



**Top Stories**

**French unions march in support of public services**



Saturday, a number of French unions and left-wing parties marched in Paris in order

to support public services, which they feel are threatened by the current government.

**60th anniversary of Nuremberg trials marked**



The city of Nuremberg has marked the 60th anniversary of the opening of the trials

against Nazi war criminals.

**Featured story**

**U.S. government proposes removing Yellowstone grizzlies from endangered species list**



The United States Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that "The greater

Yellowstone area population of grizzly bears ... is now recovered."

**Wikipedia Current Events**

•Russian President Vladimir Putin visits Japan with 100 business leaders for trade talks.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

•U.S. President George W. Bush attends a church service during his visit to People's Republic of China as he presses for greater freedoms of expression and faith during his east Asian tour.

**German BND claims U.S. exaggerated Iraq WMD claims**

One of the most important arguments in the run-up to the Iraq war made by Colin Powell in his United Nations speech and President Bush in his State of the Union address was that Iraq had an active biological weapons program and possessed mobile biological weapons labs. According an investigation by the Senate Intelligence Committee, the main source for this information was an Iraqi defector codenamed Curveball who was a source for the German central intelligence agency BND.

Several German intelligence officials responsible for Curveball have now told the LA Times that the Bush administration and the CIA have repeatedly exaggerated his claims and ignored warnings of the BND that the source was unreliable. Recounting his reaction after seeing Powell's United Nations speech one German intelligence officer said: "We were shocked. Mein Gott! We had always told them it was not proven.... It was not hard intelligence."

Nine months earlier, in May 2002, a fabricator warning was posted in Curveball's file in U.S. intelligence

databases. Powell was never warned that his United Nations speech contained material that both the DIA and CIA had determined was false, even though several people present at Powell's CIA meetings were fully aware of this.

At this time German intelligence officers would not let the CIA meet directly with Curveball, but allowed a CIA doctor to draw blood samples. Questioning the validity of Curveball's information in front of his CIA supervisor, the doctor was advised to "Keep in mind that this war is going to happen regardless of what Curve Ball said or didn't say and the Powers That Be probably aren't terribly interested in whether Curve Ball knows what he's talking about."

Shortly after Powell's UN speech and several days before the invasion, United Nations weapons inspectors attempted to directly verify several key claims made by Curveball, but concluded that they were unsustainable. The White House insisted on its WMD claims based on Curveball's information.

Even after the invasion, when more and more of Curveball's accounts were shown to be pure fabrication, the CIA and the Bush administration relied on Curveball's information. When U.S. forced discovered trucks with lab equipment and Curveball claimed that these were identical to the ones he has been reporting about, the CIA rushed to publish a White Paper claiming that these trucks were part of Saddam Hussein's secret biological weapons program

and Bush claimed publicly that "We found the weapons of mass destruction." Several days later, twelve of the thirteen WMD experts who analyzed the trucks agreed that the equipment was not suited for biological weapons production, with the only dissenting voice coming from the author of the original White Paper.

The White Paper remains posted on the CIA website to this date, and President Bush has not yet retracted his statement that Iraq produced "germ warfare agents" made in his State of the Union address or his postwar assertions that "we found the weapons of mass destruction."

### **Coal mine floods in northern China - 12,000 mines ordered to close**

Seven miners have been killed and seven more are missing after a coal mine flooded in north China's Hebei province. The Xinhua news agency reports the latest coal mine disaster occurred around 5:00am on Saturday in Xingtai City.

A reason for the accident has not yet been given. Owners of the coal mine have been detained by local police and the investigation into the cause of the flooding is underway. State media reports say the disaster occurred at a pit in Xingtai City, but gave few other details.

China's mines, many of them illegal, are considered the world's most dangerous. More than 6,000 miners died in accidents in China last year, according to previously released government figures. Other independent estimates put the real figure at around 20,000.

Saturday's accident follows a gas

explosion at a coal mine in south-western China's Guizhou province on Friday killing at least 10 people.

Xinhua reports that rescue work is underway, according to the local work safety supervision bureau. A spokesman said Yuanda Coal Mine, a collectively-owned mine in Neiqiu county of Xingtai, was flooded and all the 14 miners working down the pit were trapped.

This is the second fatal mine accident in the area in two weeks. Cave-ins at three plaster mines on November 6th caused 33 deaths and left at least four missing.

A committee for safe production, under the State Council, on Sunday urged relevant local governments to streamline the operation of mines and close unqualified ones.

More than 12,000 Chinese mines have been ordered to suspend production, and they will be closed if they fail to pass government assessments at the end of this year, the committee said.

A gas explosion on November 11 at a mine in Wuhai, a city in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, killed 16 miners and wounded three others. The mine lacked a required safety license.

The committee said in a statement that other mines should draw serious lessons from the deadly accident and "steadfastly prevent illegal production and curb the occurrence of big mining accidents."

### **Israeli Labor Party leaves government; early election ahead**



Amir Peretz

A convention of the Israeli Labor Party in Tel Aviv decided on Sunday to pull its ministers out of the coalition government with the Likud Party of prime minister Ariel Sharon.

The decision results from an initiative by party chair Amir Peretz, who was just elected to that office at the beginning of this month, succeeding Shimon Peres.

In his speech to the convention Peretz accused Sharon's government of "humiliating" immigrants and poor people and said it had deepened poverty in the country. He called on Likud voters to switch to Labor because, "Likud has abandoned you".

Officials from both parties agreed on March 28, 2006 as the day for early elections to the 17th Knesset.

Earlier today Sharon thanked Peres for the work in the government and proclaimed, "Shimon, this is the beginning of our joint work". This statement is seen as reaffirming rumors that Sharon may quit Likud and form a new party, due to several disagreements with the Likud in the past.

## 60th anniversary of Nuremberg trials marked



*View of the defendents with Göring, Heß, Joachim von Ribbentrop and Wilhelm Keitel in the front row.*

The city of Nuremberg has marked the 60th anniversary of the opening of the trials against Nazi war criminals.

At a ceremony in the Palace of Justice, where the tribunal was located, participants of the trials gathered and remembered. Whitney R. Harris, a member of the U.S. prosecution team, emphasised the importance of Nuremberg for contemporary international law saying that "the principals of the Nuremberg case have been followed in recent years and the fact that we conducted Nuremberg has given impetus to the establishment of these more recent tribunals".

On November 20, 1945 the trials began in the courtroom 600 of the Palace of Justice. A total of 24 defendents were tried, among them Hermann Göring and Rudolf Heß. With Geoffrey Lawrence being chair of the court, the trial took 218 days and ended with 12 death sentences, 7 jail terms and 3 acquittals. One defendent killed himself during the trial, another one was declared unfit to stand trial.

## Bomb blasts hit south Thailand

## market town Sungai Golok

Police in Thailand have reported two bomb explosions in the southern province of Narathiwat. Twelve people are reported to have been injured, including three police officers, a two-year-old boy, and a 58-year-old Malaysian tourist.

The two explosions came within a five minute interval around 6:00am local time (23:00 GMT). The target of the attack was a restaurant in a market town, Sungai Golok, which borders with Malaysia. Police Captain Teerapak Sengseng said that the first of the explosive devices was concealed in a fruit basket, and that as the blast was being investigated the second device exploded only metres away.

The ongoing violence which is believed to be the work of insurgents in the predominantly Muslim south of Thailand has resulted in over 1,000 deaths since January 2004, with the Associated Press putting the figure at over 1,100. The area remains under Martial law which was recently extended to some areas of neighbouring Songkla Province. The provinces, Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat which were formerly the Malay Sultinate of Pattani are the only Muslim-majority part of the traditionally Buddhist country.

There have been some suggestions that residents of the southern provinces are not accorded the same opportunities as those in other parts of the country. Thailand's economic improvements from increases in tourism during recent years have not yielded any benefits to the troubled provinces. Public statements by the Thai Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra, have

given the impression that areas which have not given support to his Thai Rak Thai political party will not be prioritised by his government; this impacts the south which returned opposition Democrats during elections earlier this year.

The almost daily violence in the provinces bordering Malaysia is expected to be among the subjects discussed at talks between former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad and Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The former PM is expected to meet Mr Shinawatra at his official residence in Ban Phitsanulok early next week.

## Today in History

284 - Diocletian became Roman Emperor.

1700 - Great Northern War: Forces led by King Charles XII of Sweden defeated the Russian army of Tsar Peter the Great in the Battle of Narva.

1910 - Mexican Revolution: Francisco I. Madero (pictured) promulgated the San Luis Plan, starting a revolt against President Porfirio Díaz.

1945 - The Nuremberg Trials against 24 leading Nazi war criminals involved in World War II and the Holocaust began in Nuremberg, Germany.

1998 - Zarya, the first module of the International Space Station, was launched on a Proton rocket from Baikonur Cosmodrome, Kazakhstan.

November 21 is Zumbi Day in Brazil, Revolution Day in Mexico, Teacher's Day in Vietnam.

## Quote of the Day

"We must believe in free will — we have no choice." ~ Isaac Bashevis Singer

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