



### Top Stories

#### North Korea denies cooperation with Iran on nuclear programs

The North Korean government has denied reports in the press that the country is working with Iran to better their nuclear programs.

#### Thousands protest Iraq war in Washington D.C.

Anti-war demonstration were being held in Washington, D.C. and other cities around the world in order to call an end to the Iraq war and to bring back home the troops stationed there.

### Featured story

#### Students insulted on returned New Zealand exam papers

Two New Zealand students have been insulted when their exam papers were returned to them with rude remarks on them.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- War in Somalia: Ethiopia is going to withdraw one third of its troops stationed in Somalia by Sunday January 28, 2007, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Meles Zenawi says.
- North Korea denies reports by British newspapers that they are helping Iran prepare to test an atomic bomb.
- Iraq troop surge of 2007: Tens of thousands of people protest at Washington D.C.'s National Mall demanding the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

#### Microsoft disgruntled with partner Dell's interest in open source

According to a 2002 email exchange obtained by lawyers in an Iowa case, Microsoft executives wanted to "whack" Dell because it was focusing on Linux deals a little too much.

The first email by Bill Veghte, currently a company vice president, describes a Linux panel where a Dell executive explains their plans to increase Linux in the enterprise market. The responses to his email start in a worried tone over market competition but quickly escalates as Paul Flessner, a senior vice president in Microsoft's server applications unit, states:... "Now there is nothing to disagree around what we should do. We should whack them, we should make sure they understand our value, we should do all the things you and Brian suggest."

Paul Flessner then goes on to describe the advantages to promote Linux over Windows for Dell: "In the end, if I were them [Dell], I would do all I could to see Linux succeed because it would put \$50/pc [\$50 per PC Dell sells] (or whatever our OEM license costs) back into my pocket. Sure Windows has greater value and lower TCO [total cost of ownership] and all of that. I would keep my relationship with MS [Microsoft] and customers and do the dance. But every chance I get I would invest in Linux and try to make more sales on Linux because I increase my margin by \$50/pc. It is an advantage for

Linux."

A recent study funded by the EU Commission confirmed Flessner's thoughts for end users. The study concluded that "in almost all the cases, a transition toward open source reports of savings on the long-term costs of ownership of the software products." In addition, Microsoft has long been at the center of criticism and allegations over its alleged unfair and anticompetitive business tactics in Europe and elsewhere.

#### North Korea denies cooperation with Iran on nuclear programs

The North Korean government has denied reports in the press that the country is working with Iran to better their nuclear programs and said that the press is spreading "lies" in an attempt to ruin the country's reputation.

Earlier this week, media outlets began to report that North Korea was attempting to help Iran test their own nuclear weapon underground and that Iran was preparing for that test.

"The Iranians are working closely with the North Koreans to study the results of last year's North Korean nuclear bomb test. All the indications are that the Iranians are working hard to prepare for their own underground nuclear test," said an unnamed European diplomat on January 24, 2007.

N. Korea immediately denied all reports that any cooperation

between the two countries, in regards to nuclear material, was taking place.

"[The] assertion is nothing but a sheer lie and fabrication intended to tarnish the image of (North Korea) by charging it with nuclear proliferation," said a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry of N. Korea.

"[North Korea] will continue to sincerely honor its duty it had assumed before the international community in the field of nuclear nonproliferation as a responsible nuclear weapons state," added the statement.

The IAEA or International Atomic Energy Agency, has also denied that there is any evidence to suggest that Iran and North Korea are working together to better their nuclear programs.

The United States; however, has stated in the past that N. Korea and Iran helped each other with missile programs, but that it is not known if they are cooperating in other areas of study.

"Whether that cooperation has extended into other areas, I don't have any information for you," said Sean McCormack, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of State.

### **Iran's official radio silent about U.N. resolution against Holocaust denials**

Iran's official radio, Voice of Islamic Republic of Iran (IRIB World Service), failed to include on its English-language web site any reports about the adoption Friday of the U.N. resolution condemning Holocaust denials. The U.S.-drafted resolution was adopted without a vote with 103 of the world body's 192 member states signed on as co-sponsors. Voice of America

(VOA) reported Iran was the only country indicating opposition to the measure. An Iranian diplomat at the U.N. described the intent of the resolution's sponsors as "mischievous."

Iran's radio did report extensively on an international cartoon competition in Tehran designed to show drawings with anti-Israel, Holocaust-denial, and pro-Palestinian themes.

While silent about the U.N. resolution, the Iranian radio provided extensive coverage of an earlier international conference in Tehran which questioned the Holocaust. The conference was organized at the initiative of Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Iranian officials argue that meetings such as last month's Tehran conference serve a scholarly purpose, and accused Israel of manipulating the Holocaust for political purposes.

FreeMediaOnline.org commented that the failure of Iran's official radio to report promptly on the U.N. resolution against Holocaust denials is typical of media organizations controlled by regimes which suppress freedom of expression and journalistic independence. FreeMediaOnline.org pointed out that journalists in countries like Iran are unable to report on many issues without specific directives from political or religious leaders.

The UN resolution "urges all member States unreservedly to reject any denial of the Holocaust as a historical event," according to the UN Radio website. The resolution designates January 27 as an International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

The new UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued the following statement through a spokesperson, "The Secretary-General welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly today [Friday] of a resolution unequivocally condemning any denial of the Holocaust. This reflects the prevailing view of the international community. The Secretary-General reiterates his conviction that the denial of historical facts such as the Holocaust is unacceptable. He expresses his strong desire to see this fundamental principle respected both in rhetoric and in practice."

### **West Indies wins the third match of the cricket series against India**

West Indies has won the third match of the series against India in Chennai by three wickets.

India started batting first as Brian Lara chose to field first after winning the toss. India made an impressive start after losing their first wicket in the second over in the form of Gautam Gambhir.

Robin Uthappa made the innings highest score, 70 runs in just 41 balls by hitting 11 fours and 2 sixes. Middle order batsmen, Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid, performed well and made a hundred-run partnership. But, after losing the captain's wicket India only made 36 runs losing 7 wickets to end the innings.

India set a target of 269 in 50 overs for West Indies. West Indies lost their first wicket in the first ball of the innings. But, a 127 run partnership for the fourth-wicket between Lara and Samuels helped to capture the match on their side. However, West Indies lost their last three wickets only adding eight runs to the innings total.

Man of the match Marlon Samuels made 98 runs in just 95 balls with 12 fours and one six. He did an impressive job of bowling and took one wicket, giving just 41 balls in 10 overs.

Overall India is leading the four match series by 2-1 and the final match at Vadodara on January 31 will be crucial for both teams. India would need to win the match to win the series, whereas to level the series West Indies must-win the match.

### **U.S. Army to court-martial Abu Ghraib officer**

U.S. Lt. Col. Steven Lee Jordan will be tried by a military court for his involvement in the Abu Ghraib prison abuse case, the U.S. Army announced yesterday. Jordan will stand trial on eight counts. The charges include cruelty, maltreatment of prisoners, disobeying a superior officer, willful dereliction of duty and making false statements. Jordan is the only U.S. officer charged in the Abu Ghraib case -eleven soldiers were previously sentenced up to 10 years in prison.

50-year-old Jordan, a reservist from Virginia, ran the interrogation center in Abu Ghraib, the notorious prison just outside of Baghdad. Under his command, soldiers photographed naked prisoners in demeaning poses. The officer himself was not present in any of the pictures. Jordan faces a maximum sentence of 22 years for the eight charges combined.

### **Technology developed to detect fake drugs quickly**

A recent improvement of an old technique in spectroscopy sparks hope for detection of counterfeit drugs, an article in the journal *Analytical Chemistry* published by

American Chemical Society said. Such technique could make fake drugs detection a lot easier and faster than it is currently practiced, according to the article.

A group of scientists at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory have tested a method called spatially offset Raman spectroscopy (SORS) on a range of over-the-counter drugs, like ibuprofen and paracetamol, to show how to test whether they are fake or not without destroying the packaging.

Current practice, using conventional Raman spectroscopy, in spotting fake drugs are not applicable when they are encapsulated or enclosed in bottles or blister packs. This difficulty makes analysis of suspect drug tedious as drug testers have to open the package and bring out the chemicals.

Charlotte Eliasson and Pavel Matousek tested the drugs without removing them from their packages. They then compared the result with the known characteristics of the drugs and with the result obtained using conventional method. They reported that, unlike conventional method, SORS could identify the drugs.

Eliasson and Matousek's recent paper concluded that "the new approach is particularly beneficial in situations where the conventional... method is hampered or fails because of [interfering signals] emanating from the packaging that contaminates the much weaker signals of the drug chemicals held in the product."

"These interfering signals can be effectively suppressed by SORS," the paper ended.

SORS technology is currently under development for commercial release. A company is being set up in Didcot to develop SORS for use in the anti-counterfeit industry.

The technology is also envisioned to be used to monitor drugs as they go through the manufacturing process. The technique could save the industry substantial amounts of money both from counterfeit drugs and in drug production.

### **Martial law lifted in 41 provinces of Thailand**

A royal decree published in Thailand's Royal Gazette has endorsed the lifting of martial law in 41 of the country's provinces. Martial law has been in place in the country since a coup on September 19 that ousted populist Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

The remaining 35 provinces will remain under martial law. This includes the south of the country which has been experiencing a separatist insurgency, and parts of the country where support for the ousted Prime Minister is still strong.

Indications that the restrictions put in place by the army appointed government would be lifted came as early as October last year when current Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont mentioned the possibility during a visit to Indonesia.

### **Students insulted on returned New Zealand exam papers**

Two New Zealand students have been insulted when their exam papers were returned to them with rude remarks on them. However one student received a positive comment on a paper that he got a merit in, the second highest mark possible.

The two students were from

Cashmere High School and both participating in the 2006 level three NCEA (National Certificate of Educational Achievement) external exams.

Josh Potter, 17-years-old, was one of the students who were insulted. When Mr Potter opened the package containing his exam papers he saw on his not-achieved media studies paper, the large words: "GOOD ONE DICK!!" written in blue felt tip pen. When he first saw it he said that he had to do a double take, "It is not the right sort of thing to be seeing on your exams."

"I was quite surprised. When I told my dad, he thought it was a joke at first but then he was quite shocked," Mr Potter said.

The other student, Sanjay Narayan, had a nice compliment on one of his papers he passed: "NICE ONE MATE," and the other paper, which he failed, said: "You useless sack of poo." The two papers were in statistics and calculus.

The two boys say that they did not hand in the papers with the words written on them. NZQA (New Zealand Qualifications Authority) also confirmed this because markers had a duty to report any broken rules, which includes writing notes on exam papers.

Mr Potter's and Mr Narayan's parents have both complained to the NZQA, the authority that manages NCEA.

Mr Potter's mother said: "Luckily, Josh is the sort of person who has taken it quite well, but imagine if it had gone to a student who was more sensitive."

Mr Potter said that neither he, nor his friends, wrote the messages.

NZQA has asked for all of the papers from both of the students as they are launching their own investigation into the "serious issue." NZQA are already confident that it was not performed by a marker, which has raised concerns by Mr Potter, who asks how easy it would be for someone to gain unauthorized access to an exam, and tamper with it. NZQA declined to comment on this issue.

### **Discriminatory job ad by Central Bank of Turkey asks for men only**

The Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey recently published a job advertisement that asked for a male document officer. A member of SHP, a mainstream Turkish political party, criticized the ad, stating that "This ad is against the 10th article of constitution, the 11th article of UN Agreement to Eliminate All Discrimination, and the EU legislation. It is also a crime according to the constitution."

Trying to defend their position, the Central Bank officials stated that the job of a document officer is not a desk job, that it requires physical power, and that it is not suitable for women. They stated that they published the ad as it was in order not to give false hopes to prospective female job applicants.

Although the traditional, patriarchal approach in Turkey does not regard women's employment positively, feminist organizations are actively working to end gender discrimination in Turkey.

### **Canadian government apologizes to deportation victim Arar**

Friday Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on behalf of the government apologized to deportation victim Maher Arar.

In 2002, Syrian-born and Canadian software engineer Maher Arar was arrested by U.S. officials and deported to Syria after the U.S. suspected that he was a terrorist. Arar was held in a Syrian prison where he was regularly tortured for a year. He came back to Canada in October 2003.

The affair became very public in Canada. Arar is banned from the United States and the Canadian government says they will try to talk with U.S. officials. Harper is calling on the U.S. government to take Arar off the no-fly and terrorist watchlists. Arar was "wrongly" accused of being a terrorist.

The Canadian PM gave him an apology for Canada's role in the affair and offered a \$10.5 million compensation package to Arar and his family. Arar gladly agreed to the package

"On behalf of the government of Canada, I wish to apologize to you...and your family for any role Canadian officials may have played in the terrible ordeal that all of you experienced in 2002 and 2003."

"I sincerely hope that these words and actions will assist you and your family in your efforts to begin a new and hopeful chapter in your lives."

"I try to see how I'm still being portrayed on the Internet and in the media. And I'll be open with you -- I get very upset when I read the words 'terror suspect', 'former terror suspect' because it always reminds the reader of this link that never existed. I'm very excited when I see people referring to me as a Canadian computer engineer," Arar said Friday in a news conference in Ottawa responding to the governments apology.

"The struggle to clear my name has been long and hard," he said. "I feel now I can put more time into being a good father, and to being a good husband and to rebuilding my life."

"This struggle has taught me how important it is to stand up for human rights," he said. "I feel proud as a Canadian and I feel proud of what we've been able to achieve."

Arar currently lives with his wife Monia Mazigh and two children in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada.

### Today in History

1521 - The Diet of Worms was convened to discuss Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire.

1573 - The Warsaw Confederation was signed, sanctioning religious freedom in Poland.

1820 - A Russian expedition led by Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen approached the coast of Antarctica.

1855 - A locomotive on the Panama Railway made the world's first transcontinental crossing.

1921 - A symbolic Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was installed beneath the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

### Quote of the Day

Man needs to go outside himself in order to find repose and reveal himself.

~ José Martí

### Word of the Day

Johnny-come-lately; n

1. A newcomer, a novice, an upstart.

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