



Top Stories

North Korea claims it has conducted a nuclear test

North Korea's Central News Agency has announced that the state has conducted its first underground nuclear test successfully without any radioactive leakage on October 9, 2006. The United States Geological Survey has reported a seismic event measuring 4.2 on the Richter scale in the North Hamgyong province on the northern coast of the socialist state.

20,000 Poles demonstrate on the streets of Warsaw

Three major political demonstrations took place in Warsaw, the capital of Poland on Saturday, October 7. In total, more than 20,000 people flooded the streets and squares of the city to express either their dissatisfaction with or support for Jarosław Kaczyński's government, marred by a political corruption scandal and inability to form stable parliamentary majority.

Featured story

Controversy follows after Canadian PM skips vote for hockey game

Outrage is being expressed over Stephen Harper's decision to skip the House of Commons vote on Wednesday for a hockey game at the Air Canada Centre in Toronto. Liberal MPs say that this reveals Mr. Harper's true attitude toward the environment. "It shows the

Featured story

importance he gives to Kyoto and climate change," said Liberal MP Pablo Rodriguez.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Google buys YouTube for \$1.65bn.
- South Korean Ban Ki-moon is nominated to succeed Kofi Annan as the United Nations Secretary-General in an affirmation vote by the Security Council. A confirmation vote by the General Assembly is expected within the next fortnight.
- The Korean Central News Agency of North Korea reports that the nation has tested its first nuclear weapon. This report was at least somewhat confirmed by a seismic event that was measured around the world.
- China expresses its "resolute opposition" to what it described as North Korea's "brazen" nuclear test.
- The United States Geological Survey says it detected an earthquake of 4.2 in North Korea as that nation conducted its first nuclear test.
- American Edmund S. Phelps wins the 2006 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for work on the trade-offs between inflation and unemployment.

Russia estimates larger yield for N. Korea nuclear test

Russia's defense minister, Sergei Ivanov, said Monday that North

Korea's nuclear test has been confirmed and yielded as much as 15 kilotons of TNT; which was the size of the Hiroshima atomic bomb. That would be far greater than the force estimated by South Korea's geological institute of just 550 tons of TNT. Other international estimates have ranged from the sub-kiloton range — less than equivalent to a ton of TNT — to upwards of 12 kilotons.

Other Asian neighbors said they registered a seismic event, but Russia is the only country which said its monitoring services had detected a nuclear explosion.

"We know the exact site of the test. The ecological situation is normal, including on Russian territory in Primorye." Ivanov said, referring to the Russian province that borders North Korea.

Tropical Storm Norman forms southwest of Baja California

The National Hurricane Center Tropical Prediction Center has upgraded Tropical Depression 15-E to Tropical Storm status. The storm, now officially Tropical Storm Norman, is the 18th named storm of the 2006 Pacific hurricane season. The storm currently has maximum sustained winds of 45 miles per hour. Norman is located well to the southwest of Baja California, and is currently tracking north at 7 miles per hour.

The storm is expected to slowly curve to the northeast as it slowly strengthening, then slowly weaken when it moves over colder waters.

There is a chance that it could bring winds and rain to Baja California before it dissipates.

All individuals who may be impacted by this storm are urged to track its progress as it develops over the next few days.

France to ban smoking in public places

France is to ban smoking in all public places in February 2007, the French prime minister, Dominique de Villepin has announced. However cafés, nightclubs and restaurants will not be required to comply until January 2008.

An offence would result in a fine of 75 euros for the person(s) responsible and 150 euros for the premises where the offence occurred.

When announcing the new law in a television interview, he stated his reason as being the "public health":

"We started on the basis of a simple observation - two figures: 60,000 deaths a year in our country linked directly to tobacco consumption and 5,000 deaths linked to passive smoking. It is an unacceptable reality in our country in terms of public health"

Public places will include stations, museums, government offices and shops, but not streets or private places such as houses or hotel rooms. He also stated that the country would pay for one-third of the costs of anti-smoking treatments:

"That would represent the first month of treatment," he said. "There are also other solutions, for example the creation of closed, ventilated spaces, where (food and drink) service is not authorised in

order to protect employees," he added.

A BBC survey made in France, a country notorious for its use of tobacco suggests that 70% of the people support the ban.

The European Union's most enthusiastic smokers are found in Greece, Cyprus and Portugal, according to findings published in May this year. When the law activates, France will join Ireland and Italy, which have passed similar measures. Italy, for example, has very strict measures, such as a minimum fine of 150 euros for smoking in public places with additional charges leveled if the offender was near a pregnant woman or a child under 13. Repeat offenders could be fined more than 275 euros, and imprisoned if they continued. In Switzerland, the canton of Ticino is the only canton in the nation to have banned smoking in restaurants. In the The Netherlands, smoking is banned in NS railway stations.

Jamie Lee Curtis quits acting

Jamie Lee Curtis, 46, has stated that her acting career is now over. Fortunately, her writing career won't end just yet.

"I'm not an actor anymore," she told Access Hollywood host Nancy O'Dell. "I really don't imagine I'll do that again." She later said in the conversation, "I'm just focused on my family and just can't imagine anything that's going to pull me away from them right now."

Curtis appeared on the Access Hollywood show to promote her newest children's book, *Is There a Human Race?*. The interview she participated in with O'Dell will appear on the show's weekend episode.

The picture book writer had this to say about ending her acting career, "No. I don't want to be somebody else anymore." That likely means she no longer wants to dress up and be someone else for a few months at a time.

The last film Curtis starred in was the 2005 film *The Kid & I*.

Craig Lowndes and Jamie Wincup become "Kings of the Mountain"

On Sunday the 888 Race Engineering team of Craig Lowndes and Jamie Wincup took out this year Supercheap Auto Bathurst 1000 and took the first ever "Kings of the Mountain" trophy - in honour of Peter Brock - home. The race was plagued with 10 safety car appearances with a little over a third of the field be wiped out, with Mark Skaife, the race favourite, being knocked out in the first lap. It's the first year this Peter Brock Trophy is given to the winners.

The top ten result were as follows:

1. Craig Lowndes/Jamie Whincup : Team Betta Electrical : Ford Falcon
2. Rick Kelly/Todd Kelly : Toll HSV Dealer Team : Holden Commodore
3. James Courtney/Glenn Seton : JELD-WEN Motorsport : Ford Falcon
4. Russell Ingall/Luke Youlden : Caltex Racing : Ford Falcon
5. Steven Richards/Paul Dumbrell : Jack Daniel's Racing : Holden Commodore
6. Paul Morris/Steve Ellery : Siromet Racing : Holden Commodore
7. Steve Owen/Tony Longhurst : Autobarn Racing : Holden Commodore

8. Nathan Pretty/Paul Weel : Advisor Stephen Hadley.
Super Cheap Auto Racing :
Holden Commodore
9. Alex Davison/Grant Denyer : Rumors of an impending nuclear
: APVC Racing : Ford Falcon test have circulated since North
Korea announced its weapons
capability. The Natural Resources
Defense Council estimates that
North Korea may have up to 10 or
12 nuclear devices already built.
10. Jason Bargwanna/Craig
Baird :WPS Racing : Ford
Falcon

North Korea claims it has conducted a nuclear test

According to South Korea-based Yonhap News service, and the Associated Press, North Korea has announced that it has successfully conducted its first nuclear test.

North Korea first announced it possessed nuclear weapons in 2005, though because it had not conducted a nuclear test its nuclear capability remained ambiguous. The United States, Japan, China, and South Korea have all urged North Korea to abandon its nuclear program. North Korea released a statement on October 3 saying that it would soon conduct a nuclear test, and also emphasized that it would neither use nuclear weapons first nor aid other countries in nuclear proliferation. The state claimed that it would only use the weapons as a deterrent against the United States and its allies. In 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun said that they "would not tolerate" a nuclear North Korea. China and Japan have also expressed concern.

U.S. officials have reported that the government of the People's Republic of China was given a 20-minute advance warning that the test was about to occur. The PRC sent an emergency alert to Washington through the United States embassy in Beijing and President George W. Bush was told shortly after 10 p.m. that a test was imminent by National Security

Advisor Stephen Hadley. According to North Korea's Central News Agency, the country conducted an underground nuclear test successfully without any radioactive leakage. Underground tests, if they fully contain the nuclear blast, can result in a minimum of nuclear fallout contamination. If confirmed, the nuclear test by North Korea would be the first nuclear test since the dual Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998.

The U.S. Geological Service has recorded a magnitude 4.2 event in eastern North Korea at 01:35:27 (UTC), or 10:35:27 North Korean local time.

U.S. President George W Bush speaking at the White House ahead of an emergency closed session of the UN Security Council called the action "unacceptable ... North Korea has defied the will of the international community and the international community will respond." He also described it as "a threat to international peace and security. The United States condemns this provocative act."

Bush contacted the leaders of Russia, China, Japan and South Korea, the other nations that have been engaged in negotiations with North Korea. All have already denounced the action. China using the harshest language yet against its old war time ally, calling the test "brazen". Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe insisted on "decisive action."

Some experts are speculating that the test may push the United Nations to back sanctions against the North Koreans, Japan's U.N Ambassador Kenzo Oshima has told reporters in New York that the United States is drafting the resolutions, which could range from trade restrictions to monetary dealings and even a sea based blockade. The sitting members have strongly condemned the nuclear test.

In the first significant reaction to the announcement the South Korean government has decided to suspend a scheduled shipment of its emergency relief aid to its northern neighbor. An official from the Unification Ministry said "A ship was scheduled to depart ... carrying 4,000 tons of concrete on Tuesday, but we decided to delay the shipment under the current circumstances."

The yield of the device has not been conclusively confirmed. Fox News has reported the yield at below 4 kilotons, citing a unspecified senior Bush administration official; however, Russian military sources estimate the yield as between 5-15 kilotons. The Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources stated its estimate of the yield as 550 tons, but later scaled it up to 800 tons.

A senior seismologist at the Australian Seismology Research Centre said that a 4.2 magnitude quake would roughly correspond with a one kiloton explosion, but would not say it was conclusive, since it depends on the type of rock that the test was set off in.

It has been reported that the Korea Exchange, South Korea's main stock exchange, suspended trading for five minutes upon

hearing news of the test.

New Zealand seventh in Czech Republic A1GP feature race

The New Zealand A1GP team, with racer Jonny Reid, managed to get seventh in A1GP feature race and picking up four championship points in the second round at Brno track, Czech Republic.

After New Zealand managing to secure themselves first place in the qualifying race by being fastest in all four qualifying segments with a time of 3:30.053, Germany second with 3:30.524. This put New Zealand in the pole position to start the sprint race.

When racing for the 20 minute sprint race started Germany and New Zealand 'locked horns' in before the very first corner. It ended with both cars crashing out of the race.

This crash made both New Zealand and Germany start from the end of the track for the feature race.

New Zealand managed to crawl their way back to get seventh place, but drops to fourteenth place from twelfth, out of 23 competing nations, on the leader board with only five points.

David Sears, Engineering Team Director for both Germany and New Zealand, said: "Reid and his German counterpart Nico Hülkenberg were warned about keeping apart...but still ended up making life difficult for themselves."

Sears added: "To finish first you must first finish and the track is incredibly wide here at Brno, so why New Zealand and Germany should be rubbing wheels on the very first corner is anyone's guess. To recover and finish strongly was

encouraging for Jonny and the car certainly has the raw speed and looks to be one of the quickest going around. That's the pleasing part amid the disappointment and we now need to refocus and prepare for the next month's round in China."

"We were so much quicker than the other teams in qualifying that it would be criminal to be banging wheels when a great result is there for the taking."

The next A1GP race takes place on November 12 in Beijing.

Controversy follows after Canadian PM skips vote for hockey game

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Harper was with his ten-year-old son Ben cheering on for the Toronto Maple Leafs. They both went on a plane paid by the government and paid for tickets to see the game.

Harper and his son sat in seats in the platinum level of the Air Canada Centre, next to Larry Tanenbaum, head of Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, the company that owns the Leafs. Also seated with Mr. Tanenbaum was Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and his wife, Terri.

"You know I'm dead meat if I make those kind of predictions in

hockey," said Harper, who must juggle support from voters in six Canadian NHL cities. "I think Ben will be cheering for the Toronto Maple Leafs," Harper told The Canadian Press. "That's his team."

Harper and his son met with the members of the Toronto team after the game was finished.

Opposition MPs say that "the decision to put pucks over Parliament shows that environmental issues rate as a low priority for Mr. Harper, who had no other reason to be in Toronto the day he attended the NHL season opener between the Maple Leafs and the Ottawa Senators."

Today in History

732: Battle of Tours: Charles Martel and the Franks defeated a large Andalusian Muslim army led by Abd er Rahman near Tours and Poitiers, stopping the northward advance of Islam from the Iberian Peninsula.

1911: The Xinhai Revolution began with the Wuchang Uprising, marking the beginning of the collapse of the Qing Dynasty in China.

1973: United States Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned after being charged with tax evasion.

1982: St. Maximilian Kolbe, who had volunteered to die in place of another man in a Nazi concentration camp, was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church.

1987: After two military coups in Fiji led by Sitiveni Rabuka, the military government revoked the constitution and declared Fiji a republic.

October 10 is National Day in Fiji (1970), Double Tenth Day in the Republic of China.

Quote of the Day

I would like to make the point that we cannot undo the past but we can learn from it, and we cannot predict the future but we can shape and build it.
~ Epeli Ganilau

Word of the Day

harangue; v

1. To give a forceful and lengthy lecture or criticism to another person.

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