



Top Stories

Massive ice deposits found on Mars

The European Space Agency Mars Express spacecraft has discovered enormous ice water deposits in the south pole of Mars that are larger than the state of Texas.

Burgas-Alexandroupolis pipeline agreement signed in Athens

The agreement for the oil pipeline Burgas-Alexandroupolis was signed today in Athens, between President Vladimir Putin of Russia and Prime Ministers of Greece and Bulgaria, Kostas Karamanlis and Sergei Stanishev respectively.

Featured story

Saturn's moon Enceladus may host "internal life"

Scientists at NASA say that new satellite images of Saturn's moon Enceladus taken in 2005, has shown that the moon has begun to spew geysers which contain "liquid water", and that the internal heat produced by the moon's core may be able to host life below the icy surface.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Three officers of the New York Police Department are indicted on charges related to the death of a black man Sean Bell on his wedding day.
- British coroner Andrew Walker finds that the death of soldier Matty Hull in the 190th Fighter Squadron, Blues and Royals

Wikipedia Current Events

"friendly fire" incident was "unlawful and criminal". The U.S. Department of State rejects this ruling.

- Airbus workers in Germany, France and Spain hold protest meetings and strikes in response to plans to cut 10,000 jobs and close six plants.
- Livedoor founder Takafumi Horie is sentenced to two and a half years for his role in securities fraud at the company.
- Santo Santoro, the federal Minister for Ageing in Australia, resigns after revealing that he owned shares in 50 or 60 companies not disclosed on the Senate register of interests.
- The Property Law of the People's Republic of China is adopted at the 2007 National People's Congress.

Edinburgh Building Services wins national award

Edinburgh Building Services (EBS) has won a national excellence award at a gala ceremony held in St Andrews last week (8 March 2007). Promises Into Action, an EBS project, won the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) award for "Securing a Workforce for the Future".

This award follows an innovative cultural change programme led jointly by Pinnacle and the City of Edinburgh Council, which focussed on improving communications and team-work and on recognising good

performance and customer care.

Councillor Sheila Gilmore, Executive Member for Community Safety and Housing, said, "It is encouraging to see the hard work that has been done and the changes that have been made as a result of this project is being recognised on a national level. I would like to congratulate the team and thank COSLA for recognising these achievements."

Pinnacle's Director, Steve White, and his team accepted the award at the prize ceremony. He said: "When we first begun working with EBS, we would never have believed that within just three years, we would be winning national awards for excellence. Through Pinnacle's partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, we focused on changing cultures, nurturing talent and delivering outcomes and as a result, EBS has been transformed into a high achieving organisation with a culture that is inclusive, open and trusting.

"The EBS team should feel justifiably proud of such an outstanding achievement."

John Swinney, Chief Executive of Pinnacle, said: "EBS continues to go from strength to strength – this is the second national award for excellence that it has achieved in just six months. It highlights, yet again, the real benefits of public/private sector partnerships working together to achieve sustainable improvements for communities and customers.

Congratulations again to the EBS team."

EBS provides a range of building maintenance services for Services for Communities and other departments of the City of Edinburgh Council. Pinnacle began work with Edinburgh Building Services in 2003.

Warmest global winter on record according to NOAA

Although the United States experienced average temperatures for the December, 2006 to February, 2007 period, overall world temperatures were the warmest on record, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

In a March 15, 2007 report, the NOAA indicated that a record warm January helped push the combined global land and ocean surface temperature for the past winter to its highest value since records began in 1880.

The ocean-atmosphere system, El Niño, played a part in the season's record warmth, according to the report's authors, but its effects did not last long, as ocean temperatures in the central equatorial Pacific cooled more than 0.3 degrees C in February and were near average for the month.

The global land-surface temperature was the warmest on record, while the ocean-surface temperature tied for second warmest in the past 128 year period, approximately 0.06 degrees C cooler than the record established during the strong El Niño episode of 1997-1998.

During the past century, global surface temperatures have increased approximately 0.06

degrees C per decade, but since 1976 the rate of increase has been about 0.18 degrees C per decade. The greatest temperature increase occurred in the high latitudes of the Northern Hemisphere.

In an interview with Reuters, Jay Lawrimore of NOAA suggested that the data does not show greenhouse gases had an influence on the recent temperature increases, but acknowledges that by "looking at long-term trends and long-term changes, we are able to better understand natural and anthropogenic (human-caused) climate change."

A U.S. Commerce Department agency based in Washington, D.C., the NOAA conducts research and gathers data on oceans and atmosphere. The NOAA is a participant in the Group on Earth Observations, GEO, an intergovernmental effort to coordinate the collection of Earth observations worldwide.

2007 Cricket World Cup: South Africa vs Netherlands

South Africa beat the Netherlands by 221 runs in the second Group A match in the World Cup at the Warner Park Stadium, Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Herschelle Gibbs made history in the match by scoring six sixes in an over (bowled by Daan van Bunge). This was the first such feat in both World Cup and one-day international history, and made Gibbs only the third man to ever record this in top class cricket.

The match was reduced to 40 overs per innings due to a delay from heavy rain. The Netherlands won the toss and elected to field first.

Football: Ties announced in UEFA Cup

The draw has been completed for the next round of the UEFA Cup, and English side Tottenham have been drawn against Sevilla of Spain. Sevilla are currently second in La Liga, trailing behind Barcelona only on goal difference. Tottenham are coming off a tie at Chelsea in the FA Cup, where they had a 3-1 lead but failed to hold on.

The draw saw all three remaining Spanish sides kept apart, setting up the possibility of an all Spanish final.

Other draws include Dutch side AZ Alkmaar against Germans Werder Bremen, Bayer Leverkusen taking on Osasuna, and Espanyol against Portugese side Benfica.

Should Tottenham advance through the quarterfinals, they will take on either Bayer Leverkusen or Osasuna.

The first leg of the quarterfinals will take place on the 5th of April, with the second leg following a week later on the 12th.

Semifinals will be played on the 26th of April and the second leg will take place on the end of May.

Quarterfinal Draws:
AZ Alkmaar v Werder Bremen
Bayer Leverkusen v Osasuna
Sevilla v Tottenham
Espanyol v Benfica

Football: McClaren names England squad

England boss Steve McClaren has announced his 23-man squad for the Euro 2008 qualifiers against Israel and Andorra.

The biggest surprise pick for the squad was Newcastle United's Scott Parker. Bayern Munich midfielder

Owen Hargreaves will make his England return after a broken leg kept him out of competition. Other central midfielders in the squad will include Steven Gerrard, Frank Lampard and Michael Carrick.

On the wings, Aaron Lennon may start down the right, while Kieron Dyer or Stewart Downing may play on the left.

Likely strikers for the club are Manchester United's Wayne Rooney and Andy Johnson of Everton.

Manchester United's on-loan keeper Ben Foster started the game against Spain last time out for England, but he is sure to be backup to Paul Robinson in the qualifiers.

John Terry and Rio Ferdinand may well make up the center of the defense with Gary Neville and Ashley Cole possibly supporting from the defensive wings.

Notable exceptions from the squad include Manchester City's Joey Barton and Gareth Barrey of Aston Villa.

Full Squad:

- Keepers: Robinson, Foster, Carson
- Defence: G. Neville, Richards, Ferdinand, Terry, Woodgate, Carragher, A Cole, P Neville
- Midfielders: Gerrard, Hargreaves, Lampard, Lennon, Parker, Carrick, Dyer, Downing
- Strikers: Johnson, Rooney, Defoe, D Bent.

Friendly fire killing of Lance Corporal Matty Hull deemed unlawful

In a narrative verdict, the Coroner investigating the death of UK soldier Lance Corporal Matty Hull,

who was killed in a friendly fire incident in Iraq on 28 March 2003, has ruled that his killing was unlawful.

L.Cpl Hull, who was from the Household Cavalry, died inside his blazing Scimitar tank when it was attacked 25 miles north of Basra by a US "tankbuster" aircraft. Four other soldiers were injured in the incident. Video footage from the cockpit of the aircraft was shown privately to his family during the inquest.

The US authorities were uncooperative throughout the proceedings and refused to give evidence, only allowing the cockpit footage to be shown after it had been leaked to a British tabloid newspaper.

2007 Cricket World Cup: England vs New Zealand

New Zealand beat England by six wickets in the second Group C match in the World Cup at Beausejour Stadium, Gros Islet, Saint Lucia.

New Zealand won the toss and elected to field first.

Bottled water in Canada recalled due to arsenic concerns

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued a health hazard alert, March 14, 2007, regarding Ark Land brand of bottled water, Naturally Carbonated Mineral Water. It is warning the public not to consume the product, as it may contain arsenic.

Although there have been no reported illnesses associated with the consumption of this product, the CFIA suggests that arsenic is a toxic substance and a human carcinogen.

The CFIA did not indicate, in the Alert, what levels of arsenic were found in the product.

The mineral water was sold in Ontario and Quebec, but may have also been distributed throughout Canada. The product, produced by Arzni Source, was imported from Armenia by Klukva Pure Inc., of Toronto.

The importer, Klukva Pure Inc., has begun the removal of product from store shelves, under the direction of the CFIA.

The product recall affects the following Ark Land brand Naturally Carbonated Mineral Water:
Size: 330 mL, UPC: 7 85000 12033 9
Size: 500 mL, UPC: 7 85000 12050 6

Both sizes show a "Best Before" date of 09.05.07

For more information, consumers and industry are encouraged to call the CFIA at 1-800-442-2342.

Rare Patek Philippe watches to be highlighted at Antiquorum

xtremely rare and expensive Patek Philippe watches will be presented at the forthcoming Antiquorum auction sale. The Antiquorum's Collectors' Wristwatches, Pocket Watches and Clocks event is to take place on March 28. Over 300 of other timepieces will be sold at the auction.

The participants of the auction sale will have a unique chance to acquire a Patek Philippe Ref. 5029 watch. The brand's limited edition creation is estimated to reach the price of about 500,000 dollars. It is one of just ten timepieces housed in rose-gold cases that were developed in 1997 to pay tribute to the opening of the new company's

factory in Geneva. The watch powered by a self-winding movement offers a complicated function of a minute-repeater.

Another highlight of the auction will become an equally rare and high-priced Patek Philippe Ref. 5013 watch. The timepiece is meant to be sold at a price range of \$400,000 to \$500,000. The platinum timekeeper is equipped with a self-winding movement. Besides providing a minute-repeater function, the complicated tonneau-shaped watch has a retrograde perpetual calendar, moon phase indicator and a 48-hour power reserve.

Patek Philippe Ref. 2499 watch will be the third exquisite creation of the brand. It is expected to be acquired at the range of 300,000 to 400,000 dollars. The astronomic timepiece is housed in 18K yellow gold case. The watch offers the following complicated functions - a round-button chronograph, a perpetual calendar, a 30-minute register and moon phase indicator.

The auction will be organized at Antiquorum's new headquarters located on Madison Avenue, New York City.

Massive ice deposits found on Mars

The European Space Agency's Mars Express spacecraft has discovered ice deposits in the south pole of Mars that are larger than the state of Texas.

Scientists say that there is enough water in the deposits to cover the entire planet with up to 36 feet of water if the ice was to melt. Some sections of the ice deposits are up to 2.3 - 2.5 miles deep. The ice is composed of carbon dioxide, a little bit of dust, and water (90 percent of the water is estimated to be

frozen).

What has caught the attention of the scientists working on the Mars Express project is that this may help reveal whether or not there is any (microbial) life within the ice.

Another perplexing question that scientists are trying to solve is what happened to all the water that produced all the channels on the surface of Mars.

Jeffrey Plaut, who is from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California and who is also leading the study, noted that, "We have this continuing question facing us in studies of Mars, which is: where did all the water go? Even if you took the water in these two (polar) ice caps and added it all up, it's still not nearly enough to do all of the work that we've seen that the water has done across the surface of Mars in its history."

Currently, only 10 percent of the water is remaining and is located at the poles of Mars. It has been suggested that some of the remaining 90 percent of the water that disappeared could either be underground or could have simply left the atmosphere into space.

Today in History

45 BC - Julius Caesar scored his final military victory in the Battle of Munda, defeating the Optimate forces of Titus Labienus and Pompey the Younger.

624 - History of Islam: Muslims of Medina defeated the Quraish of Mecca in the Battle of Badr.

1950 - The discovery of californium, a radioactive transuranium element, was announced.

1958 - Vanguard 1, the first solar-powered satellite, was launched. It is the oldest human-launched object still in Earth orbit today.

1969 - Golda Meir of the Labour Party became the fourth Prime Minister of Israel.

March 17 is Saint Patrick's Day

Quote of the Day

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.
~ James Madison

Word of the Day

limerick; n

1. A humorous, often bawdy verse of five anapestic lines, with the rhyme scheme aabba.

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