

**Top Stories**

**Chinese astronauts in Shenzhou VI return safely**



China's Shenzhou VI touched down safely in Inner Mongolia at 4.32 am (2032 GMT) after being in space for five days. The two astronauts were healthy and the mission was considered succesful by Mission Control. China is the third country to put people into space, after the US and the former Soviet Union.

**Australian Minister 'leaks' draft of anti-terror bill**

Jon Stanhope, the Australian Capital Territory Chief Minister, has posted a confidential draft of the proposed Australian anti-terror bill to his website. Concerns are being raised that the legislation could prevent free speech and peaceful protest in Australia.



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**Persistent rain storm in Northeast USA comes to an end**

On Saturday, the storm that blanketed the Northeast portion of the United States came to an end after eight days of consecutive rain. Many areas were flooded, while some areas managed to get very little damage. States affected by the storm were New Jersey, New Hampshire, parts of New York, and Connecticut.

At least 10 people across the Northeast were reported dead as a result of the storm, and four more are missing.

Some areas of New Jersey had more than a foot of rainfall. Acting Governor Richard J. Codey declared a state of emergency on Friday as a first step toward applying for federal aid. The emergency was lifted on Saturday at 8:00 PM local time.

**New York Times reporter Judith Miller breaks silence on Plame leak investigation**

New York Times reporter Judith Miller broke her media silence by writing a column the newspaper published on Sunday. Her lengthy story recounted two testimonies, September 30 and October 12, she gave to a U.S. federal grand jury seeking information on the source of the Valerie Plame leak. The column described the testimony as one that relied heavily on her reporting notes given to special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald between her first and second appearances.

By her account, after the two years that had passed from the outing of CIA operative Valerie Plame and the sketchy recollections she was able to re-create from her notes, she testified that she could not recall why, when, or where the name "Valerie Flame" — misspelled as it was — came from in her notes. Furthermore, she wrote of her testimony that she did not believe the

name came from "Scooter" Libby.

I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby is the chief of staff to Dick Cheney, vice-president of the United States. Libby, along with Karl Rove, are two high ranking administration insiders suspected of slipping information to the press in an effort to undermine Plame's husband Joe Wilson, the former ambassador to Niger who denied a White House claim that Iraq was trying to buy enriched uranium, a claim made by President Bush to support the build up to the war in Iraq.

The mistaken spelling, Miller explained, was made in a section of her notes unrelated to the interviews with Libby. Other notes documented 3 interviews with Libby, conducted in the year 2003, that in her NYT column she wrote:

June 23) ... Mr. Libby raised the subject of Mr. Wilson's wife for the first time. I wrote in my notes, inside parentheses, "Wife works in bureau?" I told Mr. Fitzgerald that I believed this was the first time I had been told that Mr. Wilson's wife might work for the C.I.A. July 8) ... our conversation also turned to Mr. Wilson's wife. My notes contain a phrase inside parentheses: "Wife works at Winpac." ... first time I had heard that Mr. Wilson's wife worked for Winpac, I assumed that she worked as an analyst, not as an undercover operative. July 12 (telephone) ... I might have called others about Mr. Wilson's wife. In my notebook I had written the words "Victoria Wilson" with a box around it, another apparent reference to Ms. Plame, who is also known as Valerie Wilson. I told Mr. Fitzgerald that I was not sure whether Mr. Libby had used this name or whether I just made a mistake in writing it on my own. Another possibility, I said, is that I gave Mr. Libby the wrong name on purpose to see whether he would correct me and confirm her identity.

These notes were written shortly before the Robert Novak story on July 14 was published, revealing Valerie Plame, and after which the

**Featured story**

**Explosion outside Trinidad nightclub wounds more than 10**



An explosion outside a popular nightclub in Trinidad's capital, Port-of-Spain, has wounded at least 10. Officials are unsure of the cause of the explosion and no group has yet claimed responsibility.

**Wikipedia Current Events**

- Helen Clark announces the formation of a Labour-led Government in New Zealand. The Progressive Party is in coalition. New Zealand First and United Future support the government and are each given ministerial positions outside Cabinet.

controversy was ignited. Asked by prosecutor Fitzgerald how she felt about the Novak story, she wrote that she was "annoyed at having been beaten on a story."

Before she agreed to testify, and thereby be released jail, she sought from Libby his personal assurance that his pre-existing waiver of confidentiality was not forced upon him by outside pressure. She also sought an agreement from Fitzgerald that grand jury questioning would be restricted in scope to questions relating only directly to her interviews with Libby.

Both of these, the assurance from Libby and the limited scope by Fitzgerald, were granted; but why she thought she needed them is open to question. Critics are skeptical of what motives are driving Miller, and wonder if she has something to hide or is protecting Libby. In the absence of road blocks to testifying that she herself made, the 85 days she spent in jail would otherwise not have been imposed.

Fitzgerald had been planning to wrap up the investigation sometime this month when the grand jury term expires October 28.

### **Tropical Storm Wilma forms, ties record for busiest hurricane season**

On Monday morning, the first ever tropical storm to be named with a 'W', Tropical Storm Wilma, formed from its beginnings as tropical depression twenty-four. The formation of this storm makes this year a tie with the 1933 Atlantic hurricane season for the busiest hurricane season ever, with a total of 21 storms.

Wilma is currently about 220 miles (370 km) southeast of Grand Cayman and 230 miles northeast of the Nicaragua / Honduras border. It is currently moving slowly southeast at 5 mph (8km/h). The storm has winds of 45 mph (75 km/h). The system is expected to move over warm waters with little wind shear which could lead to a rapid intensification of the storm into a hurricane within 72 hours.

The storm track raises concerns over Gulf of Mexico crude oil rigs already devastated by two

prior hurricanes, Katrina and Rita. Current predictions have Wilma entering the gulf on Saturday as a Category 2 storm or possibly stronger. Crude oil prices have already responded by jumping upward by \$1 a barrel.

Wilma is the last alphabetically on the list of hurricane names; Q, U, X, Y and Z are not used. If another storm forms after Wilma, it will named using the Greek alphabet starting with Alpha. Also, if another storm forms, it will break the tie between this season and the 1933 season, making the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season the busiest ever in 154 years of recorded history.

### **Chicago White Sox win 2005 American League baseball pennant**

Sunday night, the Chicago White Sox, a professional baseball team in North America, won the 2005 American League Pennant by defeating the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim by a score of 6-3 to achieve their 4th win in the American League Championship Series.

The final series of the baseball season will be the ultimate North American baseball championship, the World Series, a best of 7-games match-up where the winners of the American League and National League meet and play.

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The Shenzhou VI orbited the Earth 76 times during the mission.

Fei Junlong and Nie Haisheng, the astronauts aboard the flight, were watched by Chinese around the country on national television. The Shenzhou VI is China's second manned space mission.

Hundreds of residents in Nie's hometown in

northern Hebei province showed their pride by celebrating the successful mission with dragon dances and firecrackers.

The mission was conducted "entirely for peaceful purposes", President Wen Jiabao said to allay concerns that China's military might be using space for other matters.

Yang Liwei was the first Chinese in space and orbited the Earth in the Shenzhou V 14 times in 2003.

The space program is hoped to instill patriotism and cultivate a love for science and technology in the next generation of Chinese.

"Today, an independent, self-sufficient, constantly strengthening China has, like a miracle, become one of a handful of countries able to make the dream of spaceflight a reality," said the Xinhua state news agency.

China is the third country to put people into space, after the former Soviet Union and the USA.

### **Iraq counting ballots**

Iraq's election commission announced Monday that officials were investigating "unusually high" numbers of "yes" votes in about a dozen provinces during Iraq's landmark referendum on a new constitution, raising questions about irregularities in the balloting. The Electoral Commission made no mention of fraud, and an official with knowledge of the election process cautioned that it was too early to say whether the unusual numbers were incorrect or if they would have an effect on the outcome.

The historic Iraqi vote on the proposed draft constitution ended on Saturday, and ballots are now being tallied. Initial reports show the draft constitution will be supported. Security during voting day was tightened, although the U.S. military has announced that five American soldiers and a marine were killed by a bomb blast on the day of the referendum, bringing the U.S. death toll in Iraq to 1,971.

Early returns showed the vote was split as was expected along largely communal lines. Opponents failed to secure the necessary two-thirds "no" vote in any three of Iraq's 18 provinces, according to counts that local officials provided to The Associated Press. In the crucial central provinces with mixed ethnic and religious populations, enough Shiites and Kurds voted to block the Sunni attempt to reject the constitution. Local election officials gave a picture of a strong "Yes" vote in the Shiite Muslim provinces of the south, and of a substantial "No" vote in the Sunni Arab heartlands of the north and west.

Rejection of the draft constitution appears to be impossible according to initial vote counts reported in the three key provinces that Sunni Arab opponents relied on to defeat the draft constitution. Opponents need a two-thirds "no" vote in three of those provinces. They may have reached the threshold in Anbar and Salahuddin, but Diyala and Ninevah provinces appeared to have gone strongly "Yes".

According to the Arab News, it is probable that the Iraqis have agreed to the new constitution. It is believed that its passing is almost certain because the majority, both Shiite and Kurds, supported it. The Sunnis, on the other hand, have looked at the constitution as a "death sentence." They fear that the document, drafted as it was by a Kurdish-Shiite-dominated Parliament, will ultimately divide Iraq into three separate districts: a powerful minstate of Kurds in the north, the majority Shiites in the south, both capitalizing on Iraq's oil wealth, and the Sunnis, according to this scenario, would be left impoverished and isolated somewhere in the middle.

President Bush referred to the vote as a victory for opponents of terrorism. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, speaking in London as the vote-count in Iraq was in progress, said the draft constitution had probably passed. Rice said later the final result was still not known. An unofficial tally is expected on Thursday and a final announcement on Oct. 24, senior electoral official Farid Ayyar stated on Sunday. It is expected that the official count will take several days.

Electoral officials estimated that as many as 10 million of Iraq's eligible 15.5 million voters cast ballots, which would yield a turnout of around 63 to 64 percent. In the January election which approved their interim government, 58 percent of voters turned out.

President Bush said in his weekly radio address Saturday that the weekend election is a critical step forward in the quest for democracy in Iraq. For the draft constitution to be approved after the months of negotiations by lawmakers in Iraq's transitional National Assembly, a majority of voters must support it. With what is believed to be strong support in Shiite and Kurdish communities, who together account for more than three-quarters of the population, the 50% threshold is expected to be met.

A rejection of the draft constitution would be viewed by coalition members as serious blow to the political evolution in Iraq that followed the U.S. led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003. The transitional assembly would be dissolved, and the process of writing a new constitution would have to start all over after a new assembly could be elected in December. Regardless of the outcome, Iraq will hold parliamentary elections on December 15, the office of the President said on Sunday.

A new, permanent government, could possibly clear the way for the United States and its coalition allies to begin a withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

### Today in History

- 1009 - The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a Christian church now within the walled Old City of Jerusalem, was destroyed by the "mad" Fatimid caliph Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah.
- 1851 - Moby-Dick, a novel by Herman Melville (pictured), was first published as The Whale.
- 1922 - The British Broadcasting Company was founded by a consortium to establish a network of radio transmitters to provide a national broadcasting service in the United Kingdom.
- 1954 - Texas Instruments introduced the first transistor radio.
- 1977 - Various Red Army Faction members committed suicide in prison, ending the German

Autumn crisis.

October 18 is Alaska Day; Feast day of Saint Luke

### Quote of the Day

"We take the position that there is no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation." ~ Pierre Trudeau

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