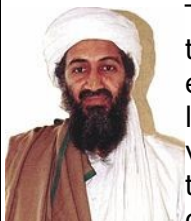




Top Stories

Osama bin Laden to release message to US on 9/11



Two U.S.-based terrorism monitors expect al-Qaeda's leader to release a video message on the sixth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

Two confirmed dead after Typhoon Fitow strikes Japan



Typhoon Fitow has struck Japan, leaving two people dead and a third

missing. The storm moved through Tokyo yesterday.

Featured story



85 Hindu pilgrims killed in India lorry crash

At least 85 people on an annual pilgrimage were killed when their lorry and trailer careered out-of-control down a gorge. At least 64 more were injured.

Wikipedia Current Events

Morocco's conservative Istiqlal Party, a member of the kingdom's ruling coalition, won most seats in parliamentary elections, according to provisional results released by the government

•At least 18 people are injured in a car bomb blast in Peshawar,

Wikipedia Current Events

Pakistan

•Islamic insurgency in Algeria (2002-present): At least 16 people have been killed and 30 injured in a car bomb attack on an Algerian naval barracks in the town of Dellys, 100km (62km) east of Algiers.

•The President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni and the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo Joseph Kabila meet in Tanzania to discuss the future of oil-rich Lake Albert.

•General Laurent Nkunda, the leader of a rebel movement, claims that Government troops have broken a ceasefire in the east of the country.

•Leaders at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Sydney considers an aspirational climate change target of a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

•Thousands of people march through central Sydney with the New South Wales Police Force making five arrests with two police officers injured.

Ford offers \$78 million for Romanian auto plant

57 Million Euros (78 Million US Dollars). This is the sum U.S. car maker Ford Motor Co. will pay for a 72.4 percent stake in the Romanian assembly plant Automobile Craiova, Romanian official said Friday.

"The offer of Ford Motor Company

for a 72.4 percent stake is 4.1556 Euros per share or 57 million Euros overall," said Sebastian Vladescu, head of the State Property Agency (AVAS), after opening Ford's improved offer. Vladescu added that the contract may be signed on September 12, during the auto show in Frankfurt.

The Romanian government bought back the Craiova-based car maker from its Daewoo Motor, in late 2006 for \$51 million. As the Korean company was bankrupt, the government had to pay another \$10 million for debts stemming from past loans. The American company is the only bidder for the purchase of the factory.

According to Washington Post, many auto-part makers have set up in the new European Union member country, attracted by cheap labor, favorable tax rates and the rising output of Renault's Dacia plant. The vice president of Dacia, Constantin Stroe, said that the price Ford offers is not important. "It's important to have the factory working as soon as possible", he added. "With this production facility, Romania will become an important auto production center in Europe", concluded Stroe, cited by HotNews.

2007 Rugby World Cup: New Zealand, Australia and England open with wins

New Zealand, Australia and England started their 2007 Rugby World Cup campaigns today with

victories over Italy, Japan and the United States respectively. Australia and tournament favourites New Zealand comprehensively defeated their opposition, while defending champions England produced a comparatively unimpressive display to overcome the American team.

Tournament favourites New Zealand dominated their opening match against Italy. Richie McCaw opened the scoring after just 64 seconds and scored again in the seventh minutes. Tries from Doug Howlett, Mills Muliana and two from Sitiveni Sivivatu increased the All Black's imposing lead. Just before half time, Marko Stanojevic scored a try for Italy taking the score to 43-7.

After the interval New Zealand scored five more tries, two each from Howlett and Jerry Collins and one from Chris Jack, with All Blacks fly half Daniel Carter kicking seventeen points during the match. In the 71st minute, Mirco Bergamasco scored a consolation try for Italy.

Australia scored thirteen tries against Japan in their opening match. A try from Nathan Sharpe and a hat-trick from Rocky Elsom put the Wallabies ahead by 23-3 at half time. Australia overwhelmed Japan in the second half, scoring nine tries without reply. Chris Latham, Berrick Barnes and Drew Mitchell claimed two tries each, and Adam Ashley-Cooper, George Smith and Adam Frier completed Australia's victory.

Japan's only points came from a Kōsei Ono penalty just before half time, while Stirling Mortlock kicked 27 points for Australia.

In contrast to the day's earlier

matches, the England team overcame the United States by only eighteen points. After 31 minutes the score was 9-3 with all points coming from penalties. However Jason Robinson and Olly Barkley scored tries late in the first half for England, with the score 21-3 at half time. Nine minutes after the interval Tom Rees scored England's third try, but they were not able to score again. Matekitonga Moeakiola scored for the Americans in the 74th minute, who were more than a match for England in the second half.

US First Lady undergoes neck surgery

United States First Lady Laura Bush underwent elective surgery on Saturday at George Washington University Hospital and is now "resting comfortably at the White House," according to spokeswoman Sally McDonough. Last month, the First Lady injured her neck and shoulder during a hiking trip.

The neck surgery, called posterior cervical foraminotomy, was performed to alleviate pressure on several pinched nerves in her neck.

Bush was not able to accompany President George W. Bush for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum in Sydney, Australia because of the procedure.

The spokeswoman said the outpatient surgery was a minimally invasive procedure, and lasted about two-and-a-half hours.

After unsuccessful physical therapy treatments, doctors reportedly suggested surgery.

The First Lady reportedly spoke with the President during his trip

back from the APEC forum and according to White House deputy press secretary Dana Perino "he [Bush] said she sounded very well...He looks forward to getting back to help her in the recovery."

Pavarotti receives standing ovation at funeral

The family and friends of the world-famous opera singer Luciano Pavarotti have gathered in his hometown of Modena, Italy to pay their final respects. Pavarotti died on Thursday of complication from pancreatic cancer at the age of 71.

The Roman Catholic service at the cathedral in Modena was attended by such international stars as fellow tenors Plácido Domingo and José Carreras, as well as U2's Bono. It included Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus, Giuseppe Verdi's Ave Maria and a message of condolence from Pope Benedict XVI, who said Pavarotti had "honored the divine gift of music through his extraordinary interpretative talent".

At least 800 people were present in the cathedral, but thousands gathered outside to watch the service on a television screen placed in Modena's main square. The service was also shown on Italian state television and via the Internet.

A recording of Pavarotti's famous duet with his father in 1978 was played and prompted a standing ovation of the crowd inside and outside the cathedral, and Italy's air force gave a flyover releasing smoke in the colours of the Italian flag. It is estimated that over 100,000 people have seen Pavarotti's casket in the past two days, where it has been publicly displayed in Modena's main piazza, to many of Pavarotti's recordings and appearances shown on the

public screen. Pavarotti will be buried in his family plot in a private ceremony at the Montale Rangone cemetery near Modena.

Four young girls killed in Zambia wall collapse

Four young girls were killed and six more people injured when a brick wall collapsed on top of them in Zambia. The victims had been trying to reach a free mosquito net handout when a stampede erupted, causing the collapse.

The accident occurred in the town of Mpika, where the Ministry of Health was conducting the handout as part of an anti-malaria initiative. As people flocked to the community hall where the event was taking place, people outside the premises began climbing the walls in an effort to get in, initiating the collapse.

The four girls died on the spot in the incident, which occurred at around 17:30 local time. Six others were taken to the local Mpika District Hospital, where they were treated for their injuries, which are believed to be non life-threatening.

Cricket: England defeat India in one-day series decider

England have beaten India by seven wickets in the seventh and final One-Day International of the series at Lord's, London, England. England win the series 4-3.

India, having won the toss, struggled with the bat. Sourav Ganguly was caught at second slip for 15 runs, and Gautam Gambhir was dismissed for 12 runs. Captain Rahul Dravid was caught behind for a duck, while Sachin Tendulkar was given out caught behind by umpire Aleem Dar for 30 runs. Television replays showed that the decision may not have been right,

but India were reduced to 59-4. Dimitri Mascarenhas was the best performing England bowler, dismissing Robin Uthappa (22), Yuvraj Singh (28) and Piyush Chawla (0), finishing with figures of 3-23. Andrew Flintoff, back in the England side after passing a medical test on his ankle, took 3-45. Mahendra Singh Dhoni scored fifty for India, but they were bowled out for just 187 runs.

England's opening batsmen Luke Wright and Matt Prior were both dismissed for ducks by R P Singh in the second over. Despite the early setback England had few problems in reaching the target. Ian Bell was run out for 36, while Kevin Pietersen and Paul Collingwood took England to victory, scoring 71 not out and 64 not out respectively. R P Singh was the pick of the Indian bowlers, taking 2-40.

Two confirmed dead after Typhoon Fitow strikes Japan

Typhoon Fitow has struck Japan, leaving two people dead and a third missing. The storm moved through Tokyo yesterday.

The Japan Meteorological Agency released the information on the storm's effects in the country yesterday. The deceased are a 50-year-old construction worker who died after a landslide at a dam construction site in Fukui Prefecture last night and a 76-year-old man who died after being struck by a falling tree on September 6, shortly after Fitow made landfall. A 52-year-old man is missing in Kanagawa Prefecture, believed to be dead, and at least 60 people have been injured by the storm.

According to information released by the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, around 200

buildings have been destroyed or badly damaged by the typhoon. A total of 5,000 people have been told to evacuate, 3,000 last night in Miyagi Prefecture.

Japan Airlines and All Nippon Airways, Japan's two largest air carriers, both said 240 domestic and eight international flights have been cancelled as a direct result of the storm, which is expected to be immediately followed by Tropical Storm Danas. Fitow is now moving towards the Sea of Okhotsk, making progress at about 24 miles per hour. It is predicted that the storm will deposit anything up to 150 millimeters (6 inches) of rainfall on areas on the Pacific coast, possibly triggering flash floods.

NFL: Colts, Saints kick off season

The NFL Season has kicked off as the Indianapolis Colts hosted the New Orleans Saints Thursday night. Peyton Manning and the Colts took their first step to defending their Super Bowl Championship by beating the New Orleans Saints by a score of 41-10.

At the half the score was knotted at 10-10, but Indianapolis showed off their offensive weapons in the second half. Peyton Manning threw for three touchdowns, passed for 288 yards and had zero interceptions. Reggie Wayne caught seven passes, two for touchdowns, for 115 yards, while Marvin Harrison had four receptions, one for a touchdown, for 83 yards. The Colts were also efficient running the ball as Joseph Addai carried the ball 23 times for 118 yards.

Manning commented on how the Colts pulled it together. "A lot of young guys played good tonight,"

said Manning. "It's only one game and there's a long way to go, but we played really well tonight."

The New Orleans Saints, also expected to compete for the Super Bowl led by Drew Brees were not as successful in their opening game. Brees passed for 192 yards with zero touchdowns and two interceptions. The Saints' rushing duo Reggie Bush and Deuce McCallister combined for 76 yards and zero touchdowns.

The Colts next face the Titans in Tennessee on 9/16 @ 1pm EDT as the Saints travel to Tampa Bay on 9/16 @ 1pm EST.

85 Hindu pilgrims killed in India lorry crash

A minimum of 85 Hindu pilgrims have been killed in India and 64 injured after their lorry and trailer plunged 24m (80ft) into a river gorge late last night.

Approximately 150 people were on board when the driver lost control on a sharp bend near the village of Nagbavji, Rajasthan, smashing through a concrete crash barrier and continuing down into the valley, coming to rest inverted.

An overnight rescue operation was initiated, removing both survivors and bodies of the dead from the wreck, with the aid of cranes and spotlights. Ambulances and medical teams rushed to the scene from surrounding areas. Of the 64 who were hospitalised, three are reported to be in critical condition. The Press Trust of India reported that as many as 130 were injured, and Al Jazeera reported that there may have been 200 people on board. It is believed the death toll could rise still further, as many people remain trapped beneath the trailer.

The truck was a 12-wheeled model designed for hauling shipping containers, and was carrying pilgrims from three nearby villages Shiwal, Madri and Bhawa. The driver had offered to take them to their destination for free, a practise common in India, despite the fact that such trucks are not safe for passenger transport, being designed primarily as freight transporters.

The vehicle had been destined for the temple of Ramdev, a site considered by both Hindus and Muslims as being of high spiritual significance. The temple is the subject of an annual ten-day pilgrimage every September, which begins on September 13, although most of the 250,000 pilgrims who flock to the site arrive several days in advance of the festival.

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan Vasundhara Raje visited the three villages in which the victims resided. The local government has initiated a full inquiry into the disaster.

Japanese man retains title at Air Guitar World Championship in Finland

Ochi Yosuke, from Japan, has retained his title at the world air guitar championships, held in Oulu, Northern Finland.

Yosuke was one of a range of international competitors, who had qualified for last night's final in the Teatria rock club, where they performed in front of a panel of judges.

French competitor Guillaume "Moche Pitt" de Tonquedec told reporters "It's great. We've seen all the nations, united nations, 'rocking on the free world' and that's good, that's great,".

The contestants who qualified for the finals were from Finland, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, Germany, Switzerland and Spain. The surprise finalist was local female Oulo resident Hilikka "Gore Kitty" Suvanto, who has twice previously received the lowest score in qualifying.

The performers each mimed one song of their choice, and improvised to one set by a jury. The panel of four judges each gave scores out of six, based on stage persona, technical skill and a quality known as "airness".

Yosuke's prize for the victory is custom built; a Flying Finn electric guitar with a value of U.S.\$3,400.

US military helicopter crashes in Florida

The United States military has said that a MH-53 Pave Low military helicopter carrying seven soldiers crashed during a routine training mission in Florida near Eglin Air Force Base late Friday night.

At least two of the soldiers suffered non-life threatening injuries, while the other five were unhurt who are being kept in the hospital for further evaluation. No civilians were injured and no damage was caused to civilian property.

The cause of the crash is not known and the military states that the crash is under investigation.

"A board of officers will investigate the accident. As soon as additional details become available, they will be provided," said a statement posted on the website for Eglin AFB.

The soldiers were with the 20th Special Operations Squadron from

Hurlburt Field in Florida.

Up to 18 arrested, police injured in APEC rally

An anti-APEC rally through the streets of Sydney has attracted around 5000 demonstrators, with up to 18 arrests and two police injured. In the days leading up to the rally, police had warned that the demonstration could attract up to 20,000 people and turn into a full scale riot, however these fears were not realised.

The mostly peaceful demonstration marched from Sydney's Town Hall to Hyde Park where they were greeted with a carnival atmosphere. The demonstrators protested against the 2003 Iraq invasion, climate change, workers' rights and globalisation with many blowing whistles, yelling chants and beating drums.

While reports in the media vary, up to 18 people were arrested when they turned violent. Two police officers were injured, one when hit by an iron bar and another when he was hit with a dart. Those arrested have been charged with offences ranging from assaulting police, hindering police, resisting arrest, offensive conduct and breaching a secure area.

Despite the arrests, NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione praised the conduct of the majority of protesters. Mr Scipione credited the huge numbers of police and poor weather for the successful outcome of the rally.

"It certainly caused numbers to dwindle, in fact it surely caused numbers not to turn up," he said.

"But more importantly, I think it was the combination of the show of force, the police were out there in big numbers, and we don't

apologise for that.

"We always indicated that we would be there, in sufficient numbers to be able to act swiftly against those that broke the law.

"So was that overkill? I don't think so."

Security surrounding the APEC summit is the tightest ever seen in Australia with a 5 Km fence restricting access to Northern parts of Sydney's CBD, overflights by airforce jets, police on jet skis, snipers, riot squad members and special laws to crack down on security during the summit.

There have been complaints about the conduct of police which are alleged to of misused special search powers which only apply to the fenced zone surrounding APEC facilities and of heavy-handedness by police. Several protesters claimed that Sydney had been turned into a "police state" as a result of the security measures. Commissioner Scipione said "all allegations of police misconduct would be investigated".

A second protest, held in Belmore Park attracted around 1,000 people from Vietnamese and Tibetan backgrounds protested against Chinese President Hu Jintao's human rights record. Organiser of the protest, Tenpa Dugdak said Australian Prime Minister John Howard should make human rights in China an APEC issue.

"It's so important - this meeting that happened, 21 leaders - great, but [don't] just discuss about trade, discuss about human rights, environmental problems that can really impact on a global scale," he said.

APEC leaders wear Driza-Bones for group photo

Leaders attending the APEC summit in Sydney, Australia have worn Driza-Bone coats for their traditional group photo in front of the Sydney Opera House. In APEC tradition, leaders wear attire which draws inspiration from the host nation's national costume.

Australia's choice was made by Prime Minister John Howard and his wife Janette. Australia does not have a national costume. In an APEC statement it was revealed that Driza-Bone had been consulted to produce an outfit that "captures the essence of Australia's culture and environment."

"Driza-Bone coats were born over 100 years ago when a sailor fashioned waterproof coats out of windjammer sails for protection against the harsh Australian trade winds," the statement said.

"These coats were also perfect for people working on the vast Australian continent and have since been adapted into the perfect riding and outback attire."

The custom-made knee-length coats worn by the leaders were the traditional dark brown of all Driza-Bones and had differing colours for the lapels and linings - slate blue for Australia's vast coastline, mustard yellow for the sun and sand; red ochre for the outback and eucalyptus green for the bush. Leaders were given the choice over which highlight colour they wanted.

The choice of costume was a closely guarded secret by Australia officials, with speculation rife throughout the media. It has been suggested that the costume could include "budgie smugglers" (male

swimwear)- and thongs (flip flops) to represent the beach; blue singlets and shorts favoured by labourers or khaki gear in memory of Steve Irwin.

The group photo is said to be one of the most anticipated parts of the APEC summit, with people wanting to see which leader looks the "silliest". In the past leaders have been dressed in silk tunics, leather bomber jackets and Batik-print shirts.

APEC countries set "aspirational goals" on climate change

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has announced that leaders of APEC nations have agreed on "aspirational goals" on climate change. The agreement, which Prime Minister Howard calls the Sydney declaration focuses on reducing energy intensity (the amount of energy used to produce a dollar of gross domestic product), reforestation and technology sharing.

Despite Australia, the United States and China being non-signatories to the United Nations' Kyoto protocol on greenhouse gas reductions which is set to expire in 2012, the APEC accord calls for "We call for a post-2012 international climate change arrangement ... that strengthens, broadens and deepens the current arrangement and leads to reduced global emissions of greenhouse gases," according to the draft declaration.

The declaration as agreed upon will be released on Sunday. The draft agreement recognised that action was required to "slow, stop and reverse" greenhouse gas emissions; that nations should vow to reduce energy intensity by 25 percent by 2030; that forest cover

in the region should be increased by 50 million acres by 2020; and that APEC nations will work with other nations to find a solution to climate change. The declaration is non-binding and is simply a statement of goals to which the nations will try to achieve.

Host nation Australia has been criticised by China, Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia for putting climate change on the agenda at the APEC summit, saying they would prefer dialogue on climate change to occur under a United Nations framework. Indonesia's Foreign Minister Hassan Wirayuda said "the APEC meeting does not replace the appropriate forum to deal with climate change."

Mr Wirayuda said that despite Indonesia not being entirely satisfied with the declaration they would "live with it".

Environmental group Greenpeace has rejected the APEC statement because it doesn't set firm targets and includes the use of nuclear energy as a replacement for fossil fuels.

Major League Baseball roundup: September 7, 2007

Smoltz flirts with no-hitter, Braves win

- Braves 7, Nationals 1: Atlanta Braves pitcher John Smoltz lost a no-hitter after seven innings, giving up a single to Ronnie Belliard in the first at-bat of the eighth inning; after allowing the hit, Smoltz left the game to cheers from the home crowd. Belliard later scored, so Smoltz (13-7) finished with one hit and one earned run for the win. Joel Hanrahan (4-3) pitched 4 1/3 innings, giving up five runs (four earned) for the

loss. The Nationals committed five errors in the game, three of them by third-baseman Ryan Zimmerman, who also went 0-4, striking out all four times he batted. In the ninth inning of the game, a fan ran onto the field; he was immediately tackled by security officers, but one officer was injured after he landed on his head in the scuffle, and the game was halted while the officer was carted off the field for treatment. The Braves (72-69) are 7.5 games back of the Mets in the NL East, and 4.5 games back of the Padres in the NL Wild Card race.

Other games

- White Sox 11, Twins 10, 13 inn: In a wild game that saw the Twins score six runs in the 9th inning to break a 4-4 tie, only to allow six runs to the White Sox in the bottom half of the inning, A.J. Pierzynski finally won the game in the 13th inning with a bases-loaded walkoff single. Heath Phillips (1-1) got the win, giving up one hit in the 13th. Juan Rincon (3-3) pitched 1 1/3 inning, allowing the winning run for the loss.
- Red Sox 4, Orioles 0: Jon Lester (4-0) gave up four hits in seven scoreless innings for the win. The Red Sox (86-56) lead the Yankees in the AL East by 6.5 games.
- Yankees 3, Royals 2: Bobby Abreu knocked in the winning run in the 7th on an RBI double. The Yankees (79-62) lead the AL Wild Card race by 3 games over the Tigers.

- Angels 3, Indians 2, 10 inn: Ryan Garko tied the game at 2-2 for the Indians in the 9th inning, but Kendry Morales hit a walkoff single to score Chone Figgins in the bottom of the 10th. The Angels (84-57) lead the AL West by 9 games over the Mariners, while the Indians (81-60) lead the AL Central by 5 games over the Tigers.
- Tigers 6, Mariners 1: Curtis Granderson went 2-4, hitting his 20th homer of the year and becoming only the 6th player in MLB history to hit 20 doubles, 20 triples and 20 home runs in the same season. The Tigers (76-65) trail the Indians in the AL Central by 5 games, and trail the Yankees in the AL Wild Card by 3 games.
- Mets 11, Astros 3: Carlos Beltran hit the game-winning solo homer and an RBI single in the game. The Mets (79-61) lead the NL East by 6 games.
- Marlins 6, Phillies 3: Miguel Olivo hit a solo homer and an RBI double, and scored two runs in the game; all three of the Phillies' runs came off a Pat Burrell three-run homer in the 4th. The Phillies trail the Mets by 6 games in the NL East, and trail the Padres by 3 games in the NL Wild Card.
- Pirates 6, Cubs 1: Jack Wilson finished a triple shy of the cycle, hitting a two-run homer and an RBI double to help the Pirates to a victory. The Cubs (71-69) are tied with the Brewers in the NL Central.
- Reds 11, Brewers 4: A six-run first inning sealed the game for the Reds, led by Ken Griffey Jr., who hit his

30th homer of the year, a two-run shot in the 2nd, and drove in a run off a 1st inning single. The Brewers (71-69) are tied with the Cubs in the NL Central.

- Diamondbacks 4, Cardinals 2: Eric Byrnes drove in the tying run off an RBI double, and scored the winning run off a fielder's choice in the 6th inning. The Diamondbacks (79-63) lead the NL West by 2 games, while the Cardinals (69-69) trail the Cubs and Brewers by 1 game in the NL Central.
- Rockies 10, Padres 4: The Padres lost their third straight game; Rockies starting pitcher Elmer Dessens left due to injury in the third inning. The Padres (76-64) trail the Diamondbacks by 2 games in the NL West, but lead the NL Wild Card by 2.5 games.
- Rangers 5, Athletics 3: Rangers leadoff batter Frank Catalanotto went 3-4 with a solo homer, an RBI triple, and an RBI infield single.
- Giants 5, Dodgers 4: After the Giants lost a one-run lead on a James Loney solo homer in the top of the 9th, the Giants' Dan Ortmeier answered back with a walk-off homer to win the game.
- Blue Jays 7, Devil Rays 2: Matt Stairs hit RBI singles to right field in the 5th and 6th innings; in the 5th inning, John McDonald and Vernon Wells scored; in the 6th inning, McDonald scored, but Wells was thrown out at home.

California lead bullet ban moves forward

A measure to ban the use of lead bullets in California was moved

forward by the State's Senate yesterday. Assembly Bill 821 bans the use of lead bullets for hunting within California. The bill, which was sponsored by Assemblyman Pete Nava and has letters of support from a number of conservation and environmental groups, was passed by a majority of 23 to 15.

Bill proponents argued that an important reason to support the ban rests in the threat lead bullets pose to endangered species such as the California condor.

"I am elated that the fight to save the condor, North America's largest bird, is one step closer to reality," stated Nava.

"The California Condor is a national treasure and with the recent death of a California condor at the Los Angeles Zoo last week from lead poisoning, further highlights the urgent need for my legislation so that our children and grandchildren can know and see these magnificent birds in the wild," added Nava.

Bill opponents, primarily groups that support hunting and the right to bear arms, argued that lead bullets were not a significant source of the threat to California condors. A statement posted on the web site of the National Rifle Association states, "the most recent scientific review provided to the Commission revealed that previous science attempting to show a link between lead ammunition and condor mortality is severely flawed."

Scientists at the Zoological Society of San Diego, an organization that has worked to reproduce condors and place them back in the wild since the 1980's state that there is strong evidence to support the

effect of lead bullets on California condor populations.

"All of the California condors which die in the wild are brought to us to determine the cause of death," stated Allison Alberts, Director of Conservation and Research for the Zoological Society of San Diego.

"Of these condors, 24% have died of lead poisoning. Studies indicate that this lead is coming from bullet fragments and shot that have been ingested when eating carcasses," added Alberts.

An article published by Bird Conservation International cites the ingestion of trash picked up from the environment as another serious threat to condor populations. This study indicates the threat is primarily for juvenile condors in the nest however.

Today in History

1513 – War of the League of Cambrai: King James IV of Scotland was killed at the Battle of Flodden Field in Northumberland while leading an invasion of England.

1850 – As part of the Compromise of 1850, California was admitted into the United States as a free state instead of a slave state where slavery was legal.

1971 – Prisoners rioted and seized control of the Attica Correctional Facility in Attica, New York, USA, taking thirty-three guards hostage. The uprising ended four days later after state police and guards raided the prison, leaving almost 40 hostages and inmates dead from the ensuing gunfire.

2001 – Ahmad Shah Massoud, leader of the Northern Alliance, was assassinated in Afghanistan.

2004 – A car bomb exploded outside the Australian embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia, killing at least 9 people and injuring over 150 others.

September 09 is National Grandparents' Day in the United States (2007); Republic Day in North Korea, Independence Day in Tajikistan.

Quote of the Day

You're given the form, but you have to write the sonnet yourself. What you say is completely up to you. ~ Madeleine L'Engle

Word of the Day

benthic; adj

1. Living on the seafloor, as opposed to floating in the ocean.

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