



Top Stories

At least 10,000 reported dead after Burma cyclone

At least 10,000 people are dead and another 3,000 are missing after Cyclone Nargis hit the country of Myanmar. Nargis made landfall on May 2. The United Nations says that it is



rushing aid after the "alarming" report.

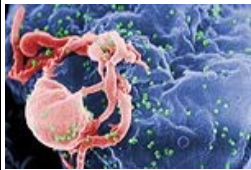
White House spokesperson discusses situation in Burma

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Clinical signs a 'reliable measure' of HIV treatment progress

Researchers have found that, in terms of survival, assessing the status of a HIV/AIDS patient by clinical examination is almost as reliable as laboratory blood testing during their course of treatment.



'Suspicious package' causes closure of busy street in Buffalo, New York

Early Cinco De Mayo celebrations were interrupted after a suspicious package caused the closure of a busy street in Buffalo, New York's Allentown District. For nearly three hours on Monday May 5, 2008 a busy street, popular with clubs and hotels, was shut down while authorities examined the package.

Wikipedia Current Events

Ronnie O'Sullivan wins the 2008 World Snooker Championship.

- The United States Federal Reserve System reports that banks are tightening lending standards on home mortgages, other types of consumer loans and business loans in response to the subprime mortgage crisis.
- Crude oil futures contracts reach \$120 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange for the first time due to a weakening United States dollar and renewed tensions with Iran.
- Somalian troops open fire killing at least two people during food riots in Mogadishu.
- Cyclone Nargis: State media in reports the death toll from the passage of the cyclone in Myanmar rises past 10,000.
- Three people are killed and another three injured after an explosion on a Shanghai bus.
- 86% of voters in Bolivia's richest

Wikipedia Current Events

region, Santa Cruz, support proposals for greater autonomy in a referendum. President Evo Morales condemns the referendum, calling it "illegal."

White House spokesperson discusses situation in Burma

A spokesperson for the White House has discussed the situation in Burma in a recent press conference. He started by saying that "we [the US government] are obviously very concerned about the reports coming out of Burma and we mourn the loss of life."

He then explained the aid given by the US in the aftermath of the cyclone in Burma. "The embassy was able to provide an initial package of aid and assistance that goes through the World Food Program, as well as other aid entities." The initial aid package provided by the US government will be worth US\$ 250,000.

A journalist then claimed that the initial aid package provided by the US Government was just a "drop in the bucket, " due to the large size of the storm. Scott Stanzel , the spokesperson, responded by saying that "we're [the US government are] in the process of assessing what more we could provide. So we're just in the initial stages, obviously, of this tragedy, so it's something that we're taking a very close look at."

Stanzel finished discussing the Burma situation by saying that "

officials at the [US] embassy are in touch with Burmese officials and we want to be as supportive to the humanitarian crisis as we can."

Over 4,000 people are dead and nearly 3,000 are missing and dozens are injured after Cyclone Nargis hit the country of Burma.

At least 10,000 reported dead after Burma cyclone

At least 10,000 people are dead and another 3,000 are missing after Cyclone Nargis hit the country of Myanmar, according to Foreign Minister Nyan Win, who spoke on state television. Just hours later Xinhua News Agency reported that government officials had told them that 15,000 were dead.

The United Nations (UN) calls the report "alarming". Paul Risley, a spokesperson for the World Food Programme said, "The UN will begin preparing assistance now to be delivered and transported to Myanmar as quickly as possible."

"The UN will do whatever it can to provide urgent humanitarian assistance. Because of the lack of communications, we are not quite sure what will be the total extent of damages and casualties. I am very much alarmed by incoming views that casualties have risen to more than 10,000, according to Myanmar's foreign ministry," said the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon.

The death toll has risen from Sunday's count of only 351 deaths.

Food and water has become scarce and hundreds of thousands of people are homeless with several towns being completely destroyed. In the city of Yangon, there is no power and much of the drinking

water has been contaminated.

"What is clear is that we are dealing with a major emergency situation, and the priority needs now are shelter and clean drinking water," said United Nations disaster response spokesman, Richard Horsey.

There are 47.8 million people living in Myanmar with over 5 million in Yangon.

Clinical signs a 'reliable measure' of HIV treatment progress

Researchers have found that, in terms of survival, assessing the status of a HIV/AIDS patient by clinical examination is almost as reliable as laboratory blood testing during their course of treatment.

Poor access to laboratory tests should therefore not be a barrier to rolling out antiretroviral (ARV) drug programmes for HIV in developing countries, they say.

The findings were published in *The Lancet* recently.

Patients on first-line ARVs in the developed world are monitored regularly for the amount of HIV circulating in their blood. When this falls below a certain level, treatment switches to second-line ARVs.

But because of limited access to laboratory tests, the WHO recommends that people in the developing world are monitored for clinical signs of HIV progression, such as bacterial infection in the mouth and certain types of cancer.

Monitoring of CD4 cell levels — an indicator of the health of a patient's immune system — is also used when laboratory testing is available. Until now, little was

known about the effectiveness of this strategy.

The researchers used a computer model to simulate the course of HIV infection and estimate the impact on survival of monitoring by viral load, CD4 count or clinical observation.

The model was initially developed for wealthy countries, but was adapted for lower-income countries by taking into account factors such as interruptions in drug supply.

It predicts that after five years, 83 per cent of patients monitored by viral load, 82 per cent of patients monitored by CD4 cell count, and 82 per cent of patients monitored by clinical examination alone, would have survived. This decreases to 67, 64 and 64 per cent, respectively, after 20 years.

Andrew Phillips, professor of epidemiology at the UK-based Royal Free & University College Medical School and lead author of the study, says the findings shouldn't dissuade people from relying on viral-load monitoring.

"I certainly wouldn't want to inhibit the roll-out of viral-load monitoring and the development of cheap and robust tests that don't rely heavily on infrastructure or highly skilled laboratory staff," he told SciDev.Net.

But, he says, that shouldn't be done at the cost of getting ARVs to everyone who needs them.

"The issue of whether to use viral-load monitoring or not pales into insignificance when dealing with whether you've actually got everyone who needs ARVs on therapy. Having drugs without viral-load monitoring is a lot better

than not having drugs."

NHL: Stars advance in eighth-longest playoff game

Brenden Morrow scored the game-winning goal, 9:03 into the fourth overtime, as the Dallas Stars defeated the San Jose Sharks 2-1. The goal gave the Stars a 4-games-to-2 series win, and they advance to the Western Conference Finals, where they'll face the Detroit Red Wings.

The game, which took 5 hours and 17 minutes to complete, was marked by the play of goalies Marty Turco and Evgeni Nabokov, who combined for 114 saves.

In the second period, the Stars took a 1-0 lead with an Antti Miettinen goal. However, early in the third period, Ryane Clowe tied the game at 1, with a wrist shot that soared past the outstretched glove of Stars goalie Marty Turco.

As the game went into overtime, both teams fought hard for early chances. Both Turco and Nabokov turned away great chances, including a glove save by Nabokov that appeared to pull his glove above — but not over — the goal line; while the goal light briefly went off, referee Tim Peel waved off the goal immediately. A video review confirmed that the shot was not a goal. The Stars outshot the Sharks 18-11 in the first OT.

In the second overtime period, the Sharks outshot Dallas a staggering 11-2, but Turco continued to keep the puck out of the net. A third OT hooking penalty against Nicklas Grossman gave the Sharks the first power play since the second period of regulation, but they were unable to even get a shot on goal, and did not capitalize on the man advantage

8:14 into the fourth overtime, a tripping penalty to Brian Campbell gave the Stars a power play. 49 seconds into the power play, forward Brenden Morrow redirected a Stephane Robidas shot to the right of Nabokov, his seventh goal of the playoffs.

Turco made 61 saves on 62 shots for the win. Nabokov made 53 saves in the loss.

The game is the eighth-longest playoff game in NHL history, and the third-longest in Stars history. In 2003, the Stars were defeated by the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim in a five-overtime thriller. A 2007 game saw the Stars defeated in four overtimes by the Vancouver Canucks.

Dallas avoided a deciding Game 7, which would have been held in San Jose. The Stars won the first three games of the series, but strong performances by San Jose, including a Game 5 overtime win, narrowed the series to 3-2.

Conference Finals matchups

The Stars advance to face the Detroit Red Wings in the Western Conference Finals. Game 1 of that series is scheduled for Thursday, at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit.

The Eastern Conference Finals, meanwhile, is an all-Pennsylvania matchup, as the Pittsburgh Penguins, who clinched their series with a 3-2 overtime victory on Sunday, face off against the rival Philadelphia Flyers. Game 1 will be held at Mellon Arena in Pittsburgh on Friday.

Pipe bomb explodes outside California courthouse

No one was injured when one or more pipe bombs exploded outside the Edward J. Schwartz Federal

Courthouse located in San Diego, California.

The bomb exploded around 1:40 a.m. Sunday morning on May 4, 2008 and was reported by guards patrolling the building. Debris from the blast was found across the street in the AT&T building eight stories above the lobby of the courthouse. Doors were blown out along with several windows, but there was no other damage.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is investigating the incident and evidence has been sent to an FBI laboratory in Virginia for analysis.

Video footage from surrounding cameras is being analyzed, but so far there are no suspects and no one has claimed responsibility for the blast. The courthouse did not receive any threats prior to the blast. Authorities swept the areas surrounding the courthouse, but no other explosive devices were found.

The courthouse will remain closed today to repair the damage and for authorities to finish the investigation.

Today in History

1682 – King Louis XIV of France moved the French royal court and the seat of government from Paris to the Château de Versailles in Versailles.

1863 – American Civil War: The Army of Northern Virginia, led by Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, scored a decisive Confederate victory at the Battle of Chancellorsville near Spotsylvania Courthouse, Virginia.

1937 – The German zeppelin Hindenburg caught fire and was destroyed while trying to land at

Lakehurst Naval Air Station in New Jersey, killing over 30 people on board.

1954 – At Oxford's Iffley Road Track, English athlete Roger Bannister became the first person to run the mile in under four minutes.

1994 – The Channel Tunnel, a 50.5-kilometre (31.4 mi) undersea rail tunnel beneath the English Channel at the Strait of Dover connecting Folkestone, Kent, England to Coquelles, France, officially opened.

May 06 is St George's Day in Bulgaria; Đurđevdan in Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina; Yuri's Day in Russia

Quote of the Day

Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise.

~ Sigmund Freud

Word of the Day

madeleine n

1. A small gâteau or sponge cake, often shaped like an elongated scallop shell.
2. Something which brings back a memory; a source of nostalgia or evocative memories.

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