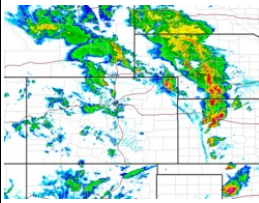




### Top Stories

#### Tornado kills one and injures 100 in northern Colorado

A tornado has killed one and injured 100 in Weld County, Colorado and caused 28 miles (45 km) of destruction throughout the county. The man killed was inside a vehicle that was destroyed in the storm west of Greeley, which is about 60 miles (97 km) north of Denver.



#### New law to help asbestos sufferers in Victoria, Australia

New legislation in Victoria, Australia will provide for greater compensation for victims suffering from effects of exposure to asbestos. The legislation is called "Bernie Banton law", after the late campaigner for asbestos-related issues. The law will remove a restriction which prevented asbestos victims from making another claim after being diagnosed with a terminal illness.



#### Conservatives win Crewe and Nantwich by-election

The Conservative Party's Edward Timpson has won the Crewe and Nantwich by-election with a majority of 7,860 votes. This is the party's first by-election victory in 26 years and party leader David Cameron visited the



### Top Stories

constituency earlier.

#### Controversial development training cited in religious discrimination lawsuits

A controversial development training course called "Landmark Forum" is cited in religious discrimination lawsuits in United States federal courts in New York and Washington, D.C. The sperm bank and surrogacy company Los Angeles-based Growing Generations is named as a defendant in the New York lawsuit, and the Democratic political action committee Twenty-First Century Democrats is a defendant in the Washington, D.C. case.

### Wikipedia Current Events

The Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-Moon states that Myanmar's State Peace and Development Council has finally decided to grant access to areas worst hit by Cyclone Nargis to international aid workers regardless of nationality.

- Around 20,000 passengers are affected by unofficial industrial action by Iarnród Éireann, Ireland's national rail operator.
- Hu Jintao, the President of China, and the President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev condemn the United States' National missile defense system.
- The International Court of Justice awards sovereignty of Pedra Branca to Singapore, ending a

### Wikipedia Current Events

28-year dispute over the islet between Singapore and Malaysia. Malaysia was awarded sovereignty of an outcropping of Pedra Branca, Middle Rocks, while the sovereignty of South Ledge was left to be determined by the maritime boundary between the two nations, which is also a contentious point.

- Seven Moroccan tourists are killed in a bus crash in central France, near the city of Blois.
- An independant investigation into \$8.2 billion in United States Department of Defense spending in Iraq, as well as aid to Egypt and Kuwait since 2001 finds that 95% of payments to contractors failed to meet requirements for documentation to determine what was paid for.

#### Two men fined over 2006 German train crash that killed 23

Two men have been fined for their failure to prevent the 2006 Lathen maglev train accident in Germany, which caused 23 deaths and 11 injuries on September 22, 2006.

The maglev train involved slammed into a maintenance vehicle at high speed on a test track after what was described as a "chain of human error" Maglevs float above the rails, kept up and propelled by magnetism. This particular Transrapid sat 1 cm above the rails and featured a rail-hugging design that reduced the risk of derailments.

The state court in Osnabrück fined then track manager Guenter Steinmetz 24,000 euro and his successor Joerg Metzner 20,000 euro. Both men were convicted of 23 counts of manslaughter and 11 counts of causing negligent injury. Prosecutors had sought jail sentences but the men were spared this as the court ruled they had not acted with criminal intent. The men intend to appeal.

The men had failed to install automatic brakes that would have stopped the train while there was a maintenance vehicle on the tracks and of not adhering to the "two-people-on-duty" guideline.

The third defendant, traffic superintendent Guenther Mueller, was unable to face trial due to suicide fears. His prosecution will occur at a later date. He is said to be the most important person facing charges, as he cleared the train to proceed when, in fact, the line was blocked.

### **Rokot launches three Gonets satellites**

Three Gonets satellites have been launched by the Russian Space Forces atop a Ukranian-built Rokot carrier rocket. Lift-off, from site 133 at the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in Northern Russia, occurred at 15:20:09 GMT this afternoon.

The three Gonets satellites will be used to provide store-dump communication services. This is the second launch of modernised Gonets-D1M satellites. They will be operated by Gonets SatCom, an organisation which was previously part of the Russian Federal Space Agency, but which was privatised in 1996. Whilst Gonets is a civilian system, it has been reported that these satellites will also be used for military applications. Reports have suggested that the satellites

have received military designations of Kosmos-2437, 2438 and 2439 under the Kosmos system. Such designations have previously been assigned to, and in some cases later removed from, civilian satellites.

A small technology demonstration satellite, Yubileiny, was also launched. It was built to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the launch of Sputnik 1, and will be operated by NPO PM. It will broadcast audio and visual programmes on amateur radio frequencies, detailing the history of the space programmes of Russia and the Soviet Union, as well as signals imitating those of Sputnik 1.

The Rokot is a small carrier rocket derived from the UR-100 missile. Its upper stage, the Briz-KM, is a scaled-down version of the Briz-M upper stage used on Proton rockets. This is the first launch of a Briz upper stage of either type since the failure of a Briz-M during a March Proton launch, which left the AMC-14 satellite stranded in Medium Earth orbit.

This is the 25th orbital launch of 2008 in spaceflight, and the 13th launch of a Rokot. The next Rokot launch is scheduled for early-mid September, with the GOCE satellite for the European Space Agency.

### **United Kingdom opposition leader states commitment to keeping Scotland part of the Union**

David Cameron, the leader of the Conservative Party and UK leader of the opposition today made a speech to the conference of the Scottish Conservative Party. In the speech he addressed the issue of Scottish independence. "I want to be Prime Minister of the United Kingdom - all of it, including

Scotland. I absolutely believe we are stronger together, and weaker apart, and I will do anything and everything to keep our two countries as one," he said.

"Whether we like it or not, the ugly stain of separatism is seeping through the Union flag," said Cameron, stating his opinion on the movements for Scottish independence. "The simple truth is that the Union between England and Scotland is under attack as never before."

Mr. Cameron also criticised Labour in the speech. "To play games by calling for a referendum right at the moment when people would take any opportunity to give the most unpopular Government in living memory a good kicking, isn't clever... isn't good politics ...isn't defending the Union."

He also commented on Britishness in the speech. "The Union is in danger for other reasons too," he claimed. "There is, of course, the question of identity. The number of people who think themselves British - ahead of Scottish or English - is in decline."

"Britishness is a matter of instinct, not calculation, and the sooner we have a Government that is willing to stand up for, and take pride in, that instinct then the sooner we can fight the forces of separation," continued Cameron, speaking to his supporters.

Cameron also addressed Scottish First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party:

"So, to Alex Salmond, I say this.

I know you've got a plan. I know you think a Conservative government at Westminster will ignore what Scotland wants and

needs, and that you will use such claims to promote your separatist agenda. Well, think again.

We've got the vision. We've got the ideas. And we've got the ambition.

And to the people of Scotland, I make this guarantee. Whatever the outcome in Scotland of the next General Election, a Conservative Government will govern the whole of the United Kingdom, including Scotland, with respect."

### **NOAA says Earth's oceans becoming more acidic**

According to a study performed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, the level of acid in the world's oceans is rising, decades before scientists expected the levels to rise.

The study was performed on the coastal waters of the Pacific Ocean from Baja California, Mexico to Vancouver, British Columbia, where tests showed that acid levels in some areas near the edge of the Continental Shelf were high enough to corrode the shells of some sea creatures as well as some corals. Some areas showed excessive levels of acid less than four miles off the northern California coastline in the United States.

"What we found ... was truly astonishing. This means ocean acidification may be seriously impacting marine life on the continental shelf right now. The models suggested they wouldn't be corrosive at the surface until sometime during the second half of this century," said Richard A. Feely, an oceanographer from the NOAA.

The natural processes of the seas and oceans constantly clean the Earth's air, absorbing 1/3 to 1/2 of the carbon dioxide generated by humans. As the oceans absorb more of the gas, the water becomes more acidic, reducing the amount of carbonate which shellfish such as clams and oysters use to form their shells, and increasing the levels of carbonic acid. Although levels are high, they are not yet high enough to threaten humans directly.

"Scientists have also seen a reduced ability of marine algae and free-floating plants and animals to produce protective carbonate shells," added Feely.

Feely noted that, according to the study, the oceans and seas have absorbed more than 525 billion tons of carbon dioxide since the Industrial Revolution began.

### **Conservatives win Crewe and Nantwich by-election**

The Conservative Party's Edward Timpson has won the Crewe and Nantwich by-election in the United Kingdom with a majority of 7,860 votes. This is the party's first by-election victory in 26 years and party leader David Cameron visited the constituency earlier.

Labour Party candidate Tamsin Dunwoody said that the 17.6% swing was a "mid-term blip" and that the people of Crewe and Nantwich will be "watching" Mr. Timpson. However David Cameron proclaimed the result "the end of New Labour" calling the Conservatives' overturning of the 7,000 Labour majority "the start of something different and something bigger".

He criticised the Labour Party's campaign in Crewe and Nantwich, which had described the

Conservative candidate as a "toff", as "negative", "xenophobic" and "class war" but said he realises the differences between by-election and general election results. The newly elected Mr. Timpson said in his victory speech that "I am going to stand up for local families, local jobs and, whenever I need to, stand up to the Government on your behalf."

Miss Dunwoody is confident of Gordon Brown's leadership, telling reporters earlier that "we know the Prime Minister can lead us through this." Labour's deputy leader Harriet Harman also defended Mr. Brown's position, saying that "the overwhelming majority of people in the Labour Party... are fully behind Gordon Brown."

Chris Huhne, Liberal Democrat home affairs spokesman, defended his party's third-place result as "really rather robust" and said the people's votes were anti-Labour, not pro-Conservative. The UK Independence Party are pleased with the result, claiming that it confirms the party's position as "the fourth political force in the country" and their candidate Mike Nattrass said "this has been a stepping stone for the European elections next year."

### **Bangladesh reports first human case of H5N1 bird flu**

Bangladesh reported its first human case of the H5N1 strain of Avian flu on Thursday. According to a representative of the Bangladesh health ministry, the 16-month old boy initially tested negative for the disease. His virus culture tested positive in tests performed by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The boy is from the capital city of Dhaka in the Dhaka District.

Colorized transmission electron micrograph of Avian influenza A H5N1 viruses (seen in gold) grown in MDCK cells (seen in green). Image: Cynthia Goldsmith.

"Although there is no farm in the neighbourhood we suspect that he got the illness after his family bought chickens from a farm," said senior health ministry official Mahmudur Rahman. Rahman is the head of Bangladesh's Institute of Epidemiology and Disease Control and Research. He asserted that the government had the disease under control, and that physicians and hospitals in the country were adequately prepared.

Rahman said Thursday that the child had recovered from the disease. "The child was found infected by H5N1 but after treatment he has recovered and is now doing well," said Rahman in a statement to Reuters.

The World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the positive test results on Friday. This case in Bangladesh brings the total number of countries in the world with human infections from the disease up to 15. "When a disease is so widespread in poultry, it is really a matter of time before you get a human case. It shows the need to control the disease in animals if you are going to reduce the chances of transmission to humans," said WHO spokesman Gregory Hartl in a statement to Reuters.

"There is no reason to panic. The child contracted the H5N1 bird flu virus in January but we only got confirmation from the CDC on Wednesday it was a human bird flu case." —Saluddin Khan, Bangladesh government official

The boy had previously been

diagnosed with H5N1 in January, but the CDC only confirmed the case this week. In a statement in Agence France-Presse, senior government official Saluddin Khan said: "There is no reason to panic. The child contracted the H5N1 bird flu virus in January but we only got confirmation from the CDC on Wednesday it was a human bird flu case."

Khan commented on preventative measures being taken by the government, saying, "we're destroying the birds and eggs as soon as we have any report of bird flu at any farm in the country."

Bangladesh was first hit by bird flu in February 2007, and after a period of dormancy, was hit again in January 2008. Outbreaks subsided in March when peaking temperatures killed off the virus. Over one million birds were slaughtered during the outbreaks, and at the peak the outbreaks were the cause of a loss 1.5 million jobs in the Bangladesh poultry industry, which is the largest in the world. The Avian influenza has spread through 47 of Bangladesh's 64 districts.

The H5N1 virus seldom infects humans, but according to WHO there have been 382 human cases globally since 2003, including 241 deaths.

### **Dinosaur tracks found in Arabian Peninsula**

A new study that was recently carried by the online publication PLoS ONE describes the finding of dinosaur tracks on the Arabian Peninsula. The first of the discoveries was of a two-footed tridactyl. These tracks showed that the animal had taken steps with an average length of just over a metre. The tracks were pointing in the SSW direction.

The study noted that "west of the tridactyl trackway, 11 subparallel quadrupedal trackways preserve evidence of large and small quadrupedal animals traveling together in a herd." The study also noted that there may have been additional tracks that were not discovered.

The report described the method of finding the tracks: "Trackways were exposed by clearing away sand, small rocks and debris." The tracks were found in Madar, 47 km north of the Yemeni capital.

Mohammed Al-Daheri, a journalist from the area of the discovery, was the first person to discover the existence of these tracks in the area. Anne S. Schulp, Mohammed Al-Wosabi and Nancy J. Stevens were subsequently contacted and asked to carry out the study.

### **2008/09 Bundesliga: Borussia Dortmund name Klopp as Head Coach**

Borussia Dortmund have hired Jürgen Klopp as their new Head Coach after Thomas Doll resignation after their worst league position in 20 years. Klopp's contract will run until the June 30, 2010. Klopp was the Head Coach for FSV Mainz since 2001 before leaving for Dortmund.

"I am delighted to be here. I am honoured", said Klopp. "Now I want to help bring the club back on track." Klopp has high expectations of the club, current players and target signings for the summer transfer window and wants to give the matches of Borussia Dortmund a "recognition factor."

### **Controversial development training cited in religious discrimination lawsuits**

A controversial development

training course called "Landmark Forum" is cited in religious discrimination lawsuits in United States federal courts in New York and Washington, D.C. The seminars are run by a San Francisco, California-based for-profit training company called Landmark Education. The company evolved from Erhard Seminars Training "est", and has faced criticism regarding its techniques and its use of unpaid labor. The sperm bank and surrogacy company Los Angeles-based Growing Generations is named as a defendant in the New York lawsuit, and the Democratic political action committee Twenty-First Century Democrats is a defendant in the Washington, D.C. case.

Manhattan seat of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, located at Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse  
Image: Wikipedia Takes Manhattan member Sheila.

In separate lawsuits filed in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York in Manhattan, New York, and in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C., former employees are suing their employers for monetary damages and claiming religious discrimination after their employers allegedly mandated that they attend courses at Landmark Education.

In the US\$3 million federal lawsuit filed in New York, Scott Glasgow is suing his former employer Growing Generations and its CEO Stuart Miller. Growing Generations maintains sperm banks and also arranges surrogacy for gay couples who wish to have children. The

company has offices in New York and Los Angeles, and has done business with celebrities including actor B. D. Wong of Law & Order: SVU.

Glasgow was marketing director of Growing Generations, and claims he was fired in June 2007 after refusing to continue attending Landmark Education seminars. Glasgow is also suing for sexual harassment, and claims Miller came on to him in September 2006. He made approximately \$100,000 per year as the company's marketing director, and was the company's only employee based out of New York City. The company's main offices are in Los Angeles.

"I want them to stop imposing Landmark on the employees, and I want an apology." —Scott Glasgow

"I was shocked when I was fired. It took me months to right myself. I want them to stop imposing Landmark on the employees, and I want an apology," said Glasgow in a statement in The Village Voice. Brent Pelton, one of Glasgow's attorneys, stated that: "The Landmark philosophy is deeply ingrained in the culture of the company". Glasgow said that the Landmark Education training courses were "opposite" to his Christian beliefs. According to Glasgow he was questioned by Miller in May 2007 after he walked out of a Landmark Education course, and was fired shortly thereafter. "We stand by the allegations contained in the complaint and we look forward to proving them at trial," said Pelton in a statement to ABC News.

Ian Wallace, an attorney who represents Growing Generations, claimed that Glasgow wasn't fired but walked away from his position.

"Growing Generations and Mr. Miller are very confident that these claims will be dismissed ultimately, and there's no factual basis for them whatsoever," said Wallace in a statement to The Village Voice. Lawyers representing Growing Generations and Stuart Miller declined comment to The New York Post, and did not immediately return a message from ABC News.

In Glasgow's complaint, entered into federal court record on April 18, he asserts that Landmark Education constitutes a "religion", and "perceived their philosophy as a form of religion that contradicted his own personal beliefs". He states that when he was promoted to Director of Marketing, he asked Miller if he could stop attending the Landmark sessions but was told that they were mandatory for all of the company's executives and that Landmark is "very much the language of the company." Glasgow said his performance at the company was assessed based on how he was "touching, moving and inspiring" others, a phrase from the Landmark philosophy, as opposed to his business accomplishments at the company. The complaint claims that the actions of Miller and Growing Generations violated Federal, New York State and New York City civil rights laws.

The lawsuit filed in federal court in Washington, D.C. deals with a separate plaintiff and company, but the plaintiff in the suit also claims that religious discrimination took place for allegedly being mandated to attend Landmark Education courses. Kenneth Goldman is suing the United States Democratic political action committee Twenty-First Century Democrats (also 21st Century Democrats) and its former executive director Kelly Young.

Goldman was formerly the communications director of 21st Century Democrats.

According to Goldman's complaint, three employees of 21st Century Democrats were fired after refusing to attend the Landmark Forum course. The complaint asserts that Landmark Education has "religious characteristics and theological implications" which influenced the mission of 21st Century Democrats and the way the organization conducted business. Goldman's complaint states that in addition to himself, a training director and field director were also fired after they made it clear they would not attend the Landmark Forum.

Goldman says executive director Young infused Landmark Education jargon terms into staff meetings such as "create possibilities", "create a new context", and "enroll in possibilities". He also claims that Young "urged" staff members to participate in Landmark Education events outside of the workplace, drove employees to and from Landmark functions, and used funds from 21st Century Democrats to pay for employees to attend those functions. Goldman's complaint asserts that he was discriminated against in violation of the District of Columbia Human Rights Act.

"While we are not a party to this lawsuit and have no firsthand knowledge of it, we can only assume that we are being used as a legal and political football to further the plaintiff's own financial interests."

—Landmark Education spokeswoman Deborah Beroset

In a statement in The Washington Times, the executive director of 21st Century Democrats, Mark

Lotwis, called the lawsuit "frivolous" and said: "we're going to defend our organization's integrity". Landmark Education spokeswoman Deborah Beroset said that the Landmark Forum "is in no way religious in nature and any claim to the contrary is simply absurd," and stated: "While we are not a party to this lawsuit and have no firsthand knowledge of it, we can only assume that we are being used as a legal and political football to further the plaintiff's own financial interests."

The New York lawsuit was filed April 14, and is still in early filing stages. A conference with the federal court judge in the case has been scheduled for June 17. The Washington, D.C. suit began in November 2007, and entered mediation this past March. As of April 15 the parties in the case were due back to court on July 11 to update the court on the mediation process.

Landmark Education is descended from Erhard Seminars Training, also called "est", which was founded by Werner Erhard. est began in 1971, and Erhard's company Werner Erhard and Associates repackaged the course as "The Forum" in 1985. Associates of Erhard bought the license to his "technology" and incorporated Landmark Education in California in 1991.

This is not the first time employees have sued claiming mandatory attendance at "Forum" workshops violated their civil rights. In a lawsuit filed in December 1988 in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, eight employees of DeKalb Farmers Market in Decatur, Georgia sued their employer claiming their religious freedom and civil rights were violated when

they were allegedly coerced into attending "Forum" training sessions. "Many of these training programs, particularly at large corporations, claim to be purely psychological, aimed at improving productivity and morale and loyalty. But in fact they are religious," said University of Denver religious studies professor Carl Raschke in a statement to The Wall Street Journal.

The DeKalb Farmers Market employees were represented by lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union. Consulting Technologies Inc., an affiliate of Transformational Technologies Inc., was named as a party in the lawsuit. Transformational Technologies was founded by Werner Erhard, and was not named as a party in the suit. The "Forum" course that the employees claimed they were mandated to attend was developed by Werner Erhard and Associates. Employees said that they were fired or pressured to quit after they objected to the Forum courses.

The workers claimed that the Forum course contradicted with their religious beliefs. The plaintiffs in the suit included adherents of varying religious backgrounds, including Christianity and Hinduism. "The sessions put people into a hibernating state. They ask for total loyalty. It's like brainwashing," said Dong Shik Kim, one of the plaintiffs in the case. The plaintiffs said they lost their jobs after objecting to a "new age quasi-religious cult" which they said was developed by Werner Erhard.

The DeKalb Farmers Market denied the allegations, and an attorney for the company Edward D. Buckley III told The Wall Street

Journal that employees were encouraged, not coerced, to attend the training sessions. According to The Wall Street Journal, The Forum said it would not sanction workers being coerced to attend its training sessions.

The parties in the DeKalb Farmers Market religious discrimination case came to a settlement in May 1989, and the case was dismissed with prejudice in June. The terms of the out-of-court settlement were not made public, but the employees' attorney Amy Totenberg told The Wall Street Journal that the case "has made employers come to grips with the legitimate boundaries of employee training".

According to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, employers must "reasonably accommodate" their employees' religious beliefs unless this creates "undue hardship". In September 1988, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued a policy-guidance notice which stated that New Age courses should be handled under Title VII of the Act. According to the Commission, employers must provide "reasonable accommodation" if an employee challenges a training course, unless this causes "undue hardship" for the company.

In October 2006, Landmark Education took legal action against Google, YouTube, the Internet Archive and a website owner in Queensland, Australia in attempts to remove criticism of its products from the Internet. The company sought a subpoena under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act in an attempt to discover the identity of an anonymous critic who uploaded a 2004 French documentary of the Landmark Forum to the Internet. "Voyage au

pays des nouveaux gourous" (Voyage to the Land of the New Gurus) was produced by Pièces à Conviction, a French investigative journalism news program. The Electronic Frontier Foundation represented the anonymous critic and the Internet Archive, and Landmark withdrew its subpoena in November 2006 in exchange for a promise from the anonymous critic not to repost the video.

Landmark Education itself has come under scrutiny for its controversial labor practices. The company has been investigated by the United States Department of Labor in separate investigations originating out of California, Colorado, and Texas.

Investigations focused on the heavy reliance of unpaid labor in the company's workforce, which Landmark Education calls "assistants" and deems volunteers.

An investigation by the U.S. Dept. Labor based out of Colorado found that activities performed by Landmark Education's "assistants" include: "office, clerical, telephone solicitation and enrollment, as well as greeting customers, setting up chairs, handling microphones during the seminars and making coffee. Additionally, a number of volunteers actually teach the courses and provide testimonials during and after the courses." The Colorado investigation's 1996 report found that "No records are kept of any hours worked by any employees." According to a 1998 article in Metro Silicon Valley: "In the end the Department of Labor dropped the issue, leaving Landmark trumpeting about its volunteers' choice in the matter." Metro Silicon Valley reported that Landmark Education at the time employed 451 paid staff, and also utilized the services of 7,500 volunteers.

After an investigation into Landmark Education's labor practices by the U.S. Dept. Labor's offices out of California, the company was deemed to have overtime violations. According to the Department of Labor's 2004 report on the investigation, back wages of \$187,569.01 were found due to 45 employees. An investigation by the U.S. Dept. Labor in Texas which concluded in 2005 stated: "Minimum wage violation found. Volunteers (Assistants) are not paid any wages for hours worked while performing the major duties of the firm. The assistants set up rooms, call registrants, collect fees, keep stats of classroom data/participants, file, they also are answering phones, training and leading seminars."

The Texas investigation also discovered an overtime violation. Landmark Education agreed to pay back wages for the overtime violation, but did not comply with the overtime violation found by the U.S. Dept. Labor for the "assistants". Landmark Education denied that the "assistants" are employees, though the Department of Labor report concluded: "Interviews reveal that the employees are taking payments, registering clients, billing, training, recruiting, setting up locations, cleaning, and other duties that would have to be performed by staff if the assistants did not perform them."

According to the 2004 investigative report by Pièces à Conviction in the "Voyage au pays des nouveaux gourous" program, Landmark Education was investigated by the French government in 1995. In the "Voyage au pays des nouveaux gourous" program volunteers were

filmed through a hidden camera and shown performing duties for Landmark Education in France including manning phones, recruitment and financial work for the company, and one volunteer was shown cleaning a toilet.

Le Nouvel Observateur reported that after "Voyage au pays des nouveaux gourous" aired in France, labor inspectors investigated Landmark Education's use of unpaid volunteers. According to Le Nouvel Observateur, one month after the labor investigation took place the French branch of the company had disbanded. A former "Introduction Leader" to the Landmark Forum, Lars Bergwik, has recently posted a series of videos to YouTube critical of the company and its practices. Bergwik appeared on a 2004 investigative journalism program on Sweden's Channel 4, Kalla Fakta (Cold Facts). According to Bergwik, after the Kalla Fakta program on Landmark Education aired, "Landmark left Sweden".

### **Russian Wikipedia "a top internet community"**

The Russian Language edition of Wikipedia was recently dubbed "a top Internet community" of the past year by a professional union of Russian Internet (Runet) scene protagonists, the "Ezhe" (EЖE).

Ezhe ("еже") means "every" in Russian, a reference to regularly updated websites; Ezhe's mascot is hedgehog because of similar word "yozh" ("ёж"). Ezhe.Ru is a non-profit "club" community coordinated via a Russian-speaking mailing list; nowadays it comprises more than 500 members — IT professionals, journalists and so on from all over the world. It was founded in 1997 and maintains some public projects, such as annual

"professional award" "ROTOR" (a spelling interpretation for "Russian Online TOP"). It has no payments or figurines and is awarded virtually.

ROTOR is Runet-wise generally regarded as an acknowledgment token for some Russian language Internet project from the so-called "Runet professionals" who populate Ezhe club. Contest is usually covered by Russian online mass media and in blogs. There are approximately 30 nominations honoring different Russian websites, or acts related to Runet, in different planes. Ezhe members vote in 2 tours, and in most contemporary ROTOR-2008 (lasted May 12—22) Russian Wikipedia gained 1st place in "Internet Community of the year" nomination. It also obtained second place in "Scientific and Educational website of the year" nomination. That was the 3rd time it took up this nomination with this second place. In 2006 and 2007, Russian Wikipedia also mastered "Science and Education" category on the Runet Prize.

In the meantime Russian Wikipedians recently celebrated Top-10 Wikipedias range introduction: Swedish Wikipedia was out of 10th place, and Russian was in with over 283 thousand articles on May 19th, 2008. The collective of editors on the project issued a now-habitual press release describing the developments of Wikipedia.

Russian editors also immediately started a "Swedish Week" organized effort within their community to write a bunch of new articles dedicated to Swedish culture. Swedes later replied with the alike action on Russian culture.

### **2008 Taiwan Excellence Gold and Silver Awards announced**

Thursday at the Taipei International Convention Center, the winners of the Gold and Silver Awards were announced at the 2008 16th-annual Taiwan Excellence Awards, an event created to promote products made in Taiwan. They were announced by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA), which also organized the event.

This year, 601 products competed for the eight gold medals and twenty-one silver awards. In the ICT category, the competition was especially fierce as 388 ICT products were on display from the IT industry. In total, 308 products from 102 companies were entitled as "Taiwan Excellent Products".

Several world-class experts judged the nominated products, in order to select the final twenty-nine based on four critical factors including R&D, design, quality, and marketing. In addition, the TAITRA also had categories where people could vote over the Internet or using their mobile phones.

ASUSTeK picked up two Gold Awards and six Silver Awards and was the biggest winner in the "Taiwan Excellence Awards". Eee PC 4G, with features like mobility, reliability, and connectively, not only won a Gold Award, but was also voted as the "Most Popular Product" as awarded by Internet

### **Bomb explodes in Exeter, UK**

Police in the United Kingdom are investigating after a bomb exploded in an Exeter restaurant at about 1250 BST. One person (believed by police to be the bomber) was injured, and a second device was found and made safe nearby. The suspect has been named as 22-year-old



Nicky Reilly from Plymouth. He has been arrested and taken to hospital.

The centre of the city was evacuated by police until about 1900 Local Time (UTC+1).

Chief Constable Stephen Otter from Devon and Cornwall Police commented on the incident. He claimed that "the injured man had one of the explosive devices on him, which partially went off," and that "the other [explosive], in the vicinity of the restaurant, did not go off."

Otter also reported collaboration between police forces. "The Devon and Cornwall force was working with the Metropolitan Police as we do with any explosion where we cannot understand why it happened."

He refused to speculate on whether it was terrorism. "I would not say anything about terrorism at this stage because I do not know."

The deputy chief constable of the police force said that the suspected bomber had been "preyed upon, radicalised and taken advantage of." Police say that Reilly, who had a history of mental illness, had recently converted to the Islamic faith.

### **2008 USL First Division: Whitecaps sign Pozniak**

The Vancouver Whitecaps announced the signing of former Toronto FC defender Chris Pozniak. Pozniak was chosen in the expansion draft by the San Jose Earthquakes and was then traded last March to Chivas USA of Major League Soccer. The contract is pending international clearance.

Whitecaps president Bob

Lenarduzzi said, "Chris brings a wealth of experience and quality to our back end. The signing of Chris made sense for a number of reasons for both the club and Chris. Chris was looking for a team that would be able to use his services for the next six weeks before allowing him to explore opportunities in Europe. We are currently playing through a busy stretch in our schedule and have sustained some recent injuries. This is a win-win for both club and player."

In 4 games with Chivas USA this season, Pozniak started 3 and recorded 311 minutes.

Pozniak, who was born in Kraków, Poland, and immigrated to Canada with his family in 1990, has been capped by Canada at the U-20, U-23 and senior levels. Pozniak earned his first senior cap in the 2002 CONCACAF Gold Cup against Haiti. He has since earned 21 caps, which includes a start in Canada's 1-0 win over Martinique last January.

### **Tornado kills one and injures 100 in northern Colorado**

A tornado that has caused 28 miles (45 km) of destruction throughout Weld County, Colorado, has killed one and injured 100. The man killed was inside a vehicle that was destroyed in the storm, west of Greeley, which is about 60 miles (97 km) north of Denver.

A state trooper says that multiple car accidents occurred on highways throughout the county. U.S. Route 85 was closed after two semi-trailers were flipped over, though the drivers were not injured. Dozens of houses and vehicles were badly damaged by the tornado as it passed through. The town of Windsor had hundreds

of homes and businesses damaged, including the town hall, in addition to trees down and electricity outages. In response to the disaster, Colorado Governor Bill Ritter declared a state of emergency and activated the Colorado National Guard in the badly damaged Weld County.

Severe storms also hit Laramie, Wyoming, 145 miles northwest of Denver, knocking out electricity to 7,300 customers and damaging buildings. One damaged building, the Quadra Dangle Square Dance Club, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, had its roof and porch ripped off. The Associated Press reports Brian Chapman of the National Weather Service in Cheyenne as saying that "indicators are very strongly in favor of it being a tornado," but no confirmation is possible until the damage is fully assessed. Governor Dave Freudenthal of Wyoming has also authorized a crew of eight National Guardsmen to help clean up the damage. Another twister touched down just east of Cheyenne, Wyoming. The local fire department responded to a call after the storm damaged a barn and a house just south of I-80.

Rain, hail and snow pelted the entire region, and more storms are predicted for today. The National Weather Service in Cheyenne reports, "Severe thunderstorms are likely again this afternoon into early this evening mainly east of the Laramie Range...with the greatest threat east of Cheyenne across the southern Nebraska panhandle. Locally heavy rainfall is also possible which may cause some localized flooding especially in areas that received heavy rainfall Thursday." Winds are expected to gust above 40mph throughout the day. At 7:40am

MST weather conditions were calm and partly cloudy just west of Laramie, Wyoming

### **Suicide bomb in Iraq kills six**

Six people are confirmed dead after a suicide bomb exploded in the Iraqi city of Fallujah. This incident took place at a checkpoint. All of the victims are civilians, according to Captain Mohammed Hussain.

The US military released a statement on the incident. "Iraqi police in Fallujah discovered a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device which detonated prior to its final destination," it said.

### **Today in History**

1626 – Director-General of New Netherland Peter Minuit bought Manhattan from Native Americans in exchange for trade goods valued at 60 guilders.

1738 – At a Moravian Church meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, John Wesley experienced a spiritual rebirth, leading to him launch the Methodist movement.

1822 – Ecuadorian War of Independence: Troops led by Antonio José de Sucre secured the independence of Quito from Spain at the Battle of Pichincha.

1883 – New York City's Brooklyn Bridge, at the time the longest suspension bridge in the world, was opened.

1988 – Section 28 of the United Kingdom Local Government Act of 1988, an amendment stating that a local authority cannot intentionally promote

homosexuality, was enacted, generating so much controversy that it was eventually repealed fifteen years later.

May 24 is Independence Day in Eritrea (1993); Aldersgate Day (Methodism); Saints Cyril and Methodius Day in Bulgaria and the Republic of Macedonia

### **Quote of the Day**

Every failure is a step to success.  
Every detection of what is false directs us towards what is true:  
every trial exhausts some tempting form of error. ~ William Whewell

### **Word of the Day**

pilfer v

1. To steal in small quantities, or articles of small value; to practise petty theft.

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