



Top Stories

Virgin Train crashes in England

A Virgin Train, travelling from Euston to Glasgow, has derailed and crashed in Cumbria, England. Virgin Trains have confirmed 1 fatality; an eighty year-old woman.

U.S. apologizes for detention of Iraqi lawmaker's son

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Featured story

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Wikipedia Current Events

- The Virginia General Assembly votes unanimously in favour of a motion expressing "profound regret" for Virginia's role in promoting Slavery, which is the first apology for slavery passed by a U.S. state legislature.
- Thousands of people protest in Madrid at a decision by the Supreme Court of Spain to reduce the sentence served by Basque

Wikipedia Current Events

separatist Inaki De Juana Chaos who has been on a hunger strike for 110 days.

- At least 39 people are killed and 61 injured as a car bomb explodes as Sunni Muslim worshippers leave their mosque in Habbaniya, Iraq.
- The official inquiry into the Grayrigg rail crash starts with early investigations focusing on a set of points.
- Vice President of the United States Dick Cheney warns Iran that "all options are on the table" if it continues to defy the international community about its nuclear program.

Champions League round of sixteen—first leg results

The first leg of the round of sixteen in the Champions League was completed on Wednesday, with at least one controversial result, and a bag full of ties. The leg began on Tuesday with four games, and the other four were played the next day, including reigning champions FC Barcelona of Spain.

Real Madrid (Spain) 3 - 2 Bayern Munich (Germany)

English star David Beckham started the game for the Galácticos, while Canadian/Englishman Owen Hargreaves started his first game back after injury for Bayern Munich. Madrid came out fast, with David Beckham passing it to Ruud van Nistelrooy, who slid in a tidy pass to Raúl, who slid the ball past Oliver Kahn in the bottom right

corner of the net. Bayern struck back within 13 minutes, after a Willy Sagnol free kick was headed home by Lúcio. Madrid kept up the fight, and 5 minutes later, Raúl was on the scoresheet again after heading home a David Beckham corner kick. Real increased their lead 5 minutes later, when Ruud van Nistelrooy slotted home a redirected Beckham free kick. Bayern was able to grab a crucial late away goal via Mark van Bommel.

PSV Eindhoven (Holland) 1 - 0 Arsenal (England)

Arsenal were without several key players due to their upcoming Carling cup final against Chelsea this weekend, but star Thierry Henry was in the squad along with Emmanuel Adebayor as a strike partner. The only goal came in the 61'st minute, when Edison Méndez shot a low screamer past Jens Lehmann from around 25 yards from goal.

Lille (France) 0 - 1 Manchester United (England)

In a game ripe with controversy, Manchester United walked away with a crucial away win after a Ryan Giggs free kick gave them the lead. Lille protested the goal, saying the team was setting up its wall at the time Giggs took the kick, and the team nearly left the pitch. After goading by officials, the game was resumed, but Lille said it would be making a stake for a replay with UEFA. UEFA has rejected the claim and declared the goal valid, as well as deciding to "instigate proceedings against Lille

for the improper behaviour of their players immediately after the goal."

Celtic (Scotland) 0 - 0 A.C. Milan (Italy)

A spirited draw both sides played competitively, but nearly had a finishing flourish to seal in points.

Roma (Italy) 0 - 0 Lyon (France)

Another goalless draw, this game lacked discipline. English referee Mike Riley issued 11 yellow cards, 8 for Roma alone.

Internazionale (Italy) 2 - 2 Valencia (Spain)

Inter came into this game on a 15 game winning league in domestic play, while Valencia as also been hot in the Spanish league as of late. Inter struck first with Cambiasso pouncing on a rebound after Ibrahimović redirection of a Figo freekick was fabulously saved by goalie Cañizares. Valencia replied in the second half with a free kick by David Villa Sanchez from 30 yards. Inter restored their lead just over 10 minutes later, as Maicon slotted home a Julio Cruz pass. As the game wound down, Valencia pressed, and were rewarded with a goal by Silva, a volley ensuing from a corner.

Porto (Portugal) 1 - 1 Chelsea (England)

Both goals happened early in this game, with the home side taking the lead after 12 minutes. Raúl Meireles volleyed a ball towards the net, and after a lucky deflection of Frank Lampard's knee, the ball beat Petr Čech low. Chelsea leveled only 4 minutes later, when Arjen Robben jetted down the sideline and crossed the ball into the middle, where Andriy Shevchenko slotted the ball into the bottom corner.

Barcelona (Spain) 1 - 2 Liverpool (England)

This game saw the current

champions taking on the champions of the year previous. Barcelona came out strong, and Brazilian Deco scored early, heading in a Zambrotta cross. Liverpool leveled just before half time, with Craig Bellamy heading a ball across the net, and out of the reach of Víctor Valdés. After the break, John Arne Riise gave Liverpool a crucial away win, as he cleared home a Bellamy pass after some poor defending by Barcelona.

Italy: President Napolitano dismisses Prodi's resignation

The President of the Italian Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, has asked Romano Prodi today to stay on as Prime Minister, but Prodi will need to pass a confidence vote as soon as possible. After two days of consultation among Italian party leaders, Napolitano called on Saturday a press conference to explain his decision.

Napolitano stated that Prodi's coalition, l'Unione, is ready to support unanimously its Prime Minister, above all after the drafting of the twelve points agreement about the main political issues. The President rejected the proposal from the centre-right opposition to call for fresh elections, because Italy needs a new electoral law, and there was no consensus to form a broad interim government.

The confidence votes, both in Italian Chamber of Deputies and Senate, will be held in the coming week.

Thanks to the vote of independent Senator Luigi Pallaro, Marco Follini, leader of a centrist movement, and the votes of four senators for life (Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, Emilio Colombo, Rita Levi Montalcini and Oscar Luigi Scalfaro), the centre-left coalition could trust in a majority of 162 votes in Senate.

The centre-right coalition, instead, has some 155 votes, although it is unknown how the ex-senator of the "Italia dei Valori" Sergio De Gregorio and the life-senators Giulio Andreotti, Francesco Cossiga and Sergio Pininfarina will vote.

XM and Sirius announce merger deal

On 19 February 2007, XM Satellite Radio and Sirius Satellite Radio announced a move that will change the face of satellite radio in the United States and Canada: XM and Sirius will be merging, creating a single satellite radio provider.

Multi-million dollar losses, combined with increasing competition from internet radio, downloadable music, and HD radio have forced XM and Sirius heads to realize that if both companies continue to compete in the American marketplace, neither company can succeed.

Mel Karmazin, CEO of Sirius Satellite Radio, described the problem: "We don't want to take subscribers from XM. We won't make money that way. We need new subscribers." Likewise, XM executives say they can't succeed by stealing Sirius subscribers. This leaves both companies with the problem of attracting new customers and distinguishing their brand, while at the same time trying to convince potential customers to pay \$12.95 a month for radio, something that people are used to getting for free. Even if one company were to force the other out of the marketplace, the remaining company would have won a Pyrric victory, without enough capital remaining to take advantage of the situation.

The solution: make a deal now, while both companies are both strong and in a position to expand

their technologies and services. That's exactly what they plan to do: In press releases and news postings on both of their web sites, both companies have pledged to make the combined company better than either service by itself. "You've heard of 1+1=3," Karmazin said during an investor conference call, "that's what this is."

Pending approval of the deal, each share of XM stock will be replaced with 4.6 shares of Sirius. Each company's stockholders will retain approximately 50% of the joined company. Sirius CEO Mel Karmazin will retain his CEO title in the new company, and XM chairman Gary Parsons will retain his. XM CEO Hugh Panero will retain his position until the merger is complete, which should happen near the end of 2007.

Timeline of events

February 21, 2007

US Representative Bob Goodlatte (R-Va) is calling for a hearing on the merger.

February 20, 2007

A public conference call between XM and Sirius occurred on Feb 20, 2007 at 8:30AM EST. A PDF presentation of the call is available [here](#). The webcast is currently available at the [Sirius Investor Site](#).

Opposition

Several consumer and community groups have come out in opposition to the merge.

In a strongly worded press release on February 19, 2007, the National Association of Broadcasters decried the plan, stating that the merger would create a monopoly in the United States satellite radio market.

A group of law students formed an organization known as the Consumer Coalition for Competition in Satellite Radio, with the purpose

of stopping the merger. The C3SR is composed of law students, all of whom subscribe to XM or Sirius Satellite Radio. Their major argument is that this would create a monopoly in the satellite radio, which would increase prices, reduce consumer choice, and subsidize unwanted services. Chris Reale, a founder of C3SR, said "If this merger is permitted to go forward, there will be no protection of competition and there will be no competitors."

Support

In the initial merger press release, Sirius and XM asserted that satellite radio is part of the audio entertainment industry rather than an industry of its own, and as such competes with traditional terrestrial radio, HD Radio, iPods and on-line radio. The resultant company will be subject to regulation pre- and post-merger by the FCC, Federal Trade Commission, Securities and Exchange Commission, Department of Justice and possibly other federal organizations. The FCC has issued a statement saying that a merger is not without its hurdles, and that they will want assurances that price, quality, and consumer choice will be protected.

Based on C3SR's blog posts and Internet forum posts on various fan sites, it is apparent that many subscribers are looking forward to the deal. Speculation abounds on what the new receivers will look like, and how customers' existing hardware will fit in to the new plan.

While many of the facts concerning the merger are not yet known: what the new company will be called, exactly which programming the new company will carry, and when customers will need to upgrade their hardware, one thing is for certain: Satellite radio in North America is in for one big

change.

Minnesota requires 25% renewable energy

Governor Tim Pawlenty of Minnesota signed a bill into law on Thursday that requires the state to generate a significant amount of its energy needs from renewable sources.

The amount of power generated by wind turbines in the state stands now at 895 megawatts. An additional 5,000 megawatts of energy from renewable sources will need to be added to Minnesota's electricity resources, which is roughly eight times more than currently comes from renewables.

The bill signed by the Governor requires energy companies to provide 25 percent of power from renewable sources by 2025.

Xcel Energy, which supplies approximately half of the electricity in the state, is required to provide 30 percent from renewable sources by 2020.

Today in History

1570 - Pope Pius V issued the papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis* to excommunicate Queen Elizabeth I and her followers in the Church of England.

1836 - Samuel Colt received a patent for a "revolving gun", later known as a revolver.

1921 - The Soviet Red Army occupied the Democratic Republic of Georgia, annexing it into a new Soviet Socialist Republic.

1951 - The first Pan American Games opened in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

1986 - EDSA Revolution: Corazon Aquino was inaugurated as President of the Philippines, as Ferdinand Marcos fled the nation after 20 years of rule.

February 25 is National Day in

Kuwait (1950)

Quote of the Day

I look at the world and I notice it's turning.

While my guitar gently weeps.
With every mistake we must surely be learning,
Still my guitar gently weeps.
~ George Harrison ~

Word of the Day

sonorous; adj

- Noisy; producing much sound.
- Capable of making sound, such as a bell.

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Today in History