



Top Stories

Iran: Detained British troops do not need to go to trial

Iran has said that the 15 British detained on March 23, do not have to go through any trial, this according to Ali Larijani, the highest ranking diplomat for Iran.

Virginia law bans mobile phone use by teen drivers

Newly licensed drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited to use mobile phones while driving. Virginia governor Tim Kaine signed a bill into law on Friday last week.

Featured story

Mouse makes nest in cash machine, eats money

In Estonia, a mouse made its nest in a cash machine and spent the weekend eating thousands of pounds worth of bank notes. The critter was discovered after a customer making a withdrawal got half-eaten bills from the machine.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The 14th annual summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation begins in New Delhi, India.
- Colorado State University experts forecast a very active 2007 Atlantic hurricane season with 17 named storms, 9 hurricanes and 5 intense hurricanes.
- The V150, a modified TGV train, breaks the land speed record for railed vehicles on the new Paris-Strasbourg LGV Est line with 574.8 km/h (357.2 mph).

NFL news: Saints trade for kicker

In the NFL today, the New Orleans Saints traded a sixth-round draft pick to the Miami Dolphins for kicker Olindo Mare. Mare will compete with John Carney, the Saints 44 year old kicker who has had a hard time hitting field goals over 35 yards. The Saints visited with former Dallas Cowboy and Indianapolis Colts kicker Mike Vanderjagt, but never offered anything. The Saints also used kicker Billy Cundiff last year.

Over the past ten seasons with the Dolphins, Mare amassed 1,048 points, while converting 245 of 303 field goals and 313 of 318 extra points.

Dolphins General Manager Randy Mueller indicated that Miami pursued the trade in hopes of improving future prospects. "Adding another draft pick is another chip that hopefully we can turn into a player for the Dolphins down the road," said Mueller. "We need to build this team a nucleus of young talent that has kind of been void for the last few years," he continued.

It had been speculated that Mare might be traded from the Dolphins, since they inked an off-season deal with New York Giants kicker Jay Feely.

2007 Cricket World Cup: Ireland vs South Africa

South Africa beat Ireland by 7 wickets (with 21 balls remaining) in the Super 8 phase of the World Cup

at the Providence Stadium, Georgetown, Guyana.

The match was reduced to 35 overs a side due to rain interruptions during Ireland's innings. South Africa's target was set at 160 runs through the Duckworth-Lewis method.

Toss: South Africa won, and elected to field first.

Canadian man who found faults of Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation dies at age 83

Robert 'Bob' Edmonds, who sued the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG), died Monday in hospital at age 83 of cancer.

"He'll be remembered as the guy who just wouldn't go away," said Ontario Ombudsman André Marin speaking of the loss. "I was the speakerphone and he was the speaker – I merely amplified what he had to say. He deserves the credit for the entire thing."

Edmonds of Coboconk, Ontario first came to fight the OLG in 2001 when he was "robbed" of his lottery winning of CAN\$250,000 by a store clerk. He asked the store clerks wife Phyllis LaPlante to check the tickets and she said he did not win but won a free ticket (when someone wins a lottery prize in Canada a small sound goes off in the store). Days after, the couple who owned the store were in the local newspaper saying they had won the jackpot of \$250,000. When he contacted the OLG they denied

the allegations, and when the couple were arrested for fraud they refused to return his winnings. He sued the LaPlantes for the winnings and settled for \$150,000.

In 2002, Edmonds sued the corporation and signed a confidentiality agreement on behalf of the OLG after a judge asked them to rightfully give him the money he won. They gave him \$200,000 three years later. Last Friday they gave him \$50,000 dollars more, for a total of \$250,000.

In October 2006, CBC's The Fifth Estate showed that more retailers from 1999 to 2006 were winning instead of the customers. After the broadcast OLG's former CEO called him and personally apologised and the company started to create more security measures for customers.

Following the allegations, 1,000,000 scratch tickets were recalled and on March 23, 2007 CEO Duncan Brown announced he resigned his position. Days later Ontario Ombudsman André Marin sparked up an investigation into the OLG however it is still ongoing.

Edmonds leaves his wife, daughter, and two sons.

TGV makes 574.8 km/h on rails

A French Train à Grande Vitesse (High-Speed Train or TGV) has smashed the world record for a train on conventional rails by a big margin, reaching 574.8km/h (356mph) The TGV travelled over 59.8 km/h (36 mph) faster than its previous record of 515 km/h (320 mph)

The record attempt by a modified TGV took place on a track between Paris and the eastern city of Strasbourg. However, this is not the

fastest train speed. A Japanese Maglev (Magnetic Levitation Train) reached a top speed of 581km/h (361mph) in 2003. The TGV made history at 13:14 CET (11:14 UTC). The TGV had been modified and was called V150 - a TGV with larger wheels than usual and two engines driving three double-decker cars. The vehicle's horsepower was 25,000.

Reporters said the three train drivers were seen grinning on French TV after they realised they had broken the record. The TGV travelled almost as fast as a World War II Spitfire fighter at top speed. Even the electrical tension in the overhead cable was increased 6000 volts from 25,000 volts to 31,000 for the record attempt.

"We saw the countryside go by a little faster than we did during the tests," engineer Eric Pieczac said.

"Everything went very well. There are about 10,000 engineers who would want to be in my place," Mr Pieczac said. "It makes me very happy, a mixed feeling of pride and honour to be able to reach this speed." Since their introduction in 1981, TGVs generally travel at about 300km/h (187.5 mph) however, on the recently opened Paris-Strasbourg LGV (Ligne à Grande Vitesse or High-Speed line) trains will travel at 320 km/h (200 mph)

SNCF and Alstom - the TGV's manufacturer - have said that the record test was performed to see how a TGV would react in extreme conditions - conditions that cannot be performed in a laboratory.

After the record was broken, French President Jacques Chirac conveyed his congratulations on "this new proof of the excellence of the French rail industry." The President

also said that "Economically efficient and respectful of the environment, the TGV is a major asset in efforts to ensure sustainable development in transport

"What is important for us today is to prove that the TGV technology which was invented in France 30 years ago is a technology for the future," said Guillaume Pepy

Alstom plans to increase TGV sales abroad, where it is competing with high-speed trains such as the Japanese Shinkansen and the German ICE. Currently, nations of the Far East such as China, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan are the "top" customers for high-speed trains. Agence France-Presse said that a high-speed rail link in between Los Angeles and San Francisco, California was being looked into.

1000 homes evacuated in Plymouth, England, after bomb find

The discovery of an old World War II bomb in a construction site has caused at least 1000 homes in Plymouth located in South-West England, to be evacuated.

"Evacuations are being carried out of properties within 100m [328ft] of the scene. Properties within the 100m-300m [328-984ft] zone are being advised to open windows and draw curtains," said a spokesman for the police department in Plymouth.

Workers on the site discovered the bomb at about 10:30 a.m. local time in Plymouth, England on Brentor Road.

Reports say that the bomb is sticking out of the ground by about 6 inches, and weighed an estimated 113 kilograms, or 250

pounds, but could have weighed as much as 500 pounds.

"The item was protruding about six inches from the ground and was described as being up to 10-inches in diameter," said a spokesman for the Devon and Cornwall Police.

The Army bomb disposal team from Wales, England is currently trying to figure out what to do with the bomb and it could take several hours before authorities can dispose of it. Reports say that the bomb will be taken to the ocean to be detonated.

"The precise nature of this operation and any potential route are yet to be confirmed," added the spokesman.

Judge rules court hearing in Vaughan, Ontario; votes disputed

Superior Court Justice Peter Howden has decided to let former Vaughan, Ontario mayor Michael Di Biase bring his case again to court after claims of uncounted votes in last November's mayoral election that he lost to current Mayor Linda Jackson.

In 2002, Mr. Di Biase served as interim mayor of the city after former mayor Lorna Jackson died. He was then elected to mayor in the 2003 municipal election.

Mr. Di Biase ran against deceased mayor Lorna Jackson's daughter Linda Jackson last November but lost by 94 votes. After the results accounced that he lost, he requested a full recount and then brought it to the Ontario Superior Court to declare the votes illegal and void. The judge said some votes we not counted nor were some voters even on the voters list at the time.

The City of Vaughan put forward a motion to leave the case but Justice Peter Howden ruled against it yesterday. "There are serious issues here that may well affect the outcome of the election."

This new decision could let another hand recount of the votes or a complete by-election be called if Di Biase wins his case.

"I am pleased with the response from Judge Howden, he validated my application, which is very important," Di Biase said yesterday. "Democracy is very important and the integrity of every vote counts. I want to make sure that every citizen has the right to vote and that their vote will count."

The court hearing will start on Tuesday.

MLB: Twins defeat Orioles 7-4 in season opener

The Minnesota Twins lit a fire in front of a sold-out Metrodome crowd during Monday's season opener against the Baltimore Orioles. The fans came to cheer on the 2006 American League Central Division champions and remember veteran radio broadcaster Herb Carneal who passed away a day ago.

Orioles starter Erik Bedard pitched five innings, giving up ten hits and six runs, including back-to-back home runs in the second inning to reigning American League MVP Justin Morneau and outfielder Torii Hunter. Twins starter Johan Santana give up seven hits and four runs in six innings, including a home run to Miguel Tejada in the fifth inning. Twins closer Joe Nathan picked up his first save of 2007.

The Twins players sported black armbands to honor Carneal, and a

tribute was shown prior to the game to honor the legendary broadcaster. Between innings, people spoke about their memories of Carneal. This is the first time since 1978 that the Baltimore Orioles have started their season away from home.

Bollywood star unveiled at Madame Tussauds

A wax figure of Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan has been unveiled at London's Madame Tussauds. The likeness of Khan, widely known as 'King Khan', has today become the third official figure of a Bollywood celebrity to grace the attraction.

Khan, star of over 50 films, specially flew to London to unveil his wax figure at the prestigious venue, with a special documentary on the actor's movie career showcased on the day. The lifesize model was uncloaked to applause and cheers from the crowd.

Artists from Madame Tussauds had spent time in India earlier this year in order to obtain precise measurements of the film star's physical features, face and hair.

Speaking of the privilege, Khan said, "It has been a lifelong dream since I visited the attraction as a child to be immortalised in wax and meet my very own Madame Tussauds double.

"This is truly a great honour; I was delighted to be involved in the whole creative process."

The actor met with special guests before spending time with British fans. He also met winners of competitions organised by the BBC Asian Network and Ikonz. Britain is believed to be home to one of Bollywood's largest fan bases within Europe.

Reena Combo, editor of British Asian magazine *Ikonz* was at the event. She explained, "For most British Asians, Shah Rukh Khan is the equivalent to Hollywood's Brad Pitt. He is one of the biggest stars in the world and the new wax figure in Madame Tussauds will help in further introducing him to those who may still be unaware of his popularity."

Khan, 41, has in the past been described by *TIME* magazine as "the most recognisable actor in the world with an audience of 3.6 billion", while *The Guardian* once referred to him as 'the world's biggest film star'.

"The unveiling here in London has been long overdue but fans of Bollywood, especially those in the UK, will be extremely grateful to Madame Tussauds' for the opportunity to meet the real Shah Rukh Khan and his artificial 'twin'," added Ms Combo.

Other Bollywood luminaries represented at the attraction include Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai. Khan's wax figure is among the only 15 new figures created this year. Madame Tussauds said they did not currently have any plans to create a figure of Shilpa Shetty, the Bollywood actress who recently won *Celebrity Big Brother*, but they hadn't ruled anything out.

Spokesperson for the attraction, Ben Lovett, stated, "We only launch 8 figures per year, and each takes a number of months to make, so it's vital that we regularly ask guests who they want to see in the attraction. Madame Tussauds London has commitments until early 2008, which means Shah Rukh Khan will be the only Bollywood figure for this year.

"In terms of Shilpa Shetty, we have been asked but at present we have no plans to make her."

Virginia law bans mobile phone use by teen drivers

Virginia governor Tim Kaine signed a bill into law on Friday last week that prohibits the use of mobile phones by newly licensed drivers under the age of 18 while operating a motor vehicle. Mobile phone users must pull off to the side of the road, or into a parking lot, to use a phone. The law takes effect July 1.

The newly signed bill by Virginia's governor makes it the 14th state in the U.S. to enact a partial ban on mobile phone use. The age group affected, 16 and 17-year-olds, need consent from their parents or guardians to obtain a driver's license in the state.

"I believe this is a common-sense restriction on those new drivers who may be tempted to pay more attention to phone calls and text messages than the road, endangering themselves and other drivers," said Governor Kaine.

State legislative proposals to restrict mobile phone use while driving have failed in 17 U.S. states where similar bills were introduced. There are currently four U.S. states, California, Connecticut, New Jersey and New York, that have passed laws limiting mobile phone use as an on-road hazard while driving. For example, both New York and New Jersey classify use of a handheld mobile phone without an earpiece as a moving violation.

California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed into law mobile phone use limitations that will take effect on July 2008. It imposes a fine of \$20 for "... anyone caught driving and using a

cell phone unless the driver uses a headset, ear bud or other technology that frees both hands." according to Matt Hamblen of *ComputerWorld.com*.

45 countries currently ban use of the hand held devices while driving. Botswana and New Zealand are debating similar measures.

Iran: Detained British troops do not need to go to trial

Iran has said that the 15 British troops detained on March 23 do not have to go through any trial, according to Ali Larijani, the highest ranking diplomat for Iran who also said that a delegation should review the case against the sailors and marines.

"We are not interested in this issue getting more complicated. Our interest is in solving this problem as soon as possible. This issue can be resolved, and there is no need for any trial. There should be a delegation to review the case ... to clarify whether they have been in our territorial waters or not," said Larijani who hopes that the situation between Britain and Iran can be solved bilaterally.

Britain has stated that they are currently studying Larijani's comments and will respond to them tomorrow.

"There remain some differences between us, but we can confirm we share his preference for early bilateral discussions to find a diplomatic solution to this problem. We will be following this up with the Iranian authorities tomorrow, given our shared desire to make early progress," said a spokesperson for the British Foreign Office.

On March 23, the fifteen sailors and marines from the frigate HMS Cornwall were inspecting a ship, in

what the UK identified as Iraqi waters, when they were surrounded by Iranian gunboats and taken into custody. Iran claims the UK forces were in Iranian waters, and are still detaining the fifteen.

US: Former FBI agent missing in Iran

On Monday, the United States said it sent an official inquiry to Iran via Swiss diplomats about a former FBI agent who went missing while in Iran on private business. He is believed to have gone missing several weeks ago on the island of Kish. The FBI say he has not worked for them in a decade nor is he a contractor for them. A US State Department spokesperson declined to give name, age or occupation of the missing man. The spokesperson also said that they have no indication that he is being held by any Iranian entity.

Asian markets set positive outlook for stocks

In early action, Asian and Oceanian markets rose while the markets pondered the impact of the United States-South Korea free trade agreement. In Japanese markets, Monday's fears that the Institute for Supply Management's report would say manufacturing growth slowed more than forecast in March actually came true. However, "US markets turned out more stable than people feared yesterday and that prompted buying back of large-cap stocks," said Yoshihisa Okamoto of Fuji Investment Management Co. in Tokyo.

British hacker to be extradited to US

Gary McKinnon of Britain lost his appeal challenging an extradition order to face charges in the United States that he hacked into military and NASA computers there. "We do not find any grounds of appeal

against the decision," said one of the judges, Lord Justice Maurice Kay. In what has been called the "biggest military hack of all time," McKinnon allegedly used the code-name Solo as he hacked into 97 computers and caused \$700,000 worth of damage according to US prosecutors. In 2006, he told The Guardian that he was searching for evidence the Americans might have about UFOs.

US Supreme Court rules against EPA on carbon dioxide regulation

The US Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that carbon dioxide should be regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The majority opinion said that the EPA had offered "no reasoned explanation" for refusing to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from cars. Previously the EPA had argued that the 1970 Clean Air Act did not give it the powers to regulate green house gases because they were not deemed to be pollutants. Twelve states and several environmental groups jointly brought the case against the EPA, contending that it was failing in its legal duty to regulate environmental pollution by not regulating green house gas emissions.

Today in History

- 1581 - Francis Drake completed a circumnavigation of the globe, the first Englishman to do so.
- 1949 - Twelve nations signed the North Atlantic Treaty, creating NATO.
- 1968 - Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee.
- 1976 - Norodom Sihanouk abdicated from the role of leader of Cambodia and was arrested by the Khmer Rouge.
- 1979 - President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

of Pakistan was executed.
April 04 is Children's Day in Taiwan

Quote of the Day

There rise authors now and then, who seem proof against the mutability of language, because they have rooted themselves in the unchanging principles of human nature. ~ Washington Irving

Word of the Day

sectarian; adj

1. Of or relating to a sect.
2. Dogmatic or partisan.
3. Narrow-minded or bigoted.

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