



Top Stories

UK sources say British sailors detained by Iran to be tried for espionage

The 15 British sailors that were arrested by Iranian Revolutionary Guards could face charges of "espionage," according to associates of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who reported the charges on a website being run by the Iranian government.

Large earthquake off Japan, tsunami warning issued

Japan has issued a tsunami warning after experiencing a magnitude 7.1 earthquake off the west coast island of Honshu. The US Geological Survey reports a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit the Southern Pacific off Vanuatu at 11:40 a.m. local time. The tremor did not trigger a tsunami.

Featured story

Mass wedding held against racism in Belgium

In February, three couples refused to pledge their wedding vows in front of the black alderman of the city of Sint-Niklaas, because of the colour of his skin. So he decided to organise a mass wedding, to send a positive signal against racial discrimination in Belgium.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Bangkok's former Don Muang International Airport reopens for domestic flights to relieve strain on Suvarnabhumi Airport which is undergoing repairs.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Iran announces that it is partially suspending cooperation with the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency and will no longer advise it of new steps taken in its nuclear program.
- The Armenian Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan dies of a heart attack.
- UK says requests for access to 15 Royal Navy personnel held by Iran have been denied.
- Donald Tsang wins a second term as the Chief Executive of Hong Kong in the city's first contested race.
- Vanuatu is struck by an earthquake of 7.2 magnitude southeast of its capital Port Vila.
- A tsunami occurs on the northern coast of Japan after an earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.1 in the Sea of Japan. NHK reports that 1 person has died and 40 have been injured.
- Ten people are killed after a fire in a nightclub in Moscow, Russia caused by a 'fire show'.

NHL: Penguins blank Bruins to catch Devils

The Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Boston Bruins 5-0 on Sunday at Mellon Arena. Sidney Crosby led the Penguins with 2 goals and an assist, pushing his point total to 111 on the season. Evgeni Malkin, Gary Roberts, and Ryan Malone also scored for the Penguins. The Penguins were strong on special

teams, scoring 3 power play goals and 1 shorthanded goal, while also killing five Bruins penalties. Marc-Andre Fleury saved all 29 shots he faced. It was his 5th shutout this season and 7th of his career.

The Penguins moved into a tie with the New Jersey Devils with the win. The Penguins had tied them yesterday afternoon, but New Jersey's win that night put them ahead by 2 points once more. New Jersey holds the tiebreaker, with 44 wins against the Penguins' 43. They also sit 2 points behind the Ottawa Senators for 4th place in the East.

Meanwhile, Boston has lost the last 4 games and 7 of the past 9. They are virtually eliminated from the playoffs, sitting 13th in the Eastern Conference with 74 points. With 8 games remaining, they sit 10 points out of the playoffs.

The Penguins return to the ice Tuesday when they will travel to Washington to face the Capitals. The Bruins also play Tuesday, when they visit Ottawa.

2007 Cricket World Cup: Bangladesh vs Bermuda

Bangladesh beat Bermuda by 7 wickets (with 21 balls remaining) in a crucial Group B match - the final game of the group stage - in the World Cup at the Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

Bangladesh will therefore advance to the Super 8 phase, while India are eliminated.

Rain stopped play after just 3 overs, and again after 7.4, 8 overs and 15.1 overs. The match was reduced to 21 overs per side.

Toss: Bangladesh won, and decided to field first.

UK sources say British sailors detained by Iran to be tried for espionage

UK sources quote what they call "associates of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad" that the 15 British sailors that were arrested by Iranian Revolutionary Guards could face charges of espionage. The source for this claim remains unclear, however Rajanews.com, a news website run by some of supporters of Ahmadinejad said on their website: "If the charges of espionage is brought against them the result would be heavy punishment by current law."

"If it is proven that they deliberately entered Iranian territory, they will be charged with espionage. If that is proven, they can expect a very serious penalty since according to Iranian law, espionage is one of the most serious offenses," said the news report which also called the sailors "insurgents." Individuals who are tried and found guilty of espionage or spying would be penalized by death, according to Iranian law.

Iran states that the sailors were engaged "in illegal and suspicious activities" inside Iranian waterways at the time of their detention and that the sailors "have admitted to violating the territorial waters of the Islamic republic," said General Alireza Afshar, Iran's top military general.

Asharq Alawsat newspaper reported that the sailors are being held until five Iranian guards, detained in Iraq by the United

States early in 2007, are released to the Iranian government.

"As soon as the corps's five members are released, the Britons can go home," an unnamed source close to the command of Qods Force, who also said that Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei approved of the trade off.

The sailors and marines, from the Type 22 frigate HMS Cornwall, had been inspecting, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1723, a ship that was believed to be smuggling cars into Iraq, though it was subsequently cleared after inspection when Iranian gunboats surrounded the sailors and arrested them at gunpoint.

Reports also say that the sailors were taken to the Iranian capital of Tehran where they are allegedly going to appear before a court. It is not known when they will appear before the court in Iran or when the hearing will be held.

As a result of the detention of the sailors, the United Kingdom has activated their "COBRA emergency committee", which is Britain's crisis management team as the U.K. denies that the sailors were in Iranian waters. Tony Blair, the U.K.'s Prime Minister calls the situation "unjustified and wrong."

"This is a very serious situation and there is no doubt at all that these people were taken from a boat in Iraqi waters. I hope the Iranian government understands how fundamental an issue this is for us. They should not be under any doubt at all about how seriously we regard this act, which was unjustified and wrong. It is simply not true that they went into Iranian territorial waters," Blair claimed during a news conference today

who also stated that the situation could be resolved within the next couple of days.

"The quicker it is resolved, the easier it will be for all of us," added Blair.

In a press release March 25, Foreign Office Minister Lord Triesman stated, "We've been insisting that [the sailors] should be released immediately - there is no reason to hold them - that they should be released unharmed and that we should be in a position to assure their families that they are in good health and that they're safe."

Triesman indicated that meetings have taken place with Iranian officials over the release of the seized British sailors, and that "they're delicate discussions."

Lane Cove Tunnel opens in Sydney

The last piece of Sydney's orbital motorway system - the Lane Cove Tunnel opened to traffic at 2PM AEST today. The 3.6 Km long tunnel took three years, 9,000 workers and AUD1.1 billion to complete.

The tunnel was opened by four people who built it as well as the NSW Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal. Premier Iemma did not attend, opting to stay at home with his family after yesterday's election win.

Over the next month, motorists will be able to use the tunnel toll-free before a toll of \$2.55 per car is introduced. It is expected around 80,000 vehicles per day will use the tunnel during it's toll-free period.

Designers of the tunnel claim it will reduce travel times by as much as 17 minutes.

The NSW Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) has warned motorists that delays may be encountered as drivers get used to the new tunnel and associated changes. Last month the RTA launched a \$1.1 million advertising campaign to advise motorists of the changes associated with the Lane Cove Tunnel including a virtual test drive on its website.

The tunnel completes Sydney's orbital motorway system, a 110 kilometre stretch of motorways circling the city. The Lane Cove Tunnel connects the Hills Motorway (M2) to the Gore Hill Freeway bypassing Epping Road.

Associated with the tunnel are changes to Epping Road (reducing lanes and providing bus lanes), widening of the Gore Hill Freeway and the Falcon Street Gateway.

The Falcon Street Gateway is a pair of north facing on/off ramps onto the Warringah Freeway which are tolled at \$1.27 for cars.

Both the Lane Cove Tunnel and Falcon Street Gateway feature fully electronic tolling and have no cash toll booths.

U.S. court grants Verizon injunction, Vonage appeals

U.S. District Judge Claude Hilton ruled Friday to grant a request for a permanent injunction against Vonage for violating patented intellectual property rights of Verizon.

The injunction would not take effect until after a hearing scheduled for April 6. The court will rule on whether the request by Vonage to stay the decision has sufficient merit during the time it would take for the largest U.S. VoIP provider to appeal the March 8 jury finding that the company violated what it

maintains are Verizon innovations too broadly defined to be patentable.

"Despite this obvious attempt by Verizon to cripple Vonage, the litigation will not stop Vonage from continuing to provide quality VoIP service to our millions of customers," said Mike Snyder, the Vonage chief executive officer.

The March 8 jury findings dismissed Vonage of wrong-doing on 4 of Verizon's 7 claims that Vonage infringed on its patent rights.

Verizon noted as part of its complaint against Vonage that, "Vonage's expanded marketing and advertising of its infringing services threaten to shift more customers and goodwill to its business at Verizon's expense," according to Olga Kharif of CIO Today.

Vonage says it did not know it was infringing on patents rights of the 3 Verizon claims that held up in court. The effect of an injunction on the 2.2 million Vonage customers using the services would mean:

1. an inability to place Internet calls to traditional phone line services
2. the elimination of voice mail and call waiting
3. the lack of wireless to Internet phone calls

Harper: "The Red Ensign of 1917 will fly over Vimy"

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has requested the Canadian Red Ensign flag fly at Vimy Ridge ceremonies next month, Harper told his cabinet ministers that he wanted both the Red Ensign and the Maple Leaf hoisted in Vimy, France, at the 90th anniversary of the First World War battle, sources close to the Prime Minister said.

"He said, 'The Red Ensign of 1917

will fly over Vimy,' " one source told The Globe and Mail last week.

The Right Honourable Jason Kenney, Privy Councillor, the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism, and Canadian Identity, all but confirmed this week that both flags would be raised. "Canadian Red Ensign of 1917 will fly in France next month to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and the re-dedication of the Canadian National Vimy Memorial."

The decision was hailed as a victory by veterans' groups and advocates, who have been lobbying Ottawa to have the historical ensign displayed over the Canadian National Vimy Memorial. Veterans Affairs cited a governmental protocol that allows no other flag than the Maple Leaf to fly on federal property. The land on which the Vimy Memorial was built was donated to Canada by France. "We know where the veterans are coming from . . . but we have to follow protocol," said Janice Summerby, a spokeswoman for Veterans Affairs.

Meanwhile a new poll has indicated that a majority of Canadians want their two national flags to fly at Vimy ridge next month.

The Ipsos Reid survey finds 79 per cent of respondents support the idea of flying both the current flag and the old Canadian 'Red Ensign' during a ceremony marking the 90th anniversary in April. At the time of the famous WWI battle at Vimy Ridge, the Canadian flag was the Red Ensign, which includes the Royal Union.

In 1965, the flag was changed to today's Maple Leaf design after heated debate across the country.

Large earthquake off Japan, tsunami warning issued

Japan has issued a tsunami warning after experiencing a magnitude 7.1 earthquake off the west coast island of Honshu. The US Geological Survey reported a magnitude 6.7 earthquake on March 25, 2007 at 9:41 a.m. local time near the west coast of Honshu and a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in the Southern Pacific off Vanuatu at 11:40 a.m. local time. The tremor did not trigger a tsunami.

The USGS has reported subsequent smaller tremors in the regions of Honshu, on March 25, 2007 at 6:11 p.m. local time and Vanuatu, at 9:37 p.m., with magnitudes of 5.5 and 5.2, respectively.

Japan's Meteorological Agency lifted the tsunami advisory for Ishikawa prefecture at 11:30 a.m. JST.

Japan's public broadcaster, NHK, has reported 170 injured and 1 dead. The death occurred after a woman was struck, reportedly, by a stone lantern in her garden. NHK also states that South Korea's meteorological agency broadcast a tsunami advisory for the eastern and southeastern coast areas. A 50 cm tsunami was expected to reach the Busan area at 12:02 pm local time.

NHK also reported that the Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear power plant in Niigata prefecture was operating normally. Hokuriku Electric Power Co. reported no effects from the earthquake and that the Number 1 and 2 reactors at its Shika nuclear power plant were shut down. It is reported that some 9400 homes in the region are without water and approximately 100 without electricity. Some roads have been damaged, railway service interrupted in the affected areas, and the Noto Airport in

Ishikawa prefecture remains closed.

The Japanese government has set up a task force at the risk management center in Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official residence. It is collecting information to confirm damage.

Today in History

- 1027 - Pope John XIX crowned Conrad II as Holy Roman Emperor.
- 1484 - William Caxton, the first printer of books in English, printed his translation of Aesop's Fables.
- 1971 - East Pakistan declared its independence from Pakistan to form Bangladesh, starting the Bangladesh Liberation War.
- 1995 - The Schengen Agreement, a 1985 treaty to abolish systematic border controls between participating European countries, went into effect.
- 1999 - The Melissa computer worm was released, infecting e-mail systems around the world.
- March 26 is Independence Day in Bangladesh (1971).

Quote of the Day

I am an Anarchist not because I believe Anarchism is the final goal, but because there is no such thing as a final goal. ~ Rudolf Rocker

Word of the Day

- pusillanimous; adj
1. Faint of heart; cowardly; contemptibly timid.

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