



### Top Stories

#### **Flight from Armenian capital Yerevan crashes near Sochi**

A large Armenian airlines passenger plane has crashed into the Black Sea. Reports say about 100 people were on board. Controllers lost contact with the plane Tuesday at 2315 UTC.

#### **Drug, alcohol, tobacco abuse rising among California teens**

California high school students' consumption of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs is headed up, according to a nationwide study of teen substance abuse released by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The study compared substance abuse statistics from their latest survey, in 2004, with statistics collected in 2002. It was based on interviews of more than 135,000 people.

### Featured story

#### **Australian civil rights activists protest terror suspects' internment**

About 100 people, including family members of the accused, went to the Barwon maximum security prison to voice their disapproval of the treatment of the 13 men accused of terror offences. Speakers said the laws were unjust and constituted torture on the ground of the UN charter as being cruel and unusual.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Nepal's new cabinet is unveiled.
- German hostages René Bräunlich and Thomas Nitzschke are freed. Both were taken hostage in Iraq on January 24, 2006. They were 3 months in custody of the insurgents.
- Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi officially hands in his resignation to President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi (BBC). Berlusconi was defeated by Romano Prodi in the April 9-10 elections, but Ciampi has asked him to remain in office, "for the handling of current affairs"
- Bolivian newly-elected President Evo Morales orders the nationalization of the gas industry. This process is a result of his plan to nationalize major industries, he said in his election campaign. Further nationalizations are planned in forestry and mining.
- The thieves of the famous paintings of Edvard Munch, The Scream and Madonna are sentenced to 4 and 8 years in prison.

#### **Flight from Armenian capital Yerevan crashes near Sochi**

An Airbus 320 passenger airplane flying from Armenia's capital, Yerevan, to the city of Sochi in southern Russia has vanished from the radar and crashed into the Black Sea, CNN reports. Wreckage of the airliner was found in the Black Sea, Itar-Tass reports. The Armenian airlines jet was found 6

km from the coast and carried around 100 people, according to Russian Itar-Tass news agency. CNN Television reports 8 crewmembers and 5 children were among the passengers.

CNN reporter Matthew Chance said rescue teams were dispatched to the area. Controllers lost contact with the plane at 0215 local time (Tuesday 2215 UTC).

There are no details yet on any casualties. In the area where the plane crashed, rain is expected in the next hours and the water temperature is currently between 8 to 10 degrees celsius.

The Airbus A320 is a short-to-medium range commercial passenger aircraft. A total of 328 people have been killed in earlier A320 crashes.

#### **Blue Security anti-spam community target of large-scale spam attack**

Beginning Monday morning, many BlueFrog and Blue Security users began receiving an email warning them that if they did not remove their email addresses from the Blue Security registry, they would begin to receive huge amounts of unsolicited email. As quickly as four hours after the initial warning message, some users began to receive an unprecedented amount of spam. Most of the messages were simply useless text. Users reported that Blue Security's website was unavailable or extremely slow in responding.

Blue Security is an online community dedicated to fighting spam. As they became more popular, their member list increased substantially. The members' email address is encrypted and added to a list of e-mail addresses that wish to stop receiving spam. Blue Security maintains the encrypted list, which uses an encrypted hash function. Spammers are encouraged to remove all addressed from their email list that are also in Blue Security's Do Not Intrude Registry by using free compliance tools available at Blue Security's web site.

According to Blue Security's web site, "A major spammer had started spamming our members with discouraging messages in an attempt to demoralize our community. This spammer is using mailing lists he already owns that may contain addresses of some community members." Reportedly, Blue Security has received complaints from users about spam allegedly sent from Blue Security promoting their anti-spam solution and web site.

Blue Security states they are "an anti-spam company determined to fight spam and as such never has and never will send unsolicited email." There are also reports of non-users of BlueSecurity/BlueFrog receiving the warning emails, which now seems is also being sent to email addresses of people who have never added their email address to Blue Security's Do Not Intrude Registry.

### **Drug, alcohol, tobacco abuse rising among California teens**

California high school students' consumption of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs is headed up, according to a nationwide study of

teen substance abuse released in April.

The report, released by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, compared substance abuse statistics from their latest survey, in 2004, with statistics collected in 2002. It was based on interviews of more than 135,000 people.

Nationwide, the rate of underage drinking remained basically unchanged, but in California, it rose from 15.28 percent of California children between 12 and 17-years-old who said they had consumed alcohol in the previous month in 2002, to 16.81 percent who said they had in 2004.

Binge drinking, defined as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion (i.e., at the same time or within a couple of hours of each other) on at least one day in the past 30 days, was reported by 10.27 percent of kids in 2004, up from the 9.16 percent who said they binged in 2002.

The report found that, in 2004, 10.9 percent of the nation's kids from the ages of 12 to 17 had used an illegal drug in the past month, down from 11.4 percent in 2002.

In California, the number of kids who said they had used an illicit drug in the past month rose, from 11.44 percent in 2002 to 12.05 percent in 2004.

Among California's 12- to 17-year-olds, those who said they had used marijuana in the previous month rose from 7.66 percent in 2002 to 8.52 percent in 2004. Those who had used marijuana in the past year rose from 14.11 percent of 14.6 percent over the period.

Only cocaine use was down among the age group, from 1.7 percent who said they had used it in the past year to 1.61 percent.

The use of any illicit drug, other than marijuana, in the month preceding the interviews of the 12- to 17-year-olds rose from 5.79 percent to 5.97 percent, according to the report. Nearly 8 percent of the age group in California had used pain relievers for "non-medical" purposes, such as getting high, the survey reported, a topic not explored in the previous survey.

More than 9 percent of California kids from 12-17 said they were abusers of or dependent on alcohol or illicit drugs in the 2004 survey, up from just over 8 percent in 2002.

Tobacco use, including chewing tobacco, increased in the age group from 9.22 percent to 10.88 percent. Cigarette smoking rose from 7.48 percent to 8.69 percent. Fewer smokers, however, reported being at great risk of smoking a pack or more a day.

The report, State Estimates of Substance Use from the 2003-2004 National Surveys on Drug Use and Health, issued April 6, estimates state rates of use of illegal drugs, binge and underage drinking, serious mental illness and tobacco use. SAMHSA combined two years of data from the annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health to enhance the precision of estimates for the less populous states.

The report shows that California increased from 24.7 percent of 12 to 20 year olds using alcohol in the past month to 26.3 percent, while Wisconsin increased from 34.7

percent to 38.3 percent. Michigan and South Carolina, however, showed decreases in underage drinking from 31.8 percent to 30.2 percent for Michigan and from 27.3 percent to 24.1 percent for South Carolina.

For illegal drug use, six states registered decreases in current use among youth ages 12-17, Illinois, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Dakota, Vermont and Virginia. There were no statistically significant increases in current drug use among youth in any state, and there were no increases in either the 18-to-25 year old age group or the 26- and -older age group.

"While we are making progress on drug and tobacco use among youth, underage drinking continues as a stubbornly persistent problem," SAMHSA Administrator Charles Curie said. "It's time to change attitudes toward teen drinking from acceptance to abstinence. It begins by recognizing the importance of parents talking to their children early and often about alcohol, especially before they've started drinking."

The estimates show that past month use of any illicit drug in 2003-2004 ranged from a low of 5.8 percent in Mississippi to a high of 11.8 percent in Alaska for all persons aged 12 and older. Four jurisdictions showed decreases from 2002-2003 in current use of any illicit drug: the District of Columbia, Florida, Nevada and Washington.

"State-by-state data is a powerful tool for policymakers at the federal, state and local levels to identify needs and target prevention and treatment resources. It is clear from the

findings that illicit drug, alcohol and tobacco use varies substantially among states and regions. That is why we continue to work through innovative programs like Access to Recovery to increase the flexibility of federal funding available to states and communities," Curie said.

Mississippi and Utah had the lowest rate of past month marijuana use (4.2 percent) in 2003-2004 for population ages 12 and older, while Alaska had the highest rate (9.9 percent). Eight states were ranked in the top fifth nationally for past month marijuana use in all three age groups, 12 to 17, 18 to 25 and 26 and older. These states are Alaska, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island and Vermont.

Seven jurisdictions had decreases in past month use of marijuana between 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 for those ages 12 and older: Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Washington.

Rhode Island had the highest percentage of persons aged 12 or older using cocaine in the past year, 3.5 percent. Ohio was the only state to show a decline in the use of cocaine in the past year, from 2.5 percent to 2.1 percent of persons aged 12 and older.

In the District of Columbia and Hawaii, approximately 3.1 percent of those 12 or older used narcotic pain relievers nonmedically, while 6.3 percent of those in Kentucky did. Washington and Kentucky were in the highest fifth for use of prescription pain relievers nonmedically in all three age groups. Arkansas and Maine had increases in the 12-17 age group, while California, Montana and New

York had increases in nonmedical use of prescription pain medications among those ages 18 to 25. A decrease in nonmedical use of pain relievers was seen among those ages 12 and older in Hawaii (from 3.9 to 3.1 percent).

Eight states were in the top fifth for both underage use of alcohol and underage binge use of alcohol: Iowa, Massachusetts, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Tobacco use in the past month by youth increased in California, but overall in California, tobacco use by those 12 and older fell from 22.5 percent to 20.7 percent due to a decrease among persons aged 26 and older. In Kansas, the percentage of persons aged 18-25 using tobacco in the past month increased from 45.7 percent to 49.9 percent.

The data show that West Virginia had the highest rate of serious psychological distress among persons aged 18 and older in the past year (12.7 percent) while Hawaii had the lowest rate (7.1 percent). Increases in serious psychological distress appeared in 10 states, Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, West Virginia and Wyoming, generally the result of increases among persons aged 26 and older.

### **Inter-Balkan Summit to take place in Thessalonika, Greece**

The northern port of Thessaloniki, Greece's second biggest city, will host the Inter-Balkan co-operation Summit, on the 3rd and 4th of May 2006. The countries of southeast Europe who are part of the Inter-Balkan Cooperation; Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia-Montenegro, Romania, Albania, Croatia, Bosnia and FYROM will be

represented by their leaders, Prime ministers and Ministers of foreign affairs.

The Inter-Balkan Cooperation Summit will focus on all the developments, both economic and political, in the area of southeast Europe, with the main topic being the situation in Kosovo.

On the sidelines of the Inter-Balkan Cooperation Summit, which will take place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel of Thessaloniki, Greek Premier Kostas Caramanlis will meet with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday in order to discuss bilateral issues, including the Cyprus problem.

For the safety of the leaders as well as for the convenience of city's traffic during possible demonstrations, a security plan has been prepared according to local police. Three years ago, Thessaloniki was the host city of the 2003 European Union Summit.

### **Blogspot ban lifted in Pakistan**

Since the morning of May 2, 2005, the blanket ban on the blogspot.com blogs has been lifted. This has been confirmed by various people on the 'Action Group Against Blogspot Ban In Pakistan' mailing list. The six baloch and plenty of Indian sites are still blocked.

The website was originally blocked because some of the blogs it hosted, reportedly contained "sacreligious" content, mostly in the form of cartoons that were earlier published by Jyllands-Posten, and republished in some Blogs. The Supreme Court of Pakistan directed the government of Pakistan to block all websites that contained such content on March 1, 2006.

### **Legislators in US states call for the impeachment of President Bush**

Legislators in three states have introduced resolutions calling for the impeachment of U.S. President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney.

US state legislators Karen Yarbrough of Illinois, Paul Koretz of California, and David Zuckerman of Vermont have each introduced resolutions to begin impeachment proceedings. Yarbrough and Koretz are Democrats, and Zuckerman is a member of the Vermont Progressive Party.

Yarbrough's resolution charges Bush with directing the National Security Agency to perform surveillance without a warrant in violation of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act; violating the torture conventions of the Geneva Convention, and "leaking classified national secrets to further an agenda." Koretz' similar resolution also calls for Cheney to be impeached.

Zuckerman introduced a resolution last Tuesday in the Vermont House of Representatives that asks Congress to "initiate impeachment proceedings against President George W. Bush." The resolution says "George W. Bush has committed high crimes and misdemeanors as he has repeatedly and intentionally violated the United States Constitution and other laws of the United States". Twelve Vermont state representatives (Democrats, Progressives, 1 Independent) have endorsed the resolution.

The Illinois resolution invokes Section 603 of Jefferson's Rules for the national House and Senate,

which allows for the introduction of impeachment charges "by charges transmitted from the legislature of a State or territory." Section 604 also states that an impeachment charge brought by any means would be a privileged motion, superseding most other business in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As of April 30, the Illinois resolution has been referred to the Rules Committee and has been sponsored by 17 representatives including Yarbrough.

In response to the Vermont resolution, the state's Republican Party Chairman James Barnett said, "If this is the best they can do at this late hour of the legislative session, then it's time to close down shop and go home for the summer so they can explain to their constituents that they didn't reform health care because they were too busy trying to impeach the president."

According to a CBS poll, the President's public approval rating has steadily declined, and is so far at an all time low of 33%.

**Today in History**

1791 - The Polish Constitution of May 3, 1791, the first codified national constitution in Europe and the second oldest constitution in the world, was adopted.

1808 - The Swedish fortress Sveaborg was lost to Russia during the Finnish War.

1937 - *Gone with the Wind*, a novel by Margaret Mitchell, won the Pulitzer Prize.

1945 - World War II: German ocean liner SS Cap Arcona, left to float defenselessly in the Baltic Sea with thousands of prisoners from various concentration camps on board, was attacked and sunk by RAF Typhoons.

1947 - A new Constitution of Japan went into effect.

May 03 is Yom Ha'atzma'ut in Israel (2006), Constitution Day in Poland and Japan, World Press Freedom Day.

**Quote of the Day**

"Education is what you get when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't."

~ Pete Seeger

**Word of the Day**

mauve; *n*

Definition

1. A pale purple or violet colour.

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