



Top Stories

Virginia Tech shooter identified, witness reports emerge

Two shootings at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia have left 33 people dead, and many more injured. The gunman, who took his own life, is amongst the dead. The shooter has been identified as Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year old South Korean national.

France knew of and told CIA about al-Qaeda hijack plans prior to 9/11

French secret services had information about al-Qaeda planning airplane hijacking at least 8 months before 9/11 which they shared with the CIA, French newspaper Le Monde reports.

Featured story

Kenya's Cheruiyot and Russia's Grigoryeva capture Boston Marathon crowns

Despite wind and rain, Kenya's Robert Cheruiyot win his third Marathon, Russia's Lidiya Grigoryeva wins the women's crown and Japan conquers both wheelchair divisions.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Nineteen people die in Rio de Janeiro in gun battles between police and drug gangs.
- Cho Seung-hui is identified as the spree shooter in the Virginia Tech massacre.
- U.S. President Bush joins thousands of mourners at a

Wikipedia Current Events

memorial service for the victims of Virginia Tech massacre.

•Itchō Itō, the mayor of Nagasaki, Japan, dies after being shot at least twice outside his re-election campaign headquarters. The assassin, Tetsuya Shiroy, is alleged to be a senior member of a local gang affiliated to the Yamaguchi-gumi crime syndicate.

•The Olympic Council of Asia chooses Incheon, South Korea as the host of the 2014 Asian Games.

•Four Nepalese United Nations workers and their driver are killed in a roadside bombing in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

•Kevin Rudd, the leader of the Australian Labor Party, announces changes to the party's industrial relations policy, including the right to a secret ballot before strike action.

Mayor of Nagasaki dies after being shot

Itchō Itō, 61, the mayor of Nagasaki City, has been shot two times in the back and died at 2:28 a.m. at the Nagasaki University Hospital.

Itō was shot by a man yesterday in front of his campaign office just outside the JR Nagasaki train station. One bullet hit his heart sending him into cardiac arrest. The attack occurred around 7:50 p.m. local time in Nagasaki.

Authorities believe that organized

crime was the cause of the shooting and arrested Tetsuya Shiroy, 59, a mob boss of the underground organized crime unit, Suishin-ka, and senior member of Yamaguchi-gumi, who reportedly shot the mayor because he was not compensated for an accident where his car was damaged a few years ago at a construction site that is operated by the public works department in Nagasaki. Police say that later, during an interrogation Shiroy confessed to the shooting and intended to kill Itō.

This is the fifth politician to be shot in Japan since World War II, a rare occurrence as guns are banned in Japan.

2007 Cricket World Cup: England vs South Africa

South Africa beat England by 9 wickets in the Super 8 phase of the World Cup at the Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados. This confirms South Africa's place in one of the four Semi-Final places in the tournament, and eliminates both England and hosts West Indies.

After losing both opening batsmen in quick succession, with Pietersen falling soon after, England were looking to rebuild steadily with Strauss and Collingwood at the crease. After hitting their 50-partnership in 80 balls, both men fell one after another inside 2 overs.

Flintoff was quickly dispatched by a reverse-swinging delivery from Andrew Hall that went in between bat and body to take out the top of

middle-stump. Two overs later and Nixon fell for 1 on the last ball of the 36th over, followed by Mahmood being bowled on the first delivery of Hall's next over leaving him on a hat-trick, which he narrowly missed achieving after a wild swing by Monty Panesar just missed the ball, but went on to fly in to wicket-keeper Boucher's hands.

Boucher caught Panesar off of the bowling of Nel following a poor shot, and Hall went on to bowl Anderson out to get his first ODI five-wicket haul (taking the wickets of Collingwood, Flintoff, Nixon, Mahmood and Anderson), the third of the competition (after fellow South Africans Charl Langeveldt's against Sri Lanka and Andre Nel's against Bangladesh), to finish with figures of 5-18 (10) - the best by a South African in a World Cup, beating Lance Klusener's 5-21 against Kenya in 1999. Andrew Strauss top scored for England with 46 and Bopara added precious runs at the tail end of England's innings with 27*, in a similar fashion to his 52 against Sri Lanka.

South Africa started batting in emphatic fashion: reaching 50 in just 5.4 overs: in contrast, England had taken 15.1 overs to reach 50; and while de Villiers was lucky not to be out on just 21 after being caught behind by Nixon off of the bowling of Anderson, (it was an edge so faint that the umpire, Steve Bucknor, couldn't hear it and couldn't give it), South Africa kept the foot on the gas and even after losing de Villiers on 42 they kept the run rate around 8, resulting in Smith getting 50 off of just 34 deliveries with only 9 dot balls, finishing on 85*. Kallis got to 17*, including getting his 9000th ODI run - a feat only 10 players have achieved.

Toss: England won, and elected to bat first.

St. Edwards University, Texas evacuated due to bomb threat

St. Edwards University in Austin has been evacuated after a non-specific bomb threat note was found by a staff member. Students are asked not to come on campus, and classes have been cancelled until 5 PM. This is according to a public relations officer for the school and the St. Edwards web site. The message on the website reads, "St. Edward's Classes Cancelled Until 5.p.m.

Due to a non-specific bomb threat, all day classes are cancelled. Classes will resume as schedule at 5 p.m. Please check your University email and/or University Web Site for further updates."

Around noon police had completed an evacuation, secured the campus and begun searching buildings. As police completed the search of dormitory buildings, students were being allowed to return. University spokesperson, Mischelle Amador, indicated that the precautions taken were in no way related to or influenced by yesterday's Virginia Tech shootings.

Virginia Tech shooter identified, witness reports emerge

The shooter in the Virginia Tech university shootings has been identified as Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year old South Korean national. He was studying English and lived on the university campus. Meanwhile, a list of confirmed deceased has been released.

The President of Virginia Tech, Charles Steger said in an interview that the "possibility exists" that more than one gunman was involved. "It appears that the

second shooter was a resident in our dormitory... it appears he was an on-campus resident," Steger said. Ballistic reports confirm that the same gun was used in the two instances, but the police could not confirm if the shooter was the same.

The shootings on Monday occurred in two separate locations, two hours apart. The first took place at 07:15 (12:15 UTC), at West Ambler Johnston Hall dormitory. Then, at about 09:15 (14:15 UTC), 30 people were killed in the second shooting, about half a mile (800 metres) from the first at the Norris Hall classroom building, on the same campus. Bodies were found in four classrooms and a stairwell, according to Virginia state police superintendent Col. Steve Flaherty.

Some students complained that they had received no warning from the university until an e-mail alert sent more than two hours after the first incident. The university has suspended the courses for one week, and Norris Hall will remain closed for the rest of the semester. In a reaction to the school massacre, the gun control group Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence asks for "common-sense actions to prevent tragedies like this from continuing to occur". The New York Times ran an editorial with a similar message for gun control.

A Virginia Tech student, Chen Chia-hao, told the Taiwanese station CTI TV that he believed the shooter in the West Ambler Johnston Hall was a Chinese student. The first victim was apparently his girlfriend after a quarrel. Chen said: "They had a big quarrel in the West Ambler Johnston Hall and he shot her. Then the RA (dormitory supervisor) came, and he shot the RA."

According to Chen, the gunman locked up 25 students who were taking a German class in the Norris Hall building. The man then shot himself in the head, making it difficult for him to be identified, Chen told CTI TV.

First-year student Erin Sheehan was one of the only 4 students coming out of the shooting in the German class unharmed. Erin explained how "(The gunman) peeked in twice, earlier in the lesson, like he was looking for someone, somebody, before he started shooting."

The gunman first shot German lecturer Christopher James Bishop in the head. Then, he fired some 30 shots in the class and went on. Trey Perkins and two other students decided to hold the heavy wooden classroom door shut with their feet.

Erin Sheehan explain how they heard "something like drilling in the walls", and how they closed the doors to prevent anyone from entering the classroom. Three times the gunman returned and fired in the door, while the students tried to keep him out. Erin describes how "He seemed very thorough about it, getting almost everyone down. I was trying to act dead. He left for about 30 seconds, came back in, did almost exactly the same thing." Trey Perkins explained how "Fortunately, we were lying down and weren't in front of the door."

In a nearby classroom, students decided to jump from the second floor through the window, and ran for safety to a nearby window.

France knew of and told CIA about al-Qaeda hijack plans prior to 9/11

Reports produced by the French secret services reveal that they

knew that al-Qaeda was planning attacks on the United States at least 8 months before the 9/11 attacks and that the attack was going to involve U.S. jetliners, the French newspaper Le Monde reports.

Le Monde also says one of the reports was handed to Bill Murray, a CIA agent working at the Paris station at the time, but no record of that handover has been released in the U.S. governments 9/11 commission report in 2004.

"[The French government knew of a] plan to hijack an aircraft by Islamic radicals," said the report, adding the planned attack had been discussed by al-Qaeda, Taliban and Uzbek militants in 2000. However; the Washington Post and The Daily times say that the militants were Chechen.

According to the reports, al-Qaeda was planning to launch the 9/11 attack in March or September in 2000, but that the attack was delayed because of "differences of opinion, particularly over the date, objective and participants."

"You have to remember that a plane hijack (in January 2001) did not have the same significance as it did after September 11. At the time, it implied forcing a plane to land at an airport and undertaking negotiations," said Pierre-Antoine Lorenzi.

The CIA said that the report does not show that the U.S. or France had advance knowledge that an attack was going to take place.

"Today's Le Monde article merely repeats what the U.S. government knew and reported before September 11 that al Qaeda was interested in airliner plots, especially hijackings. The article

does not suggest that U.S. or foreign officials had advance knowledge of the details surrounding the September 11 plot. Had the details been known, the U.S. government would have acted on them," a spokesman for the CIA, George Little, said.

Israel marks Holocaust Memorial Day

Yom HaShoa, the Holocaust Memorial Day was marked in Israel yesterday.

In Israel, a two-minute siren brought life to a standstill at 10 a.m. as Israelis observed an annual moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the Nazis and their collaborators. Pedestrians stood, buses and cars pulled over on streets.

The sirens were followed by services at the Knesset and Yad Vashem Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority. At the Knesset, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert read the names of the members of the Richter family, relatives of his wife Aliza who were killed in the Holocaust whilst Benjamin Netanyahu, opposition leader, read the names of his wife Sara's relatives. Vice Prime Minister, Shimon Peres spoke of losing his grandfather, whilst Social Affairs Minister Isaac Herzog spoke of his father's cousin who was caught trying to cross the French border and was sent to Auschwitz. Additionally, memorial services were held throughout the day at all schools and institutions.

The spirit of the day was further saddened late on in the day with the news that Professor Liviu Librescu, an Israeli Holocaust Survivor was killed in the Virginia Tech massacre. It was reported that he was murdered while holding off the gunman at his lecture hall

entrance so his students could escape through the window.

NHL: Sabres keep Islanders at bay to take series 2-1 series lead

The Buffalo Sabres defeated the New York Islanders Monday night to take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-seven series in the opening round of the NHL Playoffs. Despite being rattled by a puck to the face mask in the first, Buffalo goaltender Ryan Miller put up respectable numbers, saving 20 of 22 shots faced.

After a scoreless first period, Adam Mair, at 5:17, scored the first goal for the Sabres, taking a cross-ice pass from Chris Drury, beating Islanders goaltender Rick DiPietro on the stick side. Thomas Vanek would double the Sabres' lead, pushing the puck past DiPietro's glove side that was initially ruled no good, before being reviewed Trent Hunter would answer for the Islanders less than a minute and a half later, picking up a rebound off of Ryan Smyth's shot. Just over three minutes later, at 12:56 in the second period, with the Sabres on the power play, Daniel Briere would lead the shot barrage, finally beating DiPietro to score his first goal of the postseason. With eight seconds remaining in the second, Randy Robitaille would fake a shot from the left side before moving behind the cage, passing the puck to Ryan Smyth, who was parked in front of Buffalo netminder Ryan Miller. Smyth would score to narrow the Sabres' lead to one. However, the Sabres seized and kept control of the third period, outshooting the Islanders 17-2 over the final 20 minutes while protecting their one-goal lead.

Despite losing the game, the Islanders are still very much alive in the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals. They will try to knot

the series up at two games apiece on Wednesday, when New York will host the Buffalo Sabres once again.

NHL: Lightning strikes as Jersey falls behind in series

After losing the playoff opener, the Tampa Bay Lightning have won two straight, to take the series lead, two games to one. Both teams did very well both on the attack and in their own zone at the St. Pete Times Forum in Tampa, Florida Monday night.

Vincent Lecavalier would be the first to score midway through the first period, on a sharp angle to put the Lightning up 1-0. Johan Holmqvist would shutout the Devils though the entire first period but Martin Brodeur would return the favor as he would shutout the Lightning throughout the second period. The Devils did rebound from the 1-0 score as John Madden would score in the dying seconds of the second period to make the game 1-1. In the third period, as it was tied 1-1, Brad Richards would score very early on and put the Lightning up, yet again, at 2-1. Shortly after the Brad Richards goal, the Devils would counter with a goal of their own as Zach Parise scored to tie the game once more at 2-2. In the end Tampa Bay would be victorious as Vaclav Prospal scored the game winner late in the third.

Jersey goaltender Martin Brodeur needs to play better if he wants his team to advance, as he has given up a unusually high three goals in all three games of the series. The next game in the series is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18th, at 7:00 PM EST in Tampa Bay.

Trial of Jose Padilla under way in Florida

The trial of Jose Padilla, a US

citizen accused of assisting Islamist extremists and conspiracy to commit murder, is underway in Florida. Padilla denies the charges laid against him.

Allegations that Padilla was involved in a dirty bomb plot, made when he was arrested, will not form part of the trial. Two others, Adham Amin Hassoun and Kifah Wael Jayyousi also face charges alongside Padilla.

U.S. District Judge Marcia Cooke has told prosecutors that they cannot refer to the September 11, 2001 attacks, to which Padilla is not linked in the charges framed, in a way that suggests guilt by association.

North Korea may be shutting down nuclear reactor

Preparations for the closure of North Korea's main nuclear facility may have begun according to South Korean news reports.

Intelligence officials said that increasing activity at the nuclear sites indicate preparations for a reaction shutdown. Satellite images released by the Dong-a Ilbo newspaper and Yonhap news agency seem to indicate unusual activity at the Yongbyon facility, housing North Korea's main reactor.

China mine explosion traps 33 underground

An explosion in a coal mine in Baofeng county, Henan province in China has trapped 33 miners underground.

Chinese state media reports that a second explosion hampered rescue attempts that had begun. Rescue efforts are also hampered as the mine owner and the mine manager fled the site, leaving rescuers with a lack of accurate data about the mine. Police have frozen the

owner's bank accounts and are tracking him down.

In another incident, a coal mine pit in Zhuzhou city flooded, trapping twelve miners.

A third incident occurred in Heilongjiang province where at least two miners were trapped after an illegal coal mine collapsed, Xinhua said.

These incident come less than a year after the China pledged to improve mine safety. More than 4,700 coal miners died in accidents last year and the toll for the first three months of this year is 661.

Excessive bacon bad for lungs, says academic study

A study conducted by Columbia University has found that an increased risk of lung disease could result from consumption of large amounts bacon and other cured meats. Researchers cited additives called nitrites as a possible cause.

The findings, published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, indicate that Columbia team found an increased risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in those that had consumed cured meats at least 14 times in a month.

The American Meat Institute said the findings used outdated assumptions about nitrite levels in cured meats.

E-mail circulating UK Holocaust denial in schools is a hoax

According to a BBC report, various chain e-mails and rumours have been circulated on the internet indicating that the UK has ceased teaching details of the Holocaust to avoid upsetting religious groups who deny its occurrence.

The rumour appears to originate from reports about one school in the North of England where the Holocaust was avoided to avoid offending Muslim students who may be presented with a different picture of history both at home and in their place of worship.

A recent study into teaching indicated that many teachers were uncomfortable covering topics where students may have been exposed to an inaccurate historical account at home, however teaching the details of the Holocaust is required in England. Teaching of the topic is not mandatory in other parts of the UK.

A spokesperson for the UK government confirmed that teaching of the Holocaust is already compulsory in schools at Key Stage 3 (ages 11 to 14) and that it will remain so in the new KS3 curriculum from September 2008.

The e-mail is circulating as the European Union is considering criminalizing denying or trivialising the Holocaust.

U.S. web broadcasters face steep royalty increases

A coalition of American web broadcasters, led by National Public Radio and includes Yahoo! and AOL, has claimed that new royalty arrangements could prove 'fatal' to the industry. The decision to increase royalties, which is due to be enforceable on May 15, came from the Copyright Royalty Board.

"If these rates stand", claimed blogger Kurt Hanson, who writes on the SaveInternetRadio.org, "I believe we will see a virtual shutdown of all U.S. webcasting. That will be bad for listeners, webcasters, musicians, and the record industry alike."

John Simson, executive director of SoundExchange, the not-for-profit organization that collects the royalties, said "Our artists and labels look forward to working with the Internet Radio industry - large and small, commercial and non-commercial - so that together we can ensure it succeeds as a place where great music is available to music lovers of all genres."

Trial in Italy begins for US soldier begins

The in absentia trial of Mario Lozano, a United States soldier, began today in a courtroom inside Rome's maximum security prison Rebibbia in Italy. He stands accused in the death of Nicola Calipari, an Italian SISMI officer who was shot to death during the rescue of Giuliana Sgrena.

Today in History

1025 - Bolesław I the Brave was crowned in Gniezno, becoming the first King of Poland.

1906 - A major earthquake and subsequent fires devastated San Francisco, California, killing more than 3,000 and leaving more than half the population homeless.

1947 - In the largest non-nuclear single explosive detonation in history, the Royal Navy set off

6,800 tonnes of surplus ammunition in an attempt to destroy Heligoland, Germany.

1980 - Rhodesia became the Republic of Zimbabwe, with Canaan Banana as the country's inaugural President and Robert Mugabe as the first Prime Minister.

1983 - A suicide bomber destroyed the U.S. embassy in Beirut, killing 63 people.

1996 - Israel Defense Forces shelled Qana, Lebanon during Operation Grapes of Wrath, killing over 100 civilians at a UN compound.

Quote of the Day

History repeats itself. That's one of the things wrong with history.
~ Clarence Darrow

Word of the Day

pootle; v

1. To wander or ramble, such as by walking or riding.

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