



Top Stories

G8 finance ministers agree on deal to relieve debts of 18 poorest nations

The finance ministers of the world's eight richest countries have agreed a deal to relieve the debts of 18 of the poorest countries in the world.

Lula's future in the hands of Brazilian Parliament

The government of Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is in a severe political crisis. The crisis began after the exposure of a series of scandals which involve the Workers' Party, the Brazilian ruling party.

Pink Floyd will reunite to play London's Live 8

Organizers of the upcoming London Live 8 concert have announced that legendary rock band Pink Floyd plans to perform on July 2. There is a rumor that they will rename themselves "Grey Floyd".

•Italians end voting in a two-day referendum about strict fertility treatment laws. The Catholic Church has recommended that Catholics boycott the poll, which needs 50% turnout to be valid. Initial turnout has been low and it is projected not to reach the 50% level.

•In the Philippines, president Gloria Arroyo's press secretary Ignacio Bunye states that the president is ready to face proper impeachment charges if the opposition follows the proper legal process. Many politicians have expressed support to her.

•Philippines police are ready to charge former National Bureau of Investigation deputy director Samuel Ong for illegal wiretapping and sedition.

•In South Korea, Kim Woo Choong, former head of Daewoo Group, intends to return to the country after five years living abroad. He faces charges of fraud after the collapse of Daewoo Group.

Emotional jurors of the case, some shedding a tear or two at the verdict's reading, stated that while they initially did not expect the decision to be made by today, they all felt that the decision made was the correct one, and that they indeed had more than 'reasonable doubt' about the claims against the performer.

For a juror to return a verdict of not guilty, the US judicial system dictates that they should have reasonable doubt about whether or not the individual has performed the alleged actions. The jurors said that they did this, also commenting that they kept a close eye on the instruction pages provided to them by the judge, often referring back to them when discussing evidence in the case which contributed to the final outcome.

Jackson left the courtroom without comment to reporters, though he is expected to make a statement about the outcome of the case shortly.

Jackson found 'not guilty' on all counts

The jury hearing the Michael Jackson trial has come to a final decision today, drawing to a close the long and widely hyped trial centering on the famous performer.

On this June 13, 2005, the jury in the Michael Jackson trial announced a verdict of not guilty on all 10 counts. The charges which were brought up against Jackson included:

- One count of conspiracy to commit child abduction, false imprisonment or extortion: Not guilty
- Four counts of lewd acts with a child under 14: Not guilty
- One count of attempted lewd act on child under 14: Not guilty
- Four counts of giving alcohol to enable child molestation: Not guilty

Serial child imposter held by French police

French police are holding a 31-year-old who managed to convince social workers and fellow students that he was a 15-year-old Spanish orphan and spent a whole month attending school.

Frederic Bourdin's alias was discovered when a teacher watched a television program about his exploits and his numerous identities.

Claire Chadourne, headmistress at the College Jean-Monnet, said, "He seemed a little older than his classmates, two or three years at the most. But 31. I still can't believe it!"

Bourdin, who speaks at least five languages, told social workers and classmates that his name was Francisco

Wikipedia Current Events

• An earthquake of magnitude 7.9 hits Chile with epicenter in the northern region of Tarapaca near the Bolivian border.

•The jury in Michael Jackson's trial for child molestation found the pop star not guilty on all counts.

•Swedish diplomat Jan Eliasson is unanimously elected President of the United Nations General Assembly. He will take over the presidency on September 20, 2005.

•92 People, almost all children, have died after a flash flood hit a school in Shalan, Heilongjiang province, China.

•The last Australian peacekeeping troops are leaving East Timor.

Hernandez-Fernandez and that his parents had been killed in a car crash in 2000 and that he'd spent three months in a coma. After being placed into foster care, he claimed he was sexually abused and that he escaped to France.

He told his teacher that he had horrible scars that he wished to hide and was given special permission to wear a cap to hide his balding.

Bourdin is said to have assumed 39 other false identities in the past.

In 1997, Bourdin was arrested and imprisoned for six years in the United States for posing a Texas couple's 14-year-old son, who disappeared three years earlier. He managed to convince the couple that he was their son even though he had brown eyes and a heavy French accent.

The couple's son had blue eyes.

Bourdin lived with the couple for three months before a journalist exposed him and his lies were confirmed by a DNA test.

Returning from the United States in 2003, Bourdin showed up in the southeastern Alps, where he claimed to be Leo Balley, who went missing in 1996 when he was seven-years-old and camping with his father.

Once again, a DNA test revealed his lies.

Bourdin said, "I have only usurped the identities of two disappeared children. Otherwise 99% of the names are completely made up."

He says he assumes other identities as a way of receiving the attention he never got as a child.

Airbus wins Qatar Airways order

European aircraft manufacturer, Airbus, has won an order from Qatar Airways for up to 60 of its new mid-sized A350 jets. The order, which is believed to be worth \$15 billion, has given a boost to an

otherwise disappointing Paris Air Show, which had been dominated by a state aid dispute between Airbus and Boeing.

Qatar Airways, which choose the Airbus A350 over Boeing's 787, will also purchase 20 of Boeing's larger 777 planes for \$4.6 billion. Qatar has a previous order for 2 of Airbus' massive new A380's which it will begin to fly in 2009 out of London Heathrow.

In 2004, Airbus sold more planes than Boeing for the first time ever, sparking questions whether the US company had lost its once seemingly impregnable grip on the aviation market. However thus far, Boeing has received far more orders than Airbus in 2005.

Ryanair exercises options on five Boeing 737s

Irish low cost airline, Ryanair, announced today that it is exercising its options with Boeing to purchase five new 737 aircraft. This brings Ryanair's total number of outstanding orders with the US manufacturer to 230.

The new planes, which come from the 737-800 range, will be fitted with blended winglets to boost fuel efficiency by as much as 3%. Ryanair CEO, Michael O'Leary, justified his choice of Boeing by saying, "The Boeing 737-800 has the best technical reliability and ensures that Ryanair is the number one on-time major airline in Europe"... "In addition, it has the lowest unit operating cost. The addition of these five aircraft will continue to enable us to develop more new routes across Europe and bring low fares to many more European consumers."

Ryanair is the world's most profitable airline, having reported record profits of €269m earlier this year, and is pursuing an aggressive expansion plane which will see it's total number of passengers jump to 70m over the next few years. At present Ryanair has 91 aircraft and 230 on order.

Final withdrawal of Australian troops from East Timor

The Australian defence force handed the deeds to an ADF (Australian Defence Force) base in East Timor back to the country's government today, representing the end of armed peacekeeping in the country. The ADF says almost all their personnel will be out of the country within a fortnight. A small number will remain as part of a defence cooperation program between the two nations.

The East Timorese Prime Minister and other dignitaries were present for the handing over of the deeds. Troops from the armed forces of both Australia and East Timor paraded together while the Australian flag was lowered.

The Molena base, near the border with West Timor, has been operated by the ADF for the past three years. The site will now become a school.

A senior lecturer in international relations and strategy from the Australian National University, Doctor Michael McKinley, said "Although there's going to be a defence presence left in the country ... the peacekeeping presence could perhaps have been extended, particularly if there are any reservations whatsoever in the East Timorese Government about their ongoing security concerns. My understanding is that there are certainly some concerns still remaining."

"For the sort of psychological security of the East Timorese and perhaps even as a general message to the residue of trouble making, I thought perhaps Australia might have stayed somewhat longer," he said.

Lieutenant Colonel Brian Cox, commander of the ADF in East Timor, says he believes the country is being left in safe hands.

"We came in here in a period of turmoil in 1999 with INTAFET and General (Peter) Cosgrove leading the 5,000 Australians then, and we're now leaving with economic prosperity now in place," he said.

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Today in History

- 1381 - King Richard II of England met the leaders of the Peasants' Revolt.
- 1777 - The Continental Congress adopted the stars and stripes design for the flag of the United States.
- 1822 - Charles Babbage proposed a difference engine in a paper to the Royal Astronomical Society.
- 1940 - Paris fell under Nazi Germany occupation (see History of Paris).
- 1985 - TWA Flight 847 was hijacked by Hezbollah militants.

June 13 is Liberation Day in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (1982)

Quote of the Day

"Talent perceives differences, Genius unity." ~ William Butler Yeats

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