



### Top Stories

#### Successful launch of Space Shuttle Atlantis



Space Shuttle Atlantis successfully launched this morning after 4 years of inactivity.

Liftoff, from Launch Complex 39B at the Kennedy Space Center occurred at 15:14:55 GMT, with the spacecraft reaching orbit about 8 1/2 minutes later.

#### Michael Schumacher wins Italian Grand Prix, announces plans to retire



Michael Schumacher won the FIA Formula-1 Italian Grand Prix on the on the Autodromo Nazionale Monza racing track and announced that he will retire from racing.

### Featured story

#### Experts: obesity is a bigger threat than AIDS or bird flu



According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 1 billion people in the world today are overweight, and 300 million of those are obese. Obesity and overweightness cause many health problems, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and stroke, and certain forms of cancer

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Roger Federer wins the U.S. Open defeating Andy Roddick 6-2, 4-6, 7-5, 6-1.
- A 6.0 magnitude earthquake occurred in the Gulf of Mexico today, at 14:56:07 UTC, and was felt across the southeastern United States.
- NATO and Afghan forces have killed 94 Taliban fighters in intense overnight clashes in southern Afghanistan, the military alliance says.
- Hurricane Florence forces hurricane warnings for Bermuda as it threatens the island with rain of 5 to 8 inches. Florence is also expected to become a Category 2 hurricane prior to affecting the island.
- The most successful driver in Formula One history, German Michael Schumacher, announces his retirement from the sport at the end of the current season.
- The Sri Lankan Army says that 28 soldiers were killed and 119 were wounded while battling the Tamil Tiger rebels in Jaffna. The deaths of nearly 150 Tamil Tigers were also reported.

#### Extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis strain emerges in South Africa

New research findings from South Africa on an extremely drug-resistant (XDR) strain of the bacterium that causes tuberculosis (TB) alarm experts. XDR-TB is defined as resistance to three or more second line antibiotics for TB.

The condition remains treatable with other types of medications, but those are less effective, costlier and toxic. If the afflicted persons can't be diagnosed timely and given proper treatment, they can die within a month. In the new study, 52 out of 53 people affected have subsided.

Dr. Tony Moll discovered the Extremely Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (XDR-TB) in the South African region KwaZulu-Natal. In an interview, he said the new variant was "very highly troubling and alarming because of the very high fatality rate." Some patients might have contracted the bug in the hospital, Dr. Moll thinks, and at least two were hospital health workers. In one year time, an infected person may infect 10 to 15 close contacts. However, the percentage of XDR-TB in the entire group of people with tuberculosis still seems to be low; 6,000 of the total 330,000 people infected at any particular moment in South Africa.

The typical symptoms of TB (like prolonged coughing, fever, night sweats, weight loss and chest pain), and signs on X-ray are identical for XDR-TB. To ascertain the presence of this resistant form, a laboratory test on the patient's sputum is necessary, but these tests are often too expensive in the poor countries where TB is present. Also, these countries frequently have high HIV-rates too; 44 patient's in the study by Dr. Moll were seropositive. These patients are particularly

vulnerable. Dr. Karin Weyer, director of the South African Medical Research Council's Unit for TB Research, cautioned that "In a country with such high prevalence of HIV, the emergence of XDR-TB is a nightmare." Because TB is often a hallmark of AIDS, many people afraid of the social stigma don't seek medical attention.

These distressing findings urged a two-day meeting in Johannesburg to discuss the situation. Experts like Dr. Moll believe the new strain is also present in other provinces then Kwazulu-Natal. Conference organizers report cases in Mozambique and Botswana too. The World Health Organization has called for renewed efforts to combat the disease. Meanwhile, officials of the Health Ministry are suspected to be enforcing a media ban on the topics of AIDS and possibly TB.

During the 1990s, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), defined as resistance to at least isoniazid and rifampin, emerged as a threat to TB control, both in the United States and worldwide.

### **Thai election rerun likely in November**

Following on from the April 2 snap-election, the Thai News Agency is reporting that current caretaker PM, Thaksin Shinawatra expects the new election to be held in November.

April's snap-election followed months of building criticism and protests and was apparently called by the beleaguered PM to renew his mandate. This effort was derailed by mass-protests calling for his resignation and an opposition boycott that left Thai Rak Thai the only credible contender in the election where over 10 million people chose to abstain.

Irregularities led to the annullment of the April 2 results, and the eventual removal of the country's election commission, Friday saw the Thai Senate appoint a new election commission. With the likely date of them assuming their duties being only a month prior to the currently scheduled October 15 election rerun, the senate anticipated a delay of a month would be requested.

### **Jack Layton reaffirmed as Canadian New Democratic leader with 92% support**

Jack Layton's leadership of the New Democratic Party of Canada has been reaffirmed, this morning, at the party's federal convention in Quebec City where 92% of delegates voted against having a new leadership convention. The vote was the first formal say by party members on Layton's stewardship of the NDP since his election as party leader at the 2003 NDP leadership convention.

Layton, 56, has led the NDP through two federal elections and to its highest level of support since the 1980s. With 29 of 308 seats in the Canadian House of Commons, however, the party is still not a contender for government though it was able to hold the effective balance of power from 2004 to 2006 when the Liberal Party ruled with a minority government.

The resounding endorsement of Layton's leadership will help boost the leader's reputation after it was bruised at the opening of the convention with the news that Carl Hetu, who had been the Quebec co-chair of Layton's 2003 leadership campaign and star candidate Paul Summerville had bolted the party. Hetu criticised Layton for not doing enough to build the party in w:Quebec while

Summerville, a former banker who had been the NDP's economic spokesperson in the last election, denounced the party as being hostile to the idea of a market economy and joined the Liberals.

Earlier in the convention, an estimated 90% of delegates voted for a resolution supporting Layton's call for Canada to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan.

### **Michael Schumacher wins Italian Grand Prix, announces plans to retire**

Michael Schumacher won the FIA Formula One Italian Grand Prix on the on the Autodromo Nazionale Monza racing track. The "Red Baron" passed the checkered flag and won the race, the 90th win in his long career. Kimi Räikkönen, the McLaren Mercedes driver started from pole, but was unable to keep up with Schumacher after the first pit-stop and finished second.

As expected, Ferrari's winner spoke of his future in Formula One after the race. He announced that he will retire from Formula One as the man who wins the most then the other drivers - a true champion of this sport. He will surely struggle the last three races and it will be much easier because of a good standings in drivers' and constructors' championship.

His closest competitor Fernando Alonso, the first Renault pilot, held an unbelievable race, but was out due to the engine failure 9 laps to go. He was heading for the third place. This closed his gap from Schumacher to the minimum of 2 points and allowed Ferrari to take the lead from Renault. Second Renault driver Giancarlo Fisichella finished fourth.

A fantastic race for the first Poland Robert Kubica - BMW Sauber driver won his first podium. In the final protocol he placed himself third though started seventh. He replaced on the podium his co-driver Nick Heidfeld who started third, but finished eighth due to the penalty for speeding on the pit-lane and a failed start.

Felipe Massa, who will replace Schumacher in Ferrari next year, had an extra pit-stop due to a tire problem thus allowed Kubica to end the race alone.

Honda drivers managed two good results - Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello finished 5th and 6th, accordingly..

Michael Schumacher Formula One career major records  
 Most race wins: 90 (previous record beaten in 2001)  
 Most race wins with one team: 71  
 Most podium finishes: 153  
 Most second place finishes: 43  
 Most points finishes: 188  
 Most pole positions: 68  
 Most fastest laps: 75  
 Most race wins from pole position: 40  
 Most "clean-sweeps" (pole position, race win, and fastest lap): 22  
 Most championship points: 1,354

Michael Schumacher began his career on 1991 Italian Grand Prix.

### **South Africa defeat Australia in final match of the 2006 Tri Nations rugby series**

In the final game of the 2006 Tri Nations Series rugby union tournament, South Africa defeated Australia 24 points to 16 at Ellis Park in Johannesburg. Despite winning their last two games, South Africa finished third on the table, Australia second, and the All Blacks as winners.

The loss for Australia in Johannesburg extends their poor record in South Africa - their last win there was in 2000, and their last win at Ellis Park was over 40 years ago. Fourie du Preez and Breyton Paulse both scored tries for South Africa with Andre Pretorius kicking one conversion, three penalties goals and one drop goal. Stephen Larkham scored Australia's only try and Stirling Mortlock kicking the one conversion and three penalty goals. International rugby continues throughout the rest of the year, with a number of teams involved in 2007 Rugby World Cup qualifying, and November Tests matches in the northern hemisphere.

### **Today in History**

1297 - Scots under William Wallace defeated English troops in the Battle of Stirling Bridge.  
 1857 - Paiutes and Mormon militias killed about 120 California-bound pioneers in a wagon train in the Mountain Meadows massacre.  
 1922 - The British Mandate of Palestine began.  
 1973 - A military coup in Chile headed by Augusto Pinochet overthrew the government of President Salvador Allende.  
 2001 - September 11 Attacks: Three passenger airliners were hijacked to destroy the World Trade Center in New York City and part of The Pentagon in Washington, D.C.; a fourth aircraft crashed in Pennsylvania. In total, almost 3,000 people were killed.  
 September 11 is New Year's Day in the Coptic and the Ethiopian calendars, National Day of Catalonia, Teacher's Day in parts of Latin America.

### **Quote of the Day**

"Organisms are not billiard balls, propelled by simple and

measurable external forces to predictable new positions on life's pool table. Sufficiently complex systems have greater richness. Organisms have a history that constrains their future in myriad, subtle ways."

~ Stephen Jay Gould

### **Word of the Day**

galvanise; v

1. To shock or stimulate into sudden activity.
2. To coat with rust-resistant zinc.
3. (chemistry): To coat with a thin layer of metal by electrochemical means.

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