



*Top Stories*

**Peruvian airliner crashes in jungle**

A Peruvian jetliner carrying between 94 and 100 people crashed near Pucallpa, Peru on Tuesday at 21:20 UTC. Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo said 70 to 80 had been killed, and other authorities have said at least 40. The Boeing 737-200, operated by military-run airline Tans Peru had attempted an emergency landing on Federico Basadre road in Peru's central jungle. The crash is said to have been caused by bad weather.



**Massive floods in Bavaria, Austria, Switzerland**

Heavy rainfalls have caused massive floods in Southern Bavaria, Western Austria and Central Switzerland.

**Israel completes Gaza strip, West Bank pull-outs**

Israel has completed its pull-out from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements.

It had been feared that the protesters in the two West Bank towns, Sanur and Homesh, would put up strong resistance but in the end only made token protests, pelting soldiers with fruit, flour, and paint and burning Israeli flags. The residents of the two other towns went peacefully.

In the synagogues of the settlements Israeli troops had to cut through barricades of iron bars and barbed wire before carrying out protesters, but they did not resist. Around 40 settlers made a last stand on the roof of an old fort before giving themselves up to riot police after being sprayed with water cannons.

The Israeli Chief of Staff said, "There has been less violence than we thought. One of the reasons was because rabbis worked to calm tensions."

Four police officers recieved minor injuries.

Local Palestinians looked on as the protesters were cleared, and told reporters that life would be easier for them now. Previously, Israeli settlers had stopped Palestinian farmers from travelling, and had even stopped some of them visiting a village cemetery.

Israelis will retain responsibility for security in the West Bank settlements, although in the Gaza strip that role has now been handed over to Palestinians.

In the Gaza strip, Israeli forces have already demolished six of the settlements left behind by the evacuation of 8,500 Israeli settlers to make way for new Palestinian construction.

In the West Bank, there remain some 120 Jewish settlements housing more than 230,000.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has seen his poll ratings raise despite the angry scenes. Hamas, a radical Palestinian group, has attempted to present the pull-out as a surrender by Israel. "We believe that this unilateral withdrawal is a complete failure for the Israeli enemy, that it deserves no concession from our side whatsoever," said a spokesman.

US President George Bush said the pull-out has "changed the dynamics on the ground and has provided hope for the Palestinian people."

**UK guinea pig farm to close after owner's family grave robbed**

A forty-year-old British guinea pig farm is to close after a six-year campaign of intimidation by animal rights extremists culminated in the remains of the family's dead mother being dug up and stolen. Listen to this report · (info)

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Glady Hammond's sons, who run the farm which breeds the guinea pigs for medical experiments, have been the victim of bomb threats, hate mail, malicious phone calls, an attempt to brand them as paedophiles, and arson attacks.

However last year's exhumation of their mother was the final straw. The remains of the 87-year-old, who died in 1997, were removed under the cover of darkness from the churchyard they were buried in, and have not been found.

Two men were arrested in connection with the grave robbery, but were later released without charge.

The family hopes that their announcement that the farm will close will lead to the return of their mother's remains.

*Featured story*

**UK guinea pig farm to close after owner's family grave robbed**

A forty-year-old British guinea pig farm is to close after a six-year campaign of intimidation by animal rights extremists culminated in the remains of the family's dead mother being dug up and stolen.

*Wikipedia Current Events*

- A TANS Peru Boeing 737-200 crashed near Pucallpa with 100 on board; at least 70 have been killed.
- UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan visits Zinder, Niger, which is affected by a regional food crisis in West Africa.
- Israel completes the unilateral disengagement from all settlements in the Gaza Strip and four in the West Bank.
- Canada has sent 2 warships to the north Arctic port of Churchill, Manitoba following a territorial dispute with Denmark regarding Hans Island.

A close relative of Mrs Hammond, who spoke anonymously to the BBC, said, "Gladys was a relative of the Halls by marriage only and had no involvement in guinea pig breeding. She was a kind, gentle country lady who loved animals."

Legitimate peaceful protesters were overjoyed at the news. Johnny Holmes, a spokesman for Stop the Newchurch Guinea Pigs, said: "This is the most fantastic day of my life." The group, which has picketed the farm for several years, says it will remain until all the guinea pigs have gone.

The group's website describes the experiments the guinea pigs were subjected to as being "horrendous", and have accused the farm of keeping tens of thousands of animals in poor conditions leading to many dying of malnutrition and neurosis. Video footage taken by the group inside the farm show many young animals dying and under extreme stress.

They also say the animals have been used for cosmetics research and for "unscientific" medical experiments.

The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), in an online statement, gave their best wishes to the Hammond family, and described the decision as "regrettable but understandable".

Their director of Science and Technology said, "Guinea pigs have provided essential information to support biomedical research into respiratory disease resulting in real breakthroughs in the development of new medicines."

The animals from the farm have been used in biomedical research, especially for respiratory diseases such as asthma. The ABPI also said that future animal research may be carried out in countries that do not have the strict welfare controls the UK has.

### **Indiana senator testing waters for 2008 U.S. presidential bid**

Relatively unknown Indiana Senator Evan Bayh is taking steps to make a run for U.S. President during the 2008 election cycle. Bayh has formed a political action committee (PAC) and already is a leading

money-raiser among Democratic party hopefuls. The Hoosier politician also is touting his appeal to traditionally republican voters.

Among the selling points Bayh points to in his likely 2008 bid is that he is a democrat who consistently wins elections in republican red states by appealing to moderate republican and libertarian-leaning voters.

A former leader and key figure in the Democratic Leadership Council moderate movement in the Democratic party that brought Bill Clinton to the national stage, Bayh is known as a Democrat who won with landslide margins of victory during both terms as Indiana's governor and two U.S. Senate runs in the traditionally Republican-voting state.

In an interview with the Terre Haute, Indiana Tribune Star newspaper, he noted Democratic former president Harry Truman as a role model. In recent news reports he also criticized the national Democratic Party image as being weak on national defense.

Critics point out this popularity with moderate republicans could be a liability for Bayh in the Democrat Primaries, which are traditionally controlled by left-leaning party activists.

Between January and July 31, 2005, three years before the election, Bayh has raised \$1.17 million for a potential 2008 bid--more than most potential 2008 presidential nominees. He out raised fellow democrats Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and John Edwards. Each, unlike Bayh, are well-known household names in the United States. Money-raising results by political action committees are reported to and released by the U.S. Federal Election Commission .

Clinton is widely considered the front runner, and Republican money leader. She has focused her attention on reelection in 2006 to her New York U.S. Senate seat. For that campaign, she has raised \$10 million.

Bayh is being beaten in the money-raising arena by Democratic party chairman Howard Dean, who raised \$1.77 million in the first six months of the year. Dean has made a name for himself as an effective money-raiser for liberal causes. But Dean has bowed

out of the 2008 race according to reports.

Bayh is trailing the top Republican 2008 presidential; hopeful, Sen. Bill Frist, considered a top Republican candidate for 2008, who collected \$1.9 million in the first six months of 2005.

### **Religious broadcaster Pat Robertson calls for assassination of Venezuela's president**

Pat Robertson, an American televangelist, former presidential candidate, and founder of the Christian Coalition of America, has called for the assassination of Venezuela's president Hugo Chávez.

On his popular talk show, The 700 Club broadcast on the Christian Broadcasting Network, Robertson said on Monday that Chávez had destroyed the Venezuelan economy and made his country a "launching pad for communist infiltration and Muslim extremism all over the continent". Ninety-eight percent of all Venezuelans are Roman Catholic or Protestant.

Relating to the latest allegations from Chávez that the U.S. is planning to assassinate him, which the U.S. government denies, Robertson said: "You know, I don't know about this doctrine of assassination, but if he thinks we're trying to assassinate him, I think that we really ought to go ahead and do it."

He added that he did not believe Venezuela would stop exporting oil if that were to happen as Chávez suggested. He again called Chávez a "terrific danger" to the U.S. with the potential to hurt the country "very bad" and concluded: "We have the ability to take him out, and I think the time has come that we exercise that ability. We don't need another \$200 billion war to get rid of one, you know, strong-arm dictator. It's a whole lot easier to have some of the covert operatives do the job and then get it over with."

A spokeswoman for Robertson, Angell Watts, said to the Associated Press that he would not give interviews on Tuesday and had no statement elaborating on his remarks.

In response, Venezuela's Vice President José Vicente Rangel accused Robertson of

making terrorist threats: "It's the height of hypocrisy for the U.S. to continue talking about the war against terrorism when at the same time you have someone making obvious terrorist declarations in the heart of the country."

The U.S. State Department called the remarks "inappropriate" but did not condemn them and insisted that they do not reflect official policy and that the U.S. is not nor ever was planning to take "hostile actions" against Venezuela.

Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, reacted to Robertson's remarks: "It's absolutely chilling to hear a religious leader call for the murder of any political leader, no matter how much he disagrees with such a leader's policies or practices."

Robertson is considered to have staunch conservative views. His unsuccessful bid for the Republican nomination for president in 1988 have led to allegations of partisanship. According to White House press secretary Scott McClellan, Robertson met with President George W. Bush in November 2002 to discuss the Invasion of Iraq. He considers himself to be a supporter of Bush. Today he remains a controversial public figure.

### **Massive floods in Bavaria, Austria, Switzerland**

Heavy rainfalls have caused massive floods in Southern Bavaria, Western Austria and Central Switzerland.

In Southern Bavaria authorities have declared a state of emergency. The city of Garmisch-Partenkirchen is cut off from the outside world. Near Augsburg a freeway had to be closed because a bridge was on the verge of collapsing after water had damaged the foundation.

In the Austrian states of Tyrol and Vorarlberg authorities are battling with floods that intensified during the night with record rainfall. In Vorarlberg a brook broke into a house and caused a gas explosion injuring six people. One person is missing after he and his car were swept away. In the capital of Tyrol, Innsbruck, all bridges over the Inn had to be closed. In Western Tyrol, landslides killed one man and injured

another.

In Switzerland the cities of Bern and Lucerne were partially flooded. Mudslides killed two firefighters who were trying to evacuate a farm. In the canton of Zürich one man drowned, and a woman in Graubünden is missing after she too fell into a stream. The Swiss government estimates the floodings caused a damage of at least US\$79 million.

### **Lance Armstrong denies EPO doping claim**

The French cycling newspaper L'Équipe is reporting that a drugs testing laboratory has discovered that Lance Armstrong, seven times winner of the Tour de France, used the banned substance EPO in the 1999 tour - his first victory after defeating testicular cancer.

The Châtenay-Malabry French national doping screening laboratory, which developed the first EPO tests, says it has been developing new experimental detection techniques and decided to test frozen urine samples taken from Armstrong after several stages of the 1999 tour.

Jacques de Ceaurriz, directory of the laboratory, says that there is no doubt of the validity of the result as EPO can only degrade with storage - it does not increase with time.

The circumstances of the test do not allow the UCI, the world governing body of cycling, to take action against Armstrong. However the World Anti-doping Agency is said to be considering options.

L'Equipe also points out that the results may tarnish Armstrong's image forever, and cast a shadow of doubt over his six other victories.

Lance Armstrong has responded on his website, branding L'Equipe's reporting of being "nothing short of tabloid journalism."

Armstrong says: "I will simply restate what I have said many times: I have never taken performance[-]enhancing drugs."

### **Thousands expected to protest at Forbes Global CEO conference in Sydney**

Organisers of a protest march planned to occur in Sydney next week are predicting thousands of people will attend. The protest is timed to coincide with the Forbes Global CEO Conference, which starts at the Sydney Opera House the same day.

The action is being promoted by various trade unions and peace and social justice groups, and co-ordinated by the 30A Network, which is an informal association of such groups. A number of reasons have been given for the protest, including the Iraq War, globalisation, and the government's planned industrial relations changes.

The 30A network website is reporting that the protest has been endorsed by the NSW Fire Brigade Employees' Union, the Maritime Union of Australia, the Australian Services Union, and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union.

The NSW Police Service will provide free security for the conference. This is potentially controversial, as other events such as football games have to pay for police to attend. The decision has been criticised by the NSW Police Association, as they claim it will leave inner city stations short-staffed. The opposition police spokesman Mike Gallacher echoed the Association's criticism, saying that the conference organisers should foot the bill themselves.

"Even though ASIO have identified it as a risk coming to Sydney, they can be guaranteed the best policing resources available in this country to hold their conference in a safe environment, but to do so they should have been asked to pay their way, to pay the bill," he said.

A spokesman for the Police Minister said that frontline policing would not be affected.

New South Wales Premier Morris Iemma defended the use of taxpayers' money on policing the conference.

"The advice I have is that ASIO have declared this as a medium-security event, which classifies it as warranting security.

They do expect up to 2,000 protesters and if the local agricultural show had been subject to the same security assessment with potential protesters, they too would receive the same security response," he said.

### 'Piano Man' speaks and is identified, returns home to Germany

The man known as just the 'Piano Man' has left the hospital where he was staying and has returned home to his native Germany. He has finally spoken after four months of silence.

It turns out, according to British tabloid The Daily Mirror, that the man, aged 20, was from Germany but after losing his job in Paris, traveled to the UK through the Channel Tunnel. He was going to commit suicide when he was found by police on a Kent beach.

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He refused to talk to authorities due to his distressed state. It appears that he had formerly worked with mental patients and copied what he saw from them to fool the doctors. Also according to the Mirror, the man was only able to tap the same piano key repeatedly, but hospital officials refute this. However, all of this information came from a single, unidentified source.

The man was found soaking wet on a beach in Kent in an expensive-looking suit from which all the labels had been removed.

Some people believed he was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder or that he was an autistic savant. Some also believed he was a Canadian eccentric, a French busker, a student from Norway, or Czech concert pianist Tomáš Strnad.

### Australian current affairs TV program accused of inciting religious hatred

Australian media analysis program Media Watch has accused popular national "current affairs" style program Today Tonight of deliberately quoting a Muslim youth out of context, with the intention of presenting a

negative stereotype of the Muslim community. The allegations were aired during Monday night's episode.

According to Mediawatch, Abdul Elayoubi of the Lebanese Muslim Association was approached by Tim Noonan, a freelance film producer wanting to produce a short documentary to air on the Seven Network. Mr Elayoubi was cautious because of a prior misrepresentation, however was assured that the program would "show Australians from non-Islamic backgrounds the viewpoint of young Muslims and the pressure they face in an often hostile society", according to a letter from Peter Meakin, the Seven Network's head of news and current affairs. Elayoubi said "Tim told us he'd be doing the editing himself and would give it to Channel 7 completed," and was assured that quotes would not be taken out of context to further vilify Australian Muslims.

Three Muslim youths, Khaled, Ahmed and Samir, agreed to participate in the documentary. Despite prior reassurances, Tim Noonan did not produce a completed documentary. The film was subsequently narrated by David Richardson, who had not met the boys and who got Samir's name wrong throughout the piece.

The quote "we will never integrate, the way other communities integrate purely because of the fact that you have to draw a line with what your idea of integration is and what our idea of integration and accepting the practices of other people are," was reduced to "we will never integrate" during editing. Ahmed stated that the full quote itself was made to camera after a discussion including talk of how the Islamic rule prohibiting consumption of alcohol was a barrier to full social integration.

The interviewer, Tim Noonan, dismissed the claims in a statement to Media Watch, saying "I believe the edit was an accurate representation of what they told me and I absolutely deny that anything was taken out of context."

The aired quote was picked up by other media bodies, most noticably Sydney talk radio 2UE, where it was allegedly used to incite religious and racial intolerance. The quote was then further publicised by Today Tonight in a follow-up piece the next evening.

### Archaeologists find 1.8M-year-old Homo erectus skull

Archaeologists say they have found a 1.8 million-year-old Homo erectus skull in Georgia, the oldest such skull to be found in Europe. According to David Lortkipanidze, director of the Georgian National Museum, the skull was found August 6 and excavated on August 21 in Dmanisi, about 85 km southwest of Tblisi.

The skull was said to have been found at a site archaeologists have been examining since 1936 along with four other bones and fragments, including a jaw bone found in 1991. "Practically all the remains have been found in one place. This indicates that we have found a place of settlement of primitive people," said Lortkipanidze.

The researchers said their find was more than one million years older than any outside Africa. The skull and other remains have been cited as evidence of Homo erectus's migration into Europe at least 500,000 years earlier than has previously been thought.

Previously fossils of the hominid ancestor have been found in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Some of Lortkipanidze's earlier findings that had more slender, small features, including a smaller brain relative to Homo sapiens, contradicted anthropological theories that Homo erectus was large and intelligent even by Homo sapiens standards.

### New Zealand general election: National, Labour TV debate

Helen Clark (Prime Minister) and Don Brash (Leader of the Opposition) have gone head-to-head in the first live televised debate between the two leaders in the New Zealand general election of 2005.

A studio audience contained equal numbers of National and Labour Party supporters.

The debate ran through tax, race relations, foreign affairs, immigration, education and health (all the key policy areas).

Taxes were at the top of the agenda; the debate was just hours after the National

Party released their tax policy.

Don Brash said that the nuclear freeze policy of New Zealand (which bans nuclear powered US warships from its ports) and Helen Clark's criticism of the war in Iraq have both contributed to her failure to secure a free-trade pact with the United States.

Helen Clark was confident and aggressive and she often forced Don Brash into defensive explanations of National's policies.

### **Draft constitution pushed into Iraqi parliament**

A draft of Iraq's constitution has entered parliament, despite warnings from Sunni Arabs that it could begin a civil war. The vote however, has been delayed three more days to try to win the support of the Sunni minority.

Signs indicate little chance of a resolution to the Sunni opposition, however. "If it passes, there will be an uprising in the streets," Saleh al-Mutlak, a Sunni negotiator working on the constitution said. Another negotiator, Soha Allawi, said, "We will campaign ... to tell both Sunnis and Shi'ites to reject the constitution, which has elements that will lead to the break-up of Iraq and civil war."

Sunnis are concerned over sections of the constitution that create large "federal" regions in the north and the south under Shi'ite and Kurdish control. Sunni negotiators are demanding that all "federalism" be left out. Kurds have pressed for the provisions on federalism, as Kurdish negotiators have sought to retain, largely, their current autonomy in the north.

Other concerns which prevent Sunni support of the draft constitution center on the emphasis given to Islam as a "main source of law" -- a compromise between Islamist and secular Shi'ites and Kurds.

### **Earthquake reported near Rome's coast, no damage caused**

On Monday in Italy at 14:02 Italian local time, an earthquake was registered at 4.5 on the Richter scale epicentered in the sea near Rome. Some residents of Rome and surrounding towns who felt the quake went

out into city streets to avoid any possible serious destruction or to discuss the tremor with neighbours.

No serious damage has been reported and due to the relatively small magnitude of the quake minimal structural damage to ancient Roman monuments is believed to have occurred. Structural inspections are being made to ensure safety and stability of the historic landmarks.

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## Today in History

- 79 - Mount Vesuvius erupted, burying the cities of Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae with volcanic ash.
- 410 - The Visigoths under Alaric I sacked Rome.
- 1572 - St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre: a massacre of Huguenots began. An estimated 70,000 people were killed in France in the following weeks.
- 1821 - The Treaty of Córdoba was signed, ratifying the Plan de Iguala and concluding the Mexican War of Independence from Spain.
- 1992 - Hurricane Andrew, the costliest natural disaster to ever strike the United States, made landfall in South Florida as a Category Five storm.
- August 24 is Independence Day in Ukraine (1991)

## Quote of the Day

"Time is the substance from which I am made. Time is a river which carries me along, but I am the river; it is a tiger that devours me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire that consumes me, but I am the fire." ~ Jorge Luis Borges

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