



Top Stories

Paris riots continue into eighth day

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World Bank warns of high bird flu cost



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Featured story

US state of Kansas in battle over "Intelligent Design" in education



Kansas' school board efforts to write Intelligent Design into the public school science curriculum may have unleashed entertaining, but unintended, consequences.

Wikipedia Current Events

- France Riots in Seine St denis (North of Paris) to protest against death of two young people killed while trespassing fence of EDF power station .
- U.S. scientists warn that over two million U.S. citizens could die in the event of an expected influenza epidemic.
- Israeli troops raid the West Bank area of Jenin.

Wikipedia Current Events

- A joint Israeli-Palestinian doctors group has filed a petition to the Supreme Court of Israel requesting an end to the Israel Defense Forces use of sonic booms to terrify the Palestinian populace. The Doctors complain that the "sound bombs" cause widespread fear, induce miscarriages and traumatise children. The United Nations claim that the tactic causes panic attacks in children and has smashed thousands of windows.
- A 12 year old Palestinian boy is in a critical condition after being shot by an Israeli soldier.
- Conflict in Iraq: Seven U.K. troops accused of murdering an Iraqi civilian have have their cases quashed after a judge ruled that there was insufficient evidence against the soldiers and that the Iraqi witnesses lied.
- Five U.S. Marines have been arrested after they were accused of raping a local Filipino woman. The USS Essex was prevented from leaving the Philippines till the men were apprehended.
- Two more people have died as protests against the government of Ethiopia continue in Addis Ababa.

Paris riots continue into eighth day

Violent riots continued Thursday in the suburbs of Paris, where residents have set fire to buildings, cars, and buses and shot at police and firefighters. Numerous riots have been reported in over twenty

Paris suburbs, mostly towns with large immigrant populations. Reports indicate that at least nine people have been injured as a result of the violence.

French President Jacques Chirac met with his administration on Wednesday to discuss the current situation. However, there has been no announcement regarding strategies to suppress the violence.

The riots erupted when two Muslim teenagers died of electrocution in a power station while they were fleeing from police who they believed were chasing them. The police have since stated that they were not trying to chase the teenagers.

Libby, former Cheney aide, pleads not guilty

I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, former chief of staff to U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, pleaded not guilty in a courtroom on Thursday in response to his indictments regarding the CIA leak scandal.

"With respect your honor, I plead not guilty," Libby said.

Libby's lawyers addressed reporters following the arraignment. "In pleading not guilty he has declared to the world that he is innocent. He has declared that intends to fight the charges in the indictment, and he has declared that he wants to clear his good name," said attorney Ted Wells. "He wants to clear his good name, and he wants a jury trial," Wells added.

The former vice presidential aide was indicted by Special Prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald last week on two counts of perjury, one count of obstruction of justice, and two counts of making false statements. The indictments focus on whether he attempted to cover up his actions during the investigation instead of whether he illegally leaked the identity of undercover CIA agent Valerie Plame. After being charged, Libby immediately resigned his position.

World Bank warns of high bird flu cost

The World Bank has issued a report warning that a bird flu pandemic could cost the Asian economy up to \$283 billion and lead the region into recession. The report has identified the tourist, transport and retail sectors of the Asian economy as being particularly vulnerable to the effects of such an outbreak. World Bank economist Homi Kharas noted that, "One large shadow looms over the generally positive economic outlook we have sketched out... and that is avian flu."

The report, published twice annually by the World Bank, admitted that Asia's recent growth was going to slow down slightly anyway in 2006 (due to higher oil prices and tighter monetary policy), but that a bird flu epidemic could make this partial slowdown much worse.

The report comes just days ahead of an Asian political summit, where the foreign ministers of many of the countries already affected by the H5N1 virus are expected to agree to even closer co-operative measures to help stall the advance of the virus. The foreign ministers of Cambodia,

Laos, Burma, Thailand and Vietnam have already agreed to closer co-operation to contain the virus and develop a vaccine.

Multiple bomb threats in Sydney 'nothing more than a hoax'

The Sydney police have declared that the numerous bomb threat e-mails circulating the city today were all hoaxes. The messages warned of a late afternoon bomb attack at Town Hall station.

There were unconfirmed reports of evacuations at Town Hall Station, although it is not clear whether these were officially sanctioned, or just the result of word-of-mouth.

The police stated that there have been no evacuations. The Deputy Police Commissioner has said that the threats were "nothing more than a hoax", appealed for calm, and says that if any credible threats are received, the public will be kept informed and dealt with appropriately.

Australian House of Representatives grows heated over industrial relations legislation

Australian industrial relations reform legislation made up of 700 pages of bill legislation and 500 additional pages of explanatory memoranda was introduced into the Federal House of Representatives November 2, where the Opposition heatedly attempted to address their perceived problem of the Government's lack of discussion and debate over the matter.

The first reading of the bill was the first order of the day, and when Kevin Andrews tried to do so, Opposition member Stephen

Smith, responsible for workplace relations, immediately moved a motion deferring the bills to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation. The Leader of the House, Tony Abbott moved that Smith and the necessary supporter -- viz., Julia Gillard -- be not further heard (cloture). The Government's majority in the House ensured that this would happen. However, Opposition members attempted to use House standing orders necessitating that copies of the bill to be "available to Members", with argument arising whether "available to Members" meant all members or simply whether some copies should be available; this ended up in a dissent motion moved against the Speaker of the House.

Later, in a heated Question Time, where six members of the Opposition, (Kelly Hoare, Julia Irwin, Anthony Albanese, Bernard Ripoll, Catherine King, and Gavan O'Connor), were removed from the Chamber during Question Time under standing orders for disruption -- Jill Hall quipped that she was "glad to be still here to ask [her] question" -- nearly all questions to the Government put by the Opposition, the subsequent time for matters of public importance, and some members in the adjournment debate, was all on the topic of the industrial relations reform.

To implement and fund the legislation, the government will "spend an additional \$486million on industrial relations changes over four years, or \$121million a year. This spending would be in addition to the present annual budget of \$86million." said an unnamed government source for

The Australian.

The government will need to use its corporation powers to remove the powers from the states to alter the award conditions and other employee employer related conditions. But the New South Wales premier Morris Iemma has recieved legal advice that the legislation maybe unconstitutional, the reason being its being used to end the role of the states and territories Australian States in the industrial relations system. "It is our view that the Commonwealth is misusing this law to achieve exactly what it was designed to prevent", Iemma said. Mr Iemma will be challenging the changes in the high court with Peter Beattie Premier of Queensland supporting his challenge in the High Court.

At least thirty-three more dead in Ethopia election clashes

At least thirty-three more people have died in a second day of protests in Addis Ababa, the Capital of Ethiopia. Reuters put the figure at twenty-three.

According to incoming reports police forces opened fire on stone throwing youths who were engaged in protest.

The protests were called in reaction to the results of the parliamentary elections held in May which many opposition figures maintain were rigged. When the election results were first declared in June riots erupted in which 36 people died.

The latest series of protests come as the parliamentary session is scheduled to begin. The Opposition party, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy called the protest and refused to take their seats till a new and transparently

organised elections are held, and mass arrests of opposition activists ceases. The party said that six of its top officials, including chairman Hailu Shawel and vice-chairman Berhanu Nega, had been detained.

30 taxi drivers who took part in demonstrations against the parliamentary elections were arrested and had their licenses revoked.

The Associated Press reports that an Anonymous source in Black Lion Hospital told thir reporter that Most of the dead were shot in the chest. One eye-witness at the hospital claims that the police fired randomly into the crowd.

The dead were all shot by riot police and opposition spokesman Gizachew Shiferaw said police used excessive force, the day previous, however, two of the dead were police shot by protesters. The Government accuses the opposition of attempting to topple the government, and dismissed an assessment by European Union monitors that the elections failed to meet international standards.

Today in History

1852 - Count Cavour became the prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia, which soon expanded to become the Kingdom of Italy.

1869 - Nature, one of the oldest and most reputable general purpose scientific journals, was first published.

1918 - The German Revolution began when forty-thousand sailors took over the port in Kiel.

1956 - Soviet troops invaded Hungary to crush the Hungarian Uprising, killing thousands. Nearly a quarter million fled the country as refugees.

1979 - Iranian radicals seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran and held

the occupants hostage for 444 days.

Quote of the Day

"After looking at mothers-in-law and seeing sons-in-law — I always felt that the jokes were on the wrong ones. No sir, you can look through everything I ever did write or say, and you never did hear me tell a joke about any mother-in-law — or any creed, color or religion, either." ~ Will Rogers

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