitions include the presence of Italian military units in Iraq and Afghanistan and Italy's relations with the United States.

Today in History

1836 - The Republic of Texas declared its independence from Mexico.

1896 - Ethiopia defeated Italy in the Battle of Adowa, the climactic battle of the First Italo-Abyssinian War.

1943 - World War II: Australian and American air forces attacked and destroyed a large convoy of the Japanese Navy in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea.

1962 - A military coup d'état led by General Ne Win seized power in Burma (now Myanmar).

1978 - Aboard the Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 28, Czech Vladimír Remek became the first non-Russian and non-American to

go into space.

March 02 is Independence Day in Morocco (1956)

Quote of the Day

Of course, there is no doubt that if we lived in a police state, it would be easier to catch terrorists. If we lived in a country that allowed the police to search your home at any time for any reason; if we lived in a country that allowed the government to open your mail, eavesdrop on your phone conversations, or intercept your email communications; if we lived in a country that allowed the government to hold people in jail indefinitely based on what they write or think, or based on mere suspicion that they are up to no good, then the government would no doubt discover and arrest more terrorists. But that probably would not be a country in which we would want to live. And that would not be a country for which we could, in good conscience, ask our young people to fight and die. In short, that would not be America.

~ Russ Feingold

Word of the Day

remonstrate; v

1. To formally protest, object to, or rebel against.

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(U.K. / Europe)

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