



Top Stories

French newspaper suggests Osama bin Laden may be dead

The French daily newspaper L'Est Republicain reported today that "According to a source that is usually reliable, Saudi secret services are now convinced that Osama bin Laden is dead," citing what it said was a French secret service report dated September 21. Meanwhile, a Saudi source told CNN that bin Laden has a water-borne illness.

First successful anti-coup protest in Thailand

Amid fears of being arrested for breaking the military ban on protests and political gatherings, 30 people have protested, joined by over 200 observers, without any immediate arrests in front of Siam Center in downtown Bangkok.

Featured story

Google convicted in case brought by Belgian press

A Belgian court has ruled that Google News could not use material from "Belgian publishers of the French- and German-speaking daily press" without paying a copyright fee, in a case brought by Copiepresse, an association of newspaper editors

Wikipedia Current Events

•Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that rabbis are more critical of Zionism and the "Zionist regime" than he has been. He expresses hope that

Wikipedia Current Events

"God willing, with the force of God behind it, we shall soon experience a world without the United States and Zionism."

•Condoleezza Rice, the United States Secretary of State, and Barry Lowenkron, the assistant secretary of state for human rights, meet with Kasymzhomart Tokayev, the foreign minister of Kazakhstan. They discussed the War in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Nazarbayev administration's desire to head the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2009, which the United States Government opposes.

•British forces are reported to have killed senior Al-Qaeda operative Omar al-Faruq during a gunfight in Basra, Iraq.

•The United States Marine Corps says three troops from Camp Pendleton will face courts-martial on murder charges in the death of an Iraqi man.

•Saddam Hussein is back in court in Baghdad to face charges of genocide against the Kurds in the late 1980s. His legal team boycotts proceedings over claims of interference by the Iraqi government, and he is subsequently ejected for protesting.

•The family of the lone survivor in the crash of Comair Flight 5191 says doctors have amputated copilot James Polehinke's left leg, and he has no memory of the crash.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Remains of Dagmar of Denmark, the mother of the last Tsar of Russia, are transported from the Roskilde Cathedral to Saint Petersburg in order to be reburied in the Peter and Paul Cathedral on 28 September.

•After taking over Kismayo, Somali Islamist militants open fire on anti-sharia protesters. Three deaths are being reported.

•Two gunmen kill Safia Ahmed-jan, the provincial director of Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs outside her home in Kandahar.

•Chen Liangyu, the Shanghai Communist Party of China General Secretary and a senior member of the Shanghai clique, is dismissed for corruption.

Virgin Rail train collides with car near Copmanthorpe, killing driver

A Virgin Trains train travelling at high speed collided with a car near Copmanthorpe, Yorkshire, England, killing the car's driver.

The accident took place at approximately 20:55 GMT when the Class 220/221 train, travelling at close to 100mph hit the car which was on the tracks. The train then partially derailed but remained upright, coming to a stop further down the tracks. The car driver is believed to have been killed instantly. No one on the train was injured.

The car was not at a level

crossing. North Yorkshire Police said that the car had left the road, driven through a fence and ended up on the track.

The train was the 14:25 Virgin Voyager cross-country service from Plymouth to Edinburgh Waverley, capable of speeds up to 125mph, but was decelerating on approach into York. There were 74 passengers on board.

The line between York and Leeds was closed for several hours, delaying other services. Virgin Spokesman Arthur Leathley told reporters that Network Rail hoped to have three of the four lines in that section of the track operational by Tuesday morning.

India nominates "Rang De Basanti" for the Oscars

The Film Federation of India confirmed today that Rakeysh Mehra's Rang De Basanti would be India's entry for the Best Foreign Film Award at the Oscars. The Aamir Khan starring blockbuster has received much critical acclaim and the story (dealing with "new-age" nationalism) reportedly struck a chord with millions of viewers, both in India and abroad.

A 12-member panel including Basu Chatterjee, Kalpana Lajmi, N Chandra, Aadesh Srivastava and Ved Rahi selected Rang De Basanti from a line-up of Bollywood hits, including Omkara, Lage Raho Munnabhai, Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna and Krrish. Only three Indian films- Mother India (1957), Lagaan (2001) and Salaam Bombay (1988) have made it to the Academy Awards short-list thus far.

Clinton calls Fox interview "conservative hitjob"

In this week's interview on Fox News Sunday, former U.S.

President Bill Clinton described a question by the host, Chris Wallace as a "conservative hitjob".

According to the introduction given by Wallace, a pre-interview agreement to split the interview evenly between questions on Clinton's Global Initiative and any topic of the network's choosing was in place. Things didn't quite work out like that.

After a few opening questions, Wallace raised the issue of Clinton's efforts to deal with Bin Laden, "Why didn't you do more to put Bin Laden and Al-Quaeda out of business?" The 60-year old ex-president took issue with this characterization of his record, highlighting his efforts to kill Bin Laden and comparing them with the record of the current administration pre-September 11, "they had no meetings on Bin Laden for nine months after I left office."

Clinton's determination to rebut the implication that he had not done enough to kill Bin Laden took the majority of the first two sections of the three-part interview. As well as condemning the inaction of "neo-conservatives" and accusing them of hypocrisy for describing his efforts to kill Bin Laden as an "obsession", Wallace was asked why the same questions were not put to the current administration about their pre-September 11 efforts, if any, to kill Bin Laden.

In the much reduced amount of time devoted to Clinton's Global Initiative it was revealed that compared to last year's 2.5 billion dollars, this year over 7.3 billion have been raised, 3 billion of that from Richard Branson's pledge to give all the profits from his rail operations.

Jimmy Wales: First draft of new version of GFDL license expected soon?

According to Wikipedia founder, Jimmy Wales, the first draft of the new version of the GNU Free Documentation License is expected to be released soon.

Jimmy Wales, who is visiting Poland to establish the Polish branch of Wikia, was speaking on the occasion of the fifth "birthday" of Polish language Wikipedia, on 23rd September.

Wales, asked what he is planning to do to make usage of Wikipedia content easier, admitted that the current GFDL license (version 1.2) under which the whole content of Wikipedia is released, is very complicated and parts of it are hard to understand. However, he said that earlier in the day, he received a call from Eben Moglen, main lawyer of Free Software Foundation, which created the license, who promised that the first draft of new version of GFDL license would be released soon and it would solve the problems present in current version.

Kurt Angle signs with TNA Wrestling

Professional wrestling promotion Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA) announced last night during their No Surrender Pay-Per-View event that Olympic gold medalist Kurt Angle has signed an exclusive contract with the company. The deal comes just shortly after Angle, 37, was released by World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), with both sides citing "personal issues" as the cause of his release. TNA also used the Pay-Per-View to announce that the weekly television show TNA Impact will be moving from it's current timeslot of Thursdays at 11PM, to 9PM, starting November 16.

Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA) is an American professional wrestling promotion, founded by Jeff Jarrett and his father Jerry Jarrett in May 2002 and now owned by Panda Energy International. The company, which trades as TNA Entertainment, LLC, operates out of Nashville, Tennessee, with an office in Orlando, Florida.

New Zealand government denies financial assistance for Overlander

The New Zealand government today has announced that they will not provide financial assistance to the Overlander train service between Auckland and Wellington, which is set to stop service on September 30, if no assistance is forthcoming. ONTRACK will retain the North Island main trunk line, while looking for tourism operators to start a tourist rail service.

Trevor Mallard, acting Finance Minister, said: "In making this decision... Cabinet recognised that there was no prospect of the current Overlander service becoming commercially viable. It was not a fuel-efficient operation and at an average passenger rate of 50 passengers each way per day, it was used by relatively few people."

It is cheaper and faster to travel either by bus or plane rather than the 12-hour train journey. "The fares already overlap with airfares, and the reality is that the service is just not well-used. It can not compete with low-priced air travel and coaches. Cabinet considered the regional implications of ceasing the Overlander service and accepted that the current bus services run by the InterCity Group met the needs of those communities," Mallard said.

There has been numerous petitions from the public and from the Green Party of New Zealand to continue the Overlander train service, including one petition signed by 16,000 people presented at the Parliament Buildings on September 14, 2006. "While there have been a number of propositions about retaining the Overlander service, all of the propositions would require government funding in one form or another," said Mallard.

Mallard said that the government will only support rail services if it significantly benefitted the community.

The Government estimates that financial assistance to the Overlander train service would cost NZ\$1.75 million a year.

"Finally, the government does recognise and value the importance of a viable and efficient rail network in New Zealand's transport infrastructure. This was a critical factor in the government's decision to buy the rail network back from Tranz Rail. The government has also committed \$200 million to upgrade the national rail network between 2004/05 and 2007/08. A further \$600 million has been provided to upgrade the Auckland rail network between 2005/06 and 2009/10."

Today in History

1580 - The Golden Hind sailed into Plymouth, England, as Francis Drake completed his circumnavigation of the globe.
 1687 - The Parthenon in Athens was partially destroyed during an armed conflict between Venetian and Ottoman forces.
 1907 - Newfoundland and New Zealand became dominions within the British Empire.

1957 - West Side Story, a musical written by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim, and produced and directed by Jerome Robbins, made its debut on Broadway.

1983 - Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet Union averted a worldwide nuclear war.

September 26 is European Day of Languages

Quote of the Day

What might have been and what has been
 Point to one end, which is always present.
 Footfalls echo in the memory
 Down the passage which we did not take
 Towards the door we never opened
 Into the rose-garden.
 ~ T. S. Eliot in The Four Quartets

Word of the Day

- synecdoche; n
1. A form of metaphor, whereby an inclusive term stands for something included, or vice versa.

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Today in History

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Quote of the Day

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page

Word of the Day

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page

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