



Top Stories

Montenegro secedes from Serbia



After a referendum, the Montenegro region of Serbia and Montenegro declares independence to form the new Republic of Montenegro.

Chief of World Health Organization dies



Head of the World Health Organization (WHO), Doctor Lee Jong-wook, 61, has died after doctors performed brain surgery on him to relieve a blood clot. Dr. Lee became head of the WHO in 2003.

Featured story

Interview with Ton Roosendaal about Elephants Dream and free content movies

Three days after the Internet release of the free content 3D short Elephants Dream, we exchanged e-mails with Ton Roosendaal about the reaction to the film, open source filmmaking, and the changes to Blender that resulted from the production.

<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Featured>

Wikipedia Current Events

• Louisiana congressman William J. Jefferson refuses to resign, as he denies allegations of bribery after an FBI weekend raid of his

Wikipedia Current Events

office.

•The Trojan Nuclear Power Plant implodes as planned.

Ian Paisley rejects Sinn Fein nomination

Plans to restart the Northern Ireland Assembly failed today as the controversial Democratic Unionist Party leader and Protestant evangelist Ian Paisley rejected the nomination by Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams for him to be First Minister of a new Northern Ireland Executive. Gerry Adams nominated his colleague, Martin McGuinness, the deputy leader of Sinn Fein to be the Deputy First Minister.

Britain restarted a shadow version of the Assembly last week for the first time in 3 1/2 years to form a power sharing home rule government made up Catholics and Protestants by a November 24 as directed by the Belfast Agreement. However, accusations of a spy ring lead to the suspension of the Assembly and direct rule from London was reinstated in 2002.

Adams rose to his feet and uttered the following "I want to move that Iain Paisley be returned as First Minister and Martin McGuinness by returned as Deputy First Minister on the restoration of devolved government," in Gaelic before translating it for the rest of the Assembly to understand.

After being asked by Speaker

Eileen Bell, "Dr. Paisley, do you accept the nomination as first minister on restoration of a devolved government?"

Paisley rejected the nomination instantly stating "Certainly not, madam! And I think it goes without saying that the reasons are known well throughout this province, and they've been endorsed by the majority of unionist voters."

Paisley further more stated, "Are we going to have in the government of Northern Ireland those who are terrorists, those that condoned and even planned murders, who robbed banks, who committed criminal acts and who will not support the police?" The DUP will not support Sinn Fein until the Irish Republican Army disbands, renounces crime and Sinn Fein accepts the Police Service of Northern Ireland, something it has refused to do for decades during the time of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

The United States Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, Mitchell Reiss, stated "We need to start getting on with business, talking to each other, trying to work out some of the problems today, not leaving them until the last minute."

The Assembly has adjourned until Tuesday.

Montenegro secedes from Serbia

After a referendum, the Montenegro region of Serbia and

Montenegro declares independence to form the new Republic of Montenegro. Unlike other Balkan states such as Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia, Montenegro has achieved independence without violence. "I am convinced Montenegro could be the next country from this region to join the European Union, after Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia, which are further along the process," says Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic, who has promoted Montenegro's independence. It is also predicted that Montenegro will join the United Nations in September.

The referendum, with an 86.3% voter turnout, had a 55.4% approval for the secession, which satisfies the European Union's minimum 55% approval. With a population of 650,000, Montenegro is the world's newest country. Serbia reluctantly agreed to the split, and the European Union approved. Despite expectations, there were no riots that night; however, early celebrations had occurred in the capital Podgorica based off of expected results.

This is the first time Montenegro has been independent since 1918, when Montenegro and Serbia joined Yugoslavia. By the early 1990s, Yugoslavia had split up into smaller nations.

Some analysts note that Serbia and Montenegro had never been literally united. Before the referendum, each republic had separate anthems, laws, and currencies and their joint parliament did not meet very often.

Britain expects troops out of Iraq within next 4 years

Britain says it expects all foreign

combat troops to withdraw from Iraq by 2010. It is the first solid statement from Britain on a firm date for troop withdrawal. Prime Minister Tony Blair says the new Iraqi national unity government offers "new hopes for the country."

He was speaking at a news conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Maliki, whose new government was sworn in on Saturday. A senior British official travelling with the prime minister, said the withdrawal of the present multinational force should be accomplished within four years.

He told reporters that London hoped all but some non-combatant foreign soldiers could be withdrawn by the time of the next Iraqi election in late 2009 - provided the country moved in the right direction. "The aim is to take Iraq to a position where the multinational force is able to withdraw during its period in office," the official said. According to Reuters, the statement is perhaps the firmest call yet from one of the two main allies in the US-led invasion of Iraq on a date for pulling out troops.

He said the unity government will hasten the handover of control from coalition forces back to Iraqis, allowing Britain bring some troops home by mid-year. Britain has around 7,000 troops in Iraq. Prime Minister Maliki said overall control of security in most of Iraq's 18 provinces could gradually pass into Iraqi hands by end-2006.

As violence continues across Iraq with at least 11 people killed in shootings and bomb attacks, Mr Blair said it had taken "three years of struggle" to reach the formation of a government. "It's been longer and harder than any of us would have wanted it to be but this is a

new beginning," he said from Baghdad.

The installation of Iraq's first full-term government since 2003 has forced discussion on withdrawal plans for approximately 150,000 foreign soldiers stationed there. The United States says it is too early to discuss a timetable for pulling out its 133,000 troops.

108 British military personnel have been killed in Iraq since it joined coalition in 2003. Mr Blair is expected to visit Washington this week to meet with President George W. Bush.

Seven year old boy swims from Alcatraz to San Francisco

Braxton Bilbrey, a 7-year old boy from Glendale, California has swum from Alcatraz to Aquatic Park in San Francisco, California. The length of the swim is approximately 1.4 miles.

"It kind of seems like a long way, but I'm not totally worried. It's not that far," Bilbrey said before he started swimming.

"For a 7-year-old to be that motivated and stick with a goal that long is amazing," said Bilbrey's mother, Stacey Bilbrey.

Bilbrey trained for four days a week, training 2 hours each time. Bilbrey has also participated in several swimming triathlons. Bilbrey got the idea to complete the swim after reading about Johnny Wilson, a 9-year old fourth grader who also completed the swim, taking just under two hours in October 2005.

"If you were to ask me if a 7-year-old is old enough to do it, I'd say maybe one out of 10 million, but he's that one," said Bilbreys coach, Joe Zemaitis. His coach

made the swim along with Bilbrey. A United States Coast Guard boat followed the swimmers, along with 2 extra swimmers in case an emergency occurred.

Researchers say Ozone Hole "likely to contract, may disappear"

Researchers say the ozone hole over the Antarctic is likely to contract and may disappear by 2050 - as a result of a global reduction of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other ozone-depleting emissions.

The findings are based on a series of numerical simulations carried out by Eiji Akiyoshi of Tokyo's National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), using projected emissions of CFCs and other gases blamed for the ozone hole.

According to the Japanese report released last week, the Antarctic ozone hole is currently at its largest, but is likely to begin gradual contraction around 2020 and possibly disappear around 2050. It is believed lowered CFC emissions can cause the hole to gradually close, the NIES reported. The team's findings are in line with research by other scientists.

The scientists say CFC levels in the Earth's atmosphere have been in gradual decline since the mid-1990s, as a result of global efforts to reduce their emission.

But while Earth's ozone layer is slowly being replenished following the international 1987 agreement banning CFCs, the Montreal Protocol, the recovery is occurring in a changing atmosphere and is unlikely to stabilize at pre-1980 levels, according to a recent University of Colorado study.

The co-author of a paper by the Danish Meteorological Institute in a May 2006 issue of *Nature* said: "We now have some confidence that the ozone layer is responding to the decreases in chlorine levels in the atmosphere due to the leveling off and decrease of CFCs, and most of the improvements are in agreement with what we had hoped for with the Montreal Protocol in place," "But we are not out of the woods yet, and the ozone recovery process still faces a number of uncertainties."

Other scientists say that harmful emissions have not been lowered enough to influence the ozone hole's size. Some scientists suggest the hole won't heal until much later because old refrigerators and air-conditioners still emit CFCs.

Steel major Arcelor ready to reconsider Mittal's offer

Luxembourg's largest steel company Arcelor is ready to study Mittal Steel's improved takeover offer, the former said on Sunday, opening the door to possible talks with Indian steel-magnate Laxminivas Mittal. Arcelor Chairman Joseph Kinsch told reporters after a meeting of Arcelor's board that the directors of the company would be ready to examine the details of Mittal's latest offer once it has been approved by the CSSF (Luxembourg's financial regulatory body).

Until Sunday, Arcelor (the world's second-largest steel company) had firmly rejected world-leader Mittal's bid to take the former company over and form a global steel giant. The softening of its stance comes after Mittal Steel raised its hostile cash-and-equity bid by a third on Friday and dropped a key demand for family

control over the combined global steel giant.

Media-reports had suggested that Arcelor was trying to find another company to rescue the former from being taken over by Mittal Steel. Possible candidates have included Russian tycoon Vladimir Lisin and Russia's Magnitogorsk Iron & Steel Works (MMK). Mittal's move on Friday came after the value of its initial offer fell more than 10 per cent behind the market worth of Arcelor, as the latter announced a buyback of its own shares at above-market prices to ward off Mittal Steel.

Laxminivas Mittal, who has hinted that the bitter takeover battle might have a hint of racism involved in it, told the French newspaper *La Tribune* that he was sure that the attractive nature of his revised offer would enable him to obtain over 50% of the Arcelor shares. He added that he was of the opinion that the involvement of a Russian third-party would not be in the best interests of Arcelor's shareholders.

PM John Howard's nuclear push causes alarm

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has announced he wants a "full-scale nuclear debate", and three of his senior federal government frontbenchers - Foreign Minister Alexander Downer, Resources Minister, Ian Macfarlane, and Environment Minister Ian Campbell - have all suggested Australia, which has around 40 per cent of the world's known uranium reserves, should consider enriching uranium - a step in processing that would allow it to be used as reactor fuel as well as for nuclear weapons.

However there is strong opposition for nuclear power in the Australian

community. The Australian Greens have rejected the Prime Minister's assumption that nuclear power might be 'desirable' for Australia. The Greens say they challenge Mr Howard to show "true leadership on climate change and nuclear non-proliferation."

Greens climate change and energy spokesperson Senator Christine Milne said Mr Howard was "playing politics" by floating the idea and testing public opinion before developing a government position.

"Instead of pandering to US President George Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair - the two most unpopular leaders in the world today - Prime Minister Howard should demonstrate real leadership and put some authenticity into the government's response to climate change and terrorism," Senator Milne said. "Nuclear power and nuclear proliferation are a threat to both."

Senator Milne challenged advocates of nuclear power to explain what they will do about nuclear waste, how large a public subsidy they are prepared to pay to prop up nuclear power, and why the Sustainable Development Commission was wrong when it recommended last month against expanding nuclear power in Britain.

"Australians have already had to subsidise uranium mining companies to clean up after mines have closed, while last week's Budget papers revealed that ANSTO can't estimate the cost of decommissioning the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor," Senator Milne said. "When will advocates of nuclear power admit that it is too slow, too expensive and too dangerous to be a solution to climate change? Nor is there any

safe way to dispose of the waste. It is not even safe to transport, a concern supported by the head of the International Energy Agency..." said Senator Milne in a media release.

"Instead of turning to nuclear power, Australia should ratify the Kyoto Protocol, invest in renewable energy, adopt a national energy efficiency target and improve public transport.

"Several studies examining options to achieve deep cuts in Australian greenhouse emissions all show this goal can be achieved, cost effectively, without resorting to nuclear power," said Senator Milne in a media release.

Greens leader Bob Brown says the Prime Minister is sending a message of approval for Indonesia to become a nuclear power. "Australia and our region are essentially nuclear-free. Mr Howard is abandoning that security to grab uranium profits and facilitate an Australian role in nuclear enrichment," Senator Brown said. "This robs Australia of its moral strength to argue against Indonesia resurrecting the Soeharto plan for 12 nuclear reactors and to advance its interest in Russian-built floating nuclear power stations."

"This will make our region much less secure for the next generation of Australians," Senator Brown said. "John Howard has talked up regional terrorism. Now he is promoting nuclear power proliferation in our neighbourhood. At best his logic is faulty, at worst he is taking Australia into a future unnecessarily menaced by the nuclear threat," Senator Brown said.

Labor MP Kelvin Thomson says John Howard's push towards nuclear power generation could heighten the risk of a terrorist attack. "The problem with nuclear power is that more of it that is around, the easier it is for terrorists to get access to it and I'm not satisfied that in this day and age we can be absolutely certain that terrorists can't access it," Mr Thomson said.

Mr Thompson said the Government should be focussing its interest on "much safer and environmentally-friendly" abundant renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power. Mr Thomson said Australia was a potential world-leader in solar power. "Surely you exhaust all the other alternatives first before you say let's go down the nuclear road," he said.

"The problem with nuclear power is that more of it that is around, the easier it is for terrorists to get access to it," he said. "I'm not satisfied that in this day and age you can be absolutely certain that terrorists can't access it."

Union leader Bill Shorten, a federal Labor candidate at the next election, believes the issue is unpopular with the electorate. A survey in 2005 found 47 percent of Australians supported nuclear power and 40 percent opposed it.

Professor Frank Muller from the University of New South Wales, said the framework to manage nuclear power needs to be put in place first. He says it could take decades before a nuclear power plant could operate. "So it actually takes even longer to provide a greenhouse benefit than it does to build a power plant," he said. Professor Muller says nuclear power stations are expensive to

build, and safety is a major issue.

Opposition environment spokesman Anthony Albanese said: "John Howard's nuclear fantasy is Australia's nightmare," Mr Albanese told reporters. "Intractable problems with nuclear energy when it comes to economic costs, safety, disposal of waste and contribution to nuclear proliferation remain up to some 50 years."

Mr Albanese said that if Mr Howard was serious about nuclear power he should say where a nuclear power plant would be built, and where the waste it produced would be stored. "If he's so confident that nuclear energy is safe... I'm sure he'll have coalition MPs volunteering to have a nuclear reactor in their electorate and to store their waste in the electorate," he said.

Mr Albanese said the current Labor policy remained opposed to nuclear energy in Australia.

Chief of World Health Organization dies

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO), Doctor Lee Jong-wook, 61, has died after doctors performed brain surgery on him to relieve a blood clot.

"I am sorry to tell you that Dr Lee Jong-wook, director-general of the WHO, died this morning. [This is a] very sad bit of news" and Lee "was an exceptional person and an exceptional director-general. Under his leadership, the WHO has been strengthened and has been able to give an effective response to world (health) problems," said Elena Salgado, Spain's Health Minister in a statement during the organizations 192 nation annual assembly held in Geneva. The panel observed two minutes of

silence to honor Lee.

Lee was rushed to Cantonal Hospital in Geneva when he felt sick on Saturday. He became sick while he was at an official meeting. Doctors then determined that he had a blood clot in his brain and operated on Lee immediately.

"He had been in hospital since Saturday afternoon, where he underwent surgery to remove a blood clot on his brain (a subdural hematoma). He remained in intensive care. At 07:43 this morning, he was declared dead," said a statement by the WHO on its website.

"All of the staff of the World Health Organization extend their most sincere condolences to Dr Lee's family. The sudden loss of our leader, colleague and friend, is devastating," continued the statement.

"The world has lost a great man today. LEE Jong-wook was a man of conviction and passion. He was a strong voice for the right of every man, woman and child to health prevention and care, and advocated on behalf of the very poorest people," said Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary General.

Lee became head of the WHO in 2003 and leaves behind his son, wife and two brothers.

One of Saddam Hussein's defense lawyers thrown out of court

Bushra Khalil, one of the defense lawyers for former Iraqi President, Saddam Hussein, was thrown out of court by Chief Judge Raouf Abdel after speaking out of turn.

"The right of defence is sacred. We

have never seen in our whole career a lawyer ordered out of the court room like this. We should not be treated like this, we are defending those men who defended the honour of the nation, yes they are the honour of the nation," said an Egyptian lawyer, in court for Hussein's defense.

Khalil was attempting to make a speech when Judge Abdel told her to stop talking. When Khalil continued to speak out of turn, Judge Abdel ordered court guards to remove her from the courtroom. Khalil then threw her lawyer's robe onto the floor and walked out of the courtroom.

"You have to stick to the rules, you are a lawyer, you should behave by the rules," said Judge Abdel to Khalil while she left the courtroom.

Hussein objected to the judges orders and protested saying, "I am Saddam Hussein, president of Iraq. I am above all."

"You were president, now you are the defendant," replied Judge Abdel.

This is the second time that Khalil was thrown out of the courtroom. Back in April, Judge Abdel had Khalil removed for the same reasons. This is also her first appearance in court since April's incident.

NSW govt to rebuild high school with private funding

New South Wales minister for Education and Training, Carmel Tebbutt told parliament that Kelso High School, which was destroyed by fire on August 18, 2005 will be rebuilt under the NSW government's New Schools Public Private Partnerships (PPP) program. Under the program, the bulk of construction costs come

from private companies who own the schools for 30 years, after which time they revert to government ownership.

The PPP program began in October, 2001. According to the government, 19 schools will be delivered under the PPP program by 2009.

The announcement follows Member for Bathurst, Gerard Martin's statement to parliament on September 14, 2005 that the government would be rebuilding the school at a cost of \$18 to \$25 million. "The Government has accepted the responsibility of the \$18 million to \$25 million to rebuild the school, which is proceeding post haste" he said.

The PPP announcement has been seen as a backflip by the government.

When approached by Wikinews, Brad Hazzard, the opposition's education spokesperson said that the coalition did not have a formal policy in this area but generally were supportive of the PPP program so long as infrastructure and maintenance are addressed.

Australian Greens education spokesperson, John Kaye, said that problems were already emerging with the PPP program in NSW. In March, 2006, it was revealed that the government had to negotiate an exit strategy so that after school hours child care could be provided. In a media release provided to Wikinews, Dr Kaye said "Yet another flaw in a NSW Public Private Partnership (PPP) has been uncovered. Just like the Cross City Tunnel, the community suffered because the contract failed to protect the quality of service delivery,"

"After numerous complaints from parents, the Iemma government had to negotiate an exit strategy from the contract to provide out-of-school-hours childcare.

Corporate giant ABC Learning which had purchased the original provider, Peppercorn, was clearly not interested in the expensive end of childcare".

Dr Kaye also pointed out that an Auditor general's report found alarming evidence that the basis for PPP in NSW could be based on unreliable financial models. Dr Kaye said that the Auditor General has "cast a very large shadow" over the government's claimed savings from the PPP program.

"It appears that the NSW government does not know with any degree of certainty how much it would cost to perform the same function in the public sector. Any attempt to say that private sector control is cheaper is now fraught with danger,"

"The Auditor General's report proves that the methodology used by the Government to estimate the costs of public sector provision is highly unreliable and suspect" said Dr Kaye.

Both Carmel Tebbutt and Gerard Martin gave no response when contacted by Wikinews.

Mark Rocket to be first New Zealander in space

Mark Rocket, a Christchurch internet entrepreneur, has purchased a \$300,000 flight into space with Virgin Galactic.

In 2008 he will take off for space from the Mojave Desert, near Los Angeles in an eight man spacecraft. He will spend about 10 minutes in space.

He has said that he always wanted to go into space ever since seeing the first Star Wars movie. He even changed his name because of the movie, but won't say what from.

He has already been to California to see the development of the rocket and visited the International Space Development Conference.

Mark Rocket said: "I guess I'm just a real space nut."

Downer welcomes Australian nuclear energy debate

Australia's foreign affairs minister Alexander Downer has given his support for a serious debate on nuclear energy in Australia. Mr Downer's comments follow similar comments made by Australian Prime Minister John Howard in Canada last week.

Mr Downer said that climate change has strongly influenced many to change their position on nuclear power and to encourage debate. He encouraged people to keep an open mind on nuclear power within the context of reducing greenhouse gases. The production of nuclear energy produces far fewer greenhouse gas emissions than coal and oil power stations.

Mr Downer also said that it would make sense for Australia to investigate nuclear power generation given that it has 30 to 40 percent of the world's Uranium reserves.

Mr Downer said any discussion would need to look at whether Australia would build nuclear power stations in the future and whether a Uranium enrichment program would be undertaken.

"There's the question of whether

Australia itself would eventually, some time, no doubt in the far distant future, build nuclear power stations," he said.

"There's a question of whether Australia would ever enrich uranium - in other words, we go up the processing chain, rather than just dig it out." Mr Downer said.

Unlike Australian industry minister, Ian MacFarlane and finance minister, Nick Minchin, Mr Downer refused to say when he thought nuclear energy would become a reality in Australia. Mr Downer said the construction of nuclear power plants would depend on two things - political debate and economic considerations. Mr Downer said that nuclear power plants can be very expensive to build and they would need to be comparable in overall cost to oil and coal based power plants for it to make economic sense.

Opposition treasury spokesman Wayne Swan has said he does not support Australia building nuclear power plants. He also said that Australia had large energy reserves and has no need for nuclear power generation. "We are a country with an abundance of energy, we're optimistic about what can occur with clean coal technologies, we have an abundant supply of gas - I don't see the need for Australia to go down that road."

Five dead in Louisiana church shooting

A lone gunman has shot and killed four in-laws at the Ministry of Jesus Christ church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The suspect, identified as Anthony Bell (25), was arrested Sunday in a nearby apartment block close to

the church. The suspect's wife, Erica Bell (24), was also shot and killed.

Bell abducted his wife and her three children during a Sunday morning church service. The children, one was an infant, were found unharmed. Bell was described by his relatives as having "domestic problems".

It is unclear where the fatal shooting of Mr. Bell's wife occurred. The church pastor and mother to Erica Bell, Claudia Brown, was wounded during the rampage and was hospitalized in serious condition.

Bell has been charged with five counts of murder, attempted murder and kidnapping.

Suspicious white powder found in Norway

During the weekend, 11 estates in the capital of Norway, Oslo received suspicious white powder by mail. The owners of the estates are mainly elders, and mainly the estates are located in the west.

Some of these owners has received antibiotic cures, because this powder might be anthrax. The test-results for anthrax were released during the morning of the 22nd of May.

The results of the tests did not indicate any form for anthrax. However, this is the second time that white powder is found in the mail, the first time was shortly after the 9-11 attacks.

Trojan Nuclear Power Plant Cooling Tower Demolished

At 7am PST the 499 foot water cooling tower of the Trojan Nuclear Power plant was imploded using dynamite. The cooling tower, which is located in Rainier, Oregon,

is the largest in the world to be demolished. For the past thirty years the tower has been an icon of the Pacific Northwest.

Controlled Demolition Incorporated, which was hired to bring down the tower, used approximately 3,300 sticks of dynamite. The company also imploded the Kingdom in Seattle, Washington in 2000. Prior to the implosion, Interstate 5 and Highway 30 as well as river traffic on the Columbia River were shut down as a precaution.

The plant, which is owned by Portland General Electric, began operation in May 1976 and was shut down in January 1993 due to structural problems and decommissioned in 1999 when the reactor was taken upstream by barge to Hanford Nuclear Reservation. Some fuel rods are buried at the site, although they are in a casket over 900 feet from where the cooling tower sits.

Professionals and students continue strike in New Delhi

New Delhi: Almost 10,000 people marched to Jantar Mantar from Maulana Azad Medical College in an anti-reservation rally on Saturday. Doctors and medical students say they will continue to strike and protest, despite an appeal from the prime minister to call off their agitation.

The striking medicos under the banner of 'Youth for Equality' were joined by students from Delhi University and medical colleges around the capital, parents, lawyers and accountants.

The students and their supporters want total rollback of a proposed quota-hike for OBCs in elite educational institutions, and a review of the present reservation

policy. "There are very less seats in the post-graduate streams compared to the undergraduate courses. Hence the reservation move will affect the future of majority students," said student leader Praful Raj.

The students have support from many groups. They were led by the Youth for Equality, an AIIMS initiative, while United Students, a DU and JNU group, IIT alumni, RWAs (under the banner of United Residents Joint Action), Resident Doctors Associations from various government and private hospitals, Chartered Accountant's Association, students from private universities like IP and parents of agitating students also joined in.

Students from medical colleges in Rajasthan, Orissa, Gujarat, Punjab and Karnataka also took part in the rally. Students and doctors say the government has showed "scant regard to the sentiments of the students", who have been protesting the proposed quota-hike for OBCs in elite educational institutions.

The students had appealed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to set up a non-political judicial committee to review the existing reservation policy and sought an audience with him to discuss the issue.

Today in History

1430 - Hundred Years' War: Joan of Arc was captured at the Siege of Compiègne.

1813 - South American independence leader Simón Bolívar entered Mérida, leading the invasion of Venezuela, and was proclaimed El Libertador ("The Liberator").

1945 - End of World War II in Europe: Reichspräsident Karl Dönitz was captured and his Flensburg government was dissolved.

1998 - The Belfast Agreement was accepted in a referendum, with a high margin of three-fourth 'yes' votes to Northern Ireland.

2002 - The "55 parties" clause of the Kyoto protocol was reached after its ratification by Iceland.

Quote of the Day

"Cynicism isn't smarter, it's only safer. There's nothing fluffy about optimism." ~ Jewel

Word of the Day

simper; v

Definition

1. To smile in a frivolous, self-conscious manner.

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