



Top Stories

Mandatory Evacuation declared in New Orleans



As Hurricane Katrina moves towards the city of New Orleans its Mayor has decided to enforce a mandatory evacuation for the city.

World Health Organization declares tuberculosis emergency in Africa



A World Health Organization (WHO) committee comprising of 43 African health ministers has declared a tuberculosis emergency in the continent.

Featured story

Man allowed to keep deceased friend in warehouse freezer

Russian businessman Xiao Li Bei has received permission to keep his deceased friend in an industrial freezer.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said India will give Afghanistan whatever help it needs in dealing with terrorism and rebuilding the country.
- Omri Sharon, son of the Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, has been formally indicted on charges of corruption following allegations concerning Ariel Sharon's bid to become leader of the Likud party in 1999.
- People begin to return to their homes as road and rail routes reopen after the 2005 European floods.
- The exiled ex-Ugandan president Milton Obote has announced he is to retire as president of the Uganda People's Congress, the party he has led since 1959.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Hurricane Katrina continues to rapidly strengthen reaching Category Five status. It has the second lowest pressure for an American hurricane in recorded history, with only the Labor Day Hurricane of 1935 having a lower measurement. Katrina is at 908 mb. and dropping, the Labor Day event of 1935 had 892 mb.
- Millions of people living in and around the below sea-level Louisiana city of New Orleans are leaving as Hurricane Katrina approaches. Storm surge is forecasted at 25 ft. The Mayor of New Orleans has issued a mandatory evacuation order, citing fears that the storm will break the levees protecting the city.
- Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Palestinian Islamic Jihad suicide bomber kills himself and injures close to 50 people in the southern Israeli city of Beersheba near the main bus terminal. According to sources, the bomber was trying to make his way to Beersheba's Soroka Hospital.

First suicide attack since Israeli pullout

A Palestinian man carrying explosives blew himself up during rush hour in Beersheba. This is the first act of suicidal bombing since the Israel pull out of the 25 Jewish settlements on the Gaza Strip.

Twelve hours after the blast, two groups jointly claimed responsibility for the attack. The Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades linked to Fatah and Al-Quds Brigades of Islamic Jihad identified the bomber as Alaa Zaakik, 25, from Beit Omar. Beit Omar is situated between Bethlehem and Hebron in the West Bank.

The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, has condemned the bombing. The bombing critically wounded two security guards at the Beersheba bus station and hurt another 46 people. The Palestinian news agency, Wafa, has issued a statement commending this as "a terrorist attack."

Shortly after the attack, the Israeli cabinet voted to allow Egypt to patrol the international border with Gaza with 750 armed men. This action will allow Israel to pull all its soldiers out of Gaza in the next month.

An Israeli official, Raanan Gissin, aide to prime minister Ariel Sharon, commented on the bombing. He described the attack as "a wake-up call that brings us back to the reality of terrorism after the euphoria of the Gaza disengagement." He latter said, "As long as the Palestinians don't take decisive action against terrorism this will continue, and Abbas's strategy of making political deals with terrorist organizations will come back to haunt him." Mr. Gissin concluded his statement by saying. "They smell that he's weak, and they'll keep pressing."

Mandatory Evacuation declared in New Orleans



Katrina's Projected Path as of 14:59 UTC on August 28, 2005.

With Hurricane Katrina likely to strike the city of New Orleans, its mayor, along with the governor of Louisiana, has officially enforced a mandatory evacuation for the city. All citizens, with the exception of a few individuals essential to the operation of a handful of organizations (such as hotels and the media), should immediately leave the city and head for higher ground. The mayor has stated that rising waters from the Category 5 storm are likely to overtake the city's system of levees, which are designed to prevent flooding in the city.

Maximum sustained winds are reported at 175 mph (78 m/s). Of great concern to New Orleans officials is the predicted coastal storm surge of 18 to 22 feet above normal tide levels. Destruction from flooding is expected since the city is situated below sea level.

Traffic within the city is completely gridlocked. The governor has advised citizens heading west to take Highway 90 instead of I-10, which is gridlocked. If you cannot evacuate heading north, head eastward first, where traffic is lighter.

The mayor has also opened the Superdome as a shelter for those with special medical needs or are otherwise unable to evacuate. However, he said it is likely to lose power and plumbing as the storm moves in. At noon, it becomes a shelter of "last resort." It will have few resources, though, and people should bring their own food and other necessary items. He also said that RTA busses will be picking up people at the following shelters designated as pickup points.

Martin Luther King Elementary.
William Franz Elementary.
Warren Easton High School.
Israel Augustine School.
McMain Magnet School.
Sylvanie Williams Elementary School.
Rabouin School.
Arthur Mondy in Algiers.
O. Perry Walker High School.
Abramson High School.
Sara T. Reed School

For maps of routes, visit www.lsp.org
For state evacuation information, call 1.800.469.4828

A bulletin issued by NOAA on 28 May 2005, 1101 AM CDT warns that the New Orleans area will experience "Devastating Damage".
"The majority of industrial buildings will become non-functional. Partial to complete wall and roof failure is expected."
"All wood framed low rising apartment buildings will be destroyed."
"Water shortages will make human suffering incredible by modern standards."
The same bulletin also warns that the entire area will remain uninhabitable for "weeks...or longer" and that power outages will last for weeks.

Service cutoff extended for unresponsive U.S. VoIP users



Kevin Martin: chairman of the FCC

A Tuesday service cutoff deadline in the United States for tens of thousands of VoIP customers who failed to reply to a service limitation notification from their provider was extended by 30 days, to September 28. In an FCC mandate, VoIP providers such as Time Warner Cable, Vonage and Verizon, were to send notice to customers asking them acknowledge the possible limitations of E911 access and to keep a record of their replies.

Specifically, the FCC mandated that VoIP providers must advise subscribers of the circumstances under which E911 service may not be available, and distribute stickers or other appropriate labels with a warning that E911 service may be limited or not available, and instruct the subscriber to place them on or near the equipment used in conjunction with the service. Lastly, the provider is to obtain and keep a record of affirmative acknowledgement by every subscriber, both new and existing.

A significant number of VoIP customers did not reply to the warning letter. This led the Voice on the Net Coalition, with House Representative Bart Gordon (D-TN) and Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) and other lawmakers to write FCC Chairman Kevin Martin with their concerns. For some customers, it was feared that if the VoIP service was ended, they would have no phone service.

The E911 system allows emergency operators to link a caller's physical location with the phone used to dial for help. Conventional phones have had that capability for years, but not all VoIP providers have the technology for such a system in place. Cell phone companies are also struggling to upgrade their products for E911 capability.

VoIP use reported by the TeleGeography Research Group showed strong customer growth during the second quarter of this year. Subscribers increased nearly 40 percent over the first quarter, from roughly 1.9 million to 2.7 million.

Users of VoIP seem far from scared off by concerns over E911 connectivity despite findings that indicate the majority are interested in it as a primary phone line replacement. "To get [VoIP telephony], you've got to have a broadband connection, that means you're a reasonably affluent consumer, you've got a cell phone, you've got some sort of backup plan in place," said Stephan Beckert, an analyst for TeleGeography. "There was a group that said they would not get it because of the problems with E911. But there was a surprisingly large core group that really didn't worry about it."

Australian MPs demand Islamic headscarf ban in schools

Australian Members of Parliament Bronwyn Bishop and Sophie Panopoulous have called for a ban on the wearing of Islamic headscarves in Australian public schools, saying it is an "iconic act of defiance." They are concerned about Muslim women failing to reveal their faces in photographic identification, and claim that this could be a security risk.

Bishop and Panopoulous are both members of the Liberal Party of Australia which is the major party in the governing Coalition. Bishop said there is a clash of cultures occurring in the country: "In an ideal society you don't ban anything," she told a television interviewer. She indicated she was talking of a ban only in schools, not at home.

Australian Muslims have angrily disagreed, say they should be allowed to comply with their religious doctrine. The moves to ban the Islamic headscarf - the hijab - began in France where it is banned from government schools.

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Today in History

526 - Suleiman the Magnificent of the Ottoman Empire defeated and killed the last Jagiellonian king of Hungary and Bohemia at the Battle of Mohács.

1786 - Disgruntled farmers in Western Massachusetts, angered by high tax burdens and disenfranchisement, started the Shays Rebellion.

1907 - The Quebec Bridge collapsed during construction, killing 75 workers.

1944 - Slovak troops turned against the pro-Nazi regime of Jozef Tiso and the German Wehrmacht, starting the Slovak National Uprising.

1982 - Meitnerium, an artificial chemical element with the atomic number 109, was first synthesized in Darmstadt, Germany.
August 29 is Feast day for the Beheading of St. John the Forerunner (Eastern Christianity)

Quote of the Day

"I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood... I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today... ~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

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