



Top Stories

Prime Minister Harper meets with President Bush

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper met with President George W. Bush at the White House today. The meeting was a short one and focused primarily on global security, particularly bilateral security issues addressing the two countries.

Switzerland accuses Israel of breaking international law in Gaza

The Swiss government has accused Israel of "not taking the precautions required of it in international law" with Palestinians in their response to what Israel claims was the kidnap of an Israeli soldier.

Featured story

France beat Portugal 1-0 and reach FIFA World Cup final

An experienced French side beat Portugal 1-0 in an unspectacular semi-final of the Fifa World Cup in Munich, Wednesday.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The Space Shuttle Discovery successfully docks with the International Space Station as part of the STS-121 mission.
- Great Britain's young people are for the first time spending more time looking at Internet sites than watching TV, a new survey has revealed.
- In Mexico's presidential election, PRD candidate Andres Manuel

Wikipedia Current Events

Lopez Obrador says he will file a legal challenge against the results of the ongoing official vote count that have him losing to the PAN's Felipe Calderon by 0.57 percentage points.

• A United States Military AH-64 Apache helicopter made an emergency landing in South Korea. There was no injury or damage to the helicopter.

• The New York Court of Appeals rules in a 4-2 decision, that gay marriage is not allowed under state law.

• Taiwan, plans to test a missile capable of hitting mainland China. This has alarmed the island's main ally, the United States.

• South Korean media states that there are three or four short to medium range missiles on the launch pad in North Korea, ready for launch. North Korea has now threatened to do so.

• The Nathula Pass between India and China, sealed during the Sino-Indian War in 1962, reopens after 44 years.

• Sectarian violence in Iraq: A car bomb explodes outside a Shi'ite Muslim shrine near the holy city of Najaf in Iraq, killing at least seven people.

• An explosion, believed to be caused by a bomb, killed at least eight people in a minibus in the city of Tiraspol, in Transnistria, a breakaway region of Moldova.

Wikipedia Current Events

• IDF have created a buffer zone in northern Gaza to prevent Palestinians from firing rockets at Israel. (FOX News)

• Palestinian abductors relax their demands for release of the kidnapped Israeli soldier Cpl. Gilad Shalit.

Man urinated on Canadian National War Memorial

A man urinated on National War Memorial in Ottawa.

A retired Canadian military major, Michel Pilon, saw the man and two of his friends urinate on the memorial at about 11 p.m. Saturday. The man was photographed urinating on the National War Memorial in Ottawa. The 23-year-old was pictured smiling and making a hand gesture toward the camera.

Ottawa police are looking for the 23-year-old Montreal man and his two friends, both under the age of 18. "They should have more respect," said, Ottawa police Sgt. Jean Lamothe. "This is a shrine to people who fought for us in the wars."

They could be charged with public urination or behaving in an offensive manner, and fined \$125 or required to do a day of community work.

Portuguese Culture Ministry suspends opening of Afonso I's tomb

The Portuguese Ministry of Culture

suspended today the opening of King Afonso Henriques' tomb. The opening of the tomb would allow investigators to reconstruct an biological profile of the first King of Portugal, deceased 821 years ago.

This afternoon the Portuguese Institute of Architectural Patrimony (IPPAR) announced its decision to suspend the project for the reconstruction of the biological profile of Afonso I. For which the opening of the tomb at the Santa Cruz Monastery, in Coimbra, was scheduled for today at 5 p.m. local time (1600 Thursday, UTC).

The note released by the Institute said that after consulting the "respective internal process it was evident that the adequate and necessary procedures were not fulfilled" which include the "authorization of this institute and of the minister of Culture for the accomplishment of the related exhumation".

When contacted by TSF news agency, the responsible of IPPAR Ilisio Summerville explained that they "had consulted the process and verified that neither the current direction of IPPAR, nor the previous one had given authorization for the act [of the opening of the tomb], because there was missing a series of authorizations, between them the authorization of the minister of Culture."

The responsible clarified that the investigation will be authorized as soon that "all formalities are fulfilled".

The original authorization to open the tomb consists of a letter sent by the regional director of IPPAR, Jose Maria Tadeu Henriques, on June 23, to Professor Eugenia Cunha, an specialist in

Anthropology Biology of the Faculty of Sciences & Technology of the University of Coimbra and responsible for the investigation.

The team of investigators, lead by the anthropologist Eugenia Cunha, is composed of another two anthropologists of the University of Coimbra, Ana Carina Marques and Sonia Codinha, by the medic and anthropologist Miguel Botella (University of Granada), by the medic Bertrand Ludes and the geneticist Christine Kayser (University of Strasbourg), and by the historian Jose Mattoso (New University of Lisbon).

By analysing the bones and other mortal remains, like hair and nails, of Portugal's founder, the investigators would be able to determinate his stature, genetic profile, diet and any diseases that he might had.

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One of the larger issues was the pending U.S. law that would require everyone crossing the Canada-U.S. border to have a passport or a special identification card. Prime Minister Harper said; "if the fight for security ends up meaning that the United States becomes more closed to its friends, then the terrorists have won," as part of his appeal that Congress delay or reject the proposed border law.

Prime Minister Harper brought birthday greetings and a surprise

gift. But Bush found out about it during the press conference in the East Room. A Canadian reporter blew the secret.

Mexican conservative wins presidential election

Presidential candidate Felipe Calderon won a narrow victory on Thursday in the Mexican general election. The leading rival candidate, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, did not concede and said that he would mobilize public rallies and seek to contest the results in court.

Both leading Mexican presidential candidates earlier proclaimed victory in the Mexican presidential race despite notice from Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) that the numbers were currently too close to determine the winner.

By Thursday morning, with 98% of the vote tallies recounted, Calderon held a lead of less than one percent over Lopez Obrador.

Lopez Obrador has called for a full vote-by-vote recount after the president of the IFE, Luis Carlos Ugalde, said on national television that the preliminary count could not be used to call the race, and that more than three million votes had not been counted yet. Ugalde has said that those votes were valid, as they were not illegible or reached late.

Questions were raised about the vote count after discrepancies were noticed in the counting. While some of Lopez Obrador's supporters have alleged manipulation of the counting process, Lopez Obrador himself has discounted the possibility of outright fraud and international election observers have said that the election was transparent and largely free of problems.

The interior minister, Carlos Abascal, has said that a total recount is "physically impossible and also legally impossible." However, reports from every voting booth filled by representatives of all parties have already been distributed to the contenders.

In accordance with Mexican electoral law, workers counted the tallies attached to ballot boxes at polling stations, but were not opening properly sealed and tallied ballot boxes.

Now that the final count is complete, Mexico's Federal Electoral Tribunal of seven judges can hear complaints and consider overturning the election. It must declare a winner by September 6, 2006.

New York's highest court upholds gay marriage ban

New York State's Court of Appeals today rejected suits brought by gay and lesbian couples who sought equal treatment under the state marriage law.

A plurality of three judges on the six-justice court signed the majority opinion, saying that gay marriage was a "question to be addressed by the Legislature." One justice concurred without signing the majority opinion and the remaining two dissented.

The ruling pertains to four lawsuits brought by 44 same-sex couples who argued that the ban on homosexual marriage violates their rights under the state constitution.

In its ruling, the court wrote that it was reasonable for the state legislature to prohibit same-sex marriage on the grounds of stability in child rearing and

rejected comparisons to miscegenation laws.

This decision will likely send the question of same-sex marriage back to the state legislature.

US soldier arrested for rape and four murders in Iraq

U.S. federal prosecutors have charged a former U.S. soldier who served in Iraq with the rape and murder of an Iraqi girl and the murder of three members of her family, including the girl's sister believed to be five years old.

The rape victim was Abeer Qassim Hamza. The formal U.S. complaint estimated her age to be 25 years old; though Ahmed Taha, the girl's uncle, put her age at a definitive 15 years old.

The charges follow a military investigation into the involvement of as many as five soldiers in the rape and murders committed in the town of Mahmoudiya, 30 km south of Baghdad, on March 12.

Steven D. Green, a 21-year-old former Army private first class in the 101st Airborne Division, appeared in a federal magistrate's courtroom in Charlotte on Monday. FBI agents had arrested Green on Friday and he is being held in Charlotte without bond pending a transfer to Louisville, Kentucky. He was recently honorably discharged from the Army because of an alleged "personality disorder."

Prosecutors said Green entered the family's home, where Green shot the three relatives and that he and another soldier raped the female and killed her. All of the victims' bodies were found burned in an apparent attempt at cover-up.

In an affidavit, FBI special agent

Gregor J. Ahlers said Green and three other soldiers from the 101st's 502nd Infantry Regiment were on duty at a traffic checkpoint when they conspired to rape the female who lived nearby.

According to witness testimony in the affidavit, the soldiers changed their clothes before going to the female's residence to avoid detection. Green took three members of the family - an adult male and female, and a girl estimated to be 5 years old"into a bedroom. Shots were heard from inside the bedroom.

"Green came to the bedroom door and told everyone, 'I just killed them, all are dead,'" Ahlers wrote in the affidavit.

The affidavit is based on interviews conducted by the FBI and investigators at Fort Campbell with soldiers assigned to Green's platoon. One of the soldiers claims he witnessed Green and another soldier rape the female.

"After the rape, (the soldier) witnessed Green shoot the woman in the head two-to-three times," the affidavit said.

U.S. officials and others had previously claimed the Iraqi family was killed in sectarian violence. Abeer Hamza's uncle, Ahmed Taha, told AP Television News that the family had believed insurgents had carried out the killings until the US military made public its investigation last week.

"Some said it was insurgents, and in fact, we ruled out the American troops," Taha said.

NZ teenager convicted in motorway case

The 15-year-old who killed Christopher Currie was Ngatai

Rewiti of Otahuhu, Auckland. He has been found not guilty of murder but guilty of manslaughter at the High Court of Auckland today, July 6. He was unable to be named earlier due to name suppression but after the verdict was heard Justice Helen Winkelmann lifted name suppression.

Rewiti will be given his sentence September 6.

The jury took four hours to reach the verdict after the four-day trial.

He was facing murder charges after dropping an eight-kilogram concrete block onto a car travelling on the Auckland motorway, killing the driver.

Coca-Cola trade secrets attempted to be sold to Pepsi

Three people have been charged in the United States for trying to sell Coca-Cola trade secrets to PepsiCo. The main suspect, administration worker Joya Williams, tried to sell documents and a liquid sample of a new Coca-Cola product to the rival, prosecutors said.

When being offered to buy the trade secrets in May, PepsiCo immediately contacted the FBI. A person calling himself "Dirk" wanted to meet a PepsiCo representative at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta in June. Instead, an undercover FBI agent met with Ibrahim Dimson, the man posing as "Dirk".

During the meeting it is said the undercover agent gave Dimson \$30,000 for the trade secrets and promised to pay an additional \$45,000 later. Then later that month, another agent later offered to buy the remaining trade secrets

for \$1.5m. The same day the suspects were arrested.

A third person, Edmund Duhaney, was also arrested.

PepsiCo said in a statement that "competition can sometimes be fierce, but also must be fair and legal".

Coca-Cola said that it would review its security measures. The corporation's top-secret formula of its main drink was not affected in this security breach.

Parlez-vous francais? Qapla! More Grade 11 boys proficient in Klingon than French: local survey

Toronto - More Grade 11 males at Don Mills Collegiate Institute are proficient in Klingon than French, suggests a survey conducted by this reporter.

Of 35 students who completed the survey and indicated that they were male and in Grade 11, only two indicated that they would be able to carry on a conversation, read newspapers and write personal letters in French. Three indicated they could do so in Klingon. (A fourth Klingon-speaker did not indicate gender or grade. No females, or males in other grades, checked off the language.)

The Klingon language was constructed by American language professor Marc Okrand for the namesake militaristic race of aliens in the Star Trek TV series. Its vocabulary, like the Klingon culture, focuses on fighting and space travel, and is often found lacking when other topics are discussed. Some devoted fans of the series learn the language using books written by Okrand, and use it in conversation with other fans, particularly at science

fiction conventions (which they often attend in costume). Unlike French, however, it is not a language of business, government or scholarly writing anywhere on Earth.

In Ontario, students educated primarily in English must take French classes from Grades 4 through 9 to receive their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas. However, transfer students from outside Canada may take only the Grade 9 class. No other languages besides English and French are mandatory.

The sample of Grade 11 males was small and possibly non-representative. Also, students only had to claim, but not demonstrate, their knowledge of a particular language. Therefore, the more "Klingon" than "French" result is tentative at best. (Klingon ranks several places behind French if the entire survey group is considered.) However, it underscores a real problem: a dearth of French proficiency in TDSB students and graduates. Only 30% of senior students surveyed say they can speak a basic level of French, and only 30% can read and write French at a basic level.

Singer Lorraine Hunt Lieberson dies in Santa Fe, New Mexico

Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, an American mezzo soprano singer, died Monday morning at her home in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Lieberson, 52, died after a bout with terminal cancer, according to Richard Gaddes, general director of the Santa Fe Opera.

Lieberson was born in San Francisco where her father conducted community opera productions. She began her musical career as a violinist.

Lieberson avoided the standard operatic repertoire, preferring instead to perform early (pre-1750) music and contemporary works. Particularly respected for her musicianship, she was focused on music and art, rather than on cultivating celebrity.

Two weeks ago, Lieberson canceled all of her remaining 2006 performances. Lieberson's younger sister Alexis died of breast cancer in 2000, the same year the singer herself was diagnosed with breast cancer.

She is survived by her husband, mother, father, brother, and sister.

Today in History

1456 - Joan of Arc was acquitted of heresy posthumously.

1846 - American forces led by Commodore John D. Sloat occupied Monterey and Yerba Buena, beginning the annexation of California.

1937 - The Marco Polo Bridge Incident marked the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War.

1991 - The Slovenian War formally ended with the signing of the Brioni Agreement.

2005 - A series of four bomb explosions struck London's public transport system, killing 56.

July 07 is Independence Day in the Solomon Islands; Tanabata in Japan.

Quote of the Day

"Sin lies only in hurting others unnecessarily. All other 'sins' are invented nonsense."

~ Robert A. Heinlein

Word of the Day

sycophant; n

1. One who uses compliments to gain self-serving favor or advantage from another.

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