

Top Stories

Three deadly explosions hit Bali and kill at least 25

Three explosions hit popular tourist locations in Bali on Saturday morning, reportedly causing at least 19 deaths.

U.S. house majority leader DeLay indicted, steps down temporarily



U.S House of Representatives majority leader Tom DeLay was indicted today by a Travis County Texas grand jury on conspiracy charges. He announced that he will step down temporarily.

Featured story

French ferry raided by military forces

Marine Nationale intercepts and boards ferry ship captured by strikers.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The Ilamatepec volcano erupts in a coffee growing area 40 miles west of San Salvador, El Salvador, spitting rock and ash into the air. The Salvadoran government evacuates hundreds of people in the region and there are no reported injuries. With the additional volcanic debris, San Salvador's air quality is significantly worse in then previous days, posing a threat to those who live in the already most polluted city in Central America.

Wikipedia Current Events

- A Russian rocket lifted the Soyuz spacecraft towards the International Space Station.
- Four explosions are reported in Bali at popular tourist areas, killing at least 36 and injuring 103 people.
- New Zealand's Labour Prime Minister Helen Clark is set to form a third-term government after the Nationals lose a seat. She begins talks with minor party leaders to form a coalition government as well obtain the support of enough minor parties to have a majority on supply and confidence issues.
- The Indonesian government raises fuel prices by more than 100%, resulting in petrol prices of 4,500 rupiah (.44 \$US) a litre.

Connecticut becomes third state to allow civil unions

In the state of Connecticut today, a law allowing civil unions for same-sex couples took effect.

The law is unique as it allows civil unions for same-sex couples with full benefits of a regular marriage. While, at the same time defining marriage as between a man and a woman.

Heterosexual couples are not allowed to receive civil unions. The license application will be identical to one for a regular marriage, except "bride" and "groom" are replaced with "party 1" and "party 2."

The law is also unique as it was the first law on gay marriage to be passed voluntary instead of by lawsuit. Fellow New England states, Vermont and Massachusetts were forced to allow civil unions. Vermont has civil unions while Massachusetts allows actual same-sex marriage. Some localities have reconized same-sex couples in the form of a domestic partnership

"This is a historic day. We're beyond ecstatic." said Randy Sharp, 46, of Plainville, who was applying for a license with his partner Jeff Blanchette, 44.

Of course, not everyone is happy about the law. Already, opponents are lobbying an amendment that will ban same-sex marriage. "Today was a sad day for our state. It was a sad day for our state's children." said Brian Brown, executive director of Family Institute of Connecticut. The group held a protest outside the Capitol which was only attended by 50 people. Last year eleven states voted on Election Day to prohibit same-sex marriage.

Google formally submits bid to provide free WiFi in San Francisco

Google Inc. formally submitted a bid to provide free wireless internet, or WiFi, in response to a request from Mayor Gavin Newsom's office.

The company's goal is to ensure easy, reliable access to its search engine at all times. In another sign

of its interest in Internet access, Google recently bought an undisclosed stake in a Maryland startup, the Current Communications Group, which is trying to provide high-speed connections through power lines.

Three deadly explosions hit Bali and kill at least 25

Three explosions hit popular tourist destination areas in Kuta Beach, Indonesia early today, killing at least nineteen and injuring forty others. Between 11:50 and 12:00 UTC, three simultaneous explosions hit the Kuta Square and Jimbaran Beach, two popular Western tourist areas in Bali.

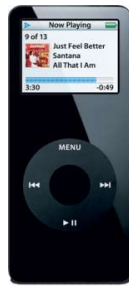
The Indonesian national news agency, ANTARA, reported that the first two explosions occurred at 6:50 p.m. local time, near a Jimbaran food court and the third blast at 7:00 p.m. in Kuta Town Square. Other reports claim that the blasts occurred at around 7:15 p.m. The two major blasts are thought to have struck a crowded main square at central Kuta, and the other in a cafe on Jimbaran beach, near the Four Seasons Hotel, areas which are generally popular with Western tourists. At this time, it is not clear how many explosions were involved; however, 4 blasts have been reported.

The bombings occurred just two days before the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and 11 days before the third anniversary of the 2002 Bali bombing

Apple agrees to replace iPod nanos with scratched screens

Apple Computer has formally acknowledged that the screens on some of its new iPod nano units

are prone to scratching and cracking. The company has agreed to replace all affected units free of charge.



Several customers found that the screens of their brand new iPod nano MP3 players were cracking and scratch easily. According to Tyler Hall the creator of www.nanoscratch.com, his iPod nano was scratched within 30 minutes of use in the pocket of his shirt. He posted his concerns to the Apple support forums, but his post was deleted. He created www.nanoscratch.com to allow other users to post comments on the iPod's "scratchability" and post photos of scratched iPods.

"This is a real but minor issue that involved a vendor quality problem in a small number of units," said Apple spokesperson Tom Neumayr. Apple estimates that these issues affected less than 0.01% of the total iPod Nanos shipped.

In most individual cases Apple had been telling customers that the scratches were covered under warranty. Standard warranties on most electronic products do not normally cover scratches or other cosmetic damage. Users with a defective screen can now contact Apple for a free replacement.

Minimum wage in United Kingdom increases to £5.05

From Saturday, the minimum wage (in the United Kingdom) will be increased to £5.05 (approximately \$8.94 USD) which will affect more than a million workers. People aged between 18 and 21 will have a 15p increase to £4.25. Over 21s will be able to get

at least £5.05 an hour, up from £4.85.

According to the Low Pay Commission the number of jobs had grown since the minimum wage was introduced in 1999 and so a further increase was necessary. "The increase will see well over a million low-paid workers with more cash in their pockets, many of them women working part-time," Brendan Barber, TUC general secretary, said. "But, as ever, with each minimum wage increase comes the predictable wave of protests from business saying that it cannot afford another rise."

Further increases are expected to happen sometime in the future. In October 2006 the government said an increase for adults should be put to £5.35 and £4.45 for 18-21 year olds. This would have a "serious impact" according to Sir Digby Jones. "The UK is already edging towards the top of the international minimum wage league table."

Junk food to be banned in English schools



Junk food is set to be banished from British schools

The British Education Secretary, Ruth Kelly, announced during the week that junk food is to be banned from schools in England from September 1st 2006. Items such as crisps, sweets, chocolate bars and chewing gum are expected to be among the items banned.

Junk foods are classified as those

high in fat, salt or sugar. Recently the British government committed £280m to improving school food over the next three years. That followed a campaign by celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver, to improve school food.

The action by the British government to ban junk food has already sparked debate in Ireland whether they should follow suit.

Researchers: Wild gorillas seen using tools

Wild gorillas were seen using tools, researchers for the U.S. based Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) said.



Images show that one female gorilla was apparently using sticks to test the depth of water, another female made a bridge with stump detached from a bush to help her cross muddy ground, and, in another instance, a female was spotted using a stump, from a bush, as support as she dug for herbs.

Thomas Breuer, of the WCS operating in the Republic of the Congo, called the discovery "truly astounding" and added that it was "quite surprising to me and my team to make this observation". Only wild chimps, orangutans and captive gorillas were previously known to use tools, suggesting that tool usage might predate the evolution of modern humans.

But, tool usage seems to be infrequent among wild gorillas. They were observed for some ten years in the Mbeli Bai area before this discovery was made.

Nevertheless, Breuer is fascinated by what he calls a "similarity" between humans and gorillas: "If you or me want to cross a swamp, we use the same solutions as gorillas."

Gorillas are an endangered species They appear on the Red List of IUCN.

Today in History

- 1187: The Siege of Jerusalem: Ayyubid forces led by Saladin captured Jerusalem, prompting the Third Crusade.
 - 1535: French explorer Jacques Cartier sailed along the St. Lawrence River and reached an Iroquois fort on the island now known as Montréal.
 - 1835: Mexican dragoons dispatched to disarm settlers at Gonzales, Texas encountered stiff resistance from a Texian militia in the Battle of Gonzales, the first armed engagement of the Texas Revolution.
 - 1928: Saint Josemaría Escrivá (pictured) founded Opus Dei, a worldwide organization of lay members of the Roman Catholic Church.
 - 1950: Peanuts, a syndicated comic strip by Charles M. Schulz, featuring Charlie Brown and his pet beagle Snoopy, was first published in major newspapers.
- October 03 is Independence Day in Guinea, Gandhi Jayanti in India

Quote of the Day

"There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and

superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call the Twilight Zone." ~ Rod Serling in The Twilight Zone

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