

Top Stories

Hurricane Katrina strikes Florida, kills seven

As hurricane Katrina moves beyond the Floridian peninsula, death tolls are beginning to surface. On Friday, the official count was seven dead, at least five missing.



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.



Tajik officials say that the piloted paraplane was transporting 18 kilograms of heroin above their southeast border. Border guards launched a search operation to find the pilot, believed to be wounded.

The deputy head of Tajik's border troops, Sabza Sarkorov, said to the media that this was actually the first narcotics interception of its kind. Smugglers used paraplanes to move drugs across the border for three years. Earlier attempts to bring it down were unsuccessful until now.

The country is a prime route for illegal drugs from Afghanistan, who is the world's top opium producer.

Two arrests made in Zotob worm attack

Turkish and Moroccan authorities arrested two suspects who are believed to be the creators of the Zotob worm that took down CNN's computer network and crippled other computers in the U.S. and worldwide earlier this month.

The FBI traced an electronic trail that led to two men from the Middle East and North Africa. An 18-year old Moroccan, Farid Essebar, is believed to have written the worm in return for a payment from a 21-year old Turk Atilla Ekici. Both were arrested Friday and await prosecution in their respective countries.

It appears that Essebar and Ekici never met personally, and conducted the entire cyber crime through contact with each other over the internet. The online monikers for the two is believed to be "Diablo" for Essebar and "Coder" for Ekici.

The speedy pace at which investigators made arrests is credited from working closely with the Microsoft Corp., and Moroccan and Turkish authorities, said the FBI assistant director Louis Reigel. "Had we not had those entities involved in this investigation, I suspect it would still be ongoing today."

Microsoft investigators began in March to analyze an e-mail variant called Mytob, which emerged in late February. The two suspects are believed to have authored the predecessor to Mytob, known then as 'Rbot'. These worms could plant in infected computers a backdoor that could be used to gain remote access to the computer and their networks at a later date.

The release of the Zytob worm yielded more evidence of the perpetrators' identities. The motive for the attacks appears to be financial gain and not terrorist related. The two men allegedly forwarded stolen financial information to a credit-card fraud ring, according to the Moroccan government.

The 5-year-old Windows 2000 operating system is most vulnerable to attack. The worm uses a flaw in the Windows Plug and Play service; a flaw for which Microsoft has issued a patch. But an August 23 Microsoft advisory notes that some non-default configurations of Windows XP Service Pack 1 systems could also be at risk. XP SP2 users are not at risk.

Swedish Wikipedia reaches 100,000 articles



The Swedish language edition of the multilingual Wikipedia project passed 100,000 articles this evening at 18:11 CEST. Swedish is the fifth language to reach the milestone, joining English, French, German, and Japanese.

The article growth was quite modest when 100 articles remained, but at 18.09 with less than 50 articles left people started submitting a lot of articles. Most of them

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

- Muhammad Deif, the Hamas leader who heads Israel's most wanted list, releases a video taunting Israel. (BBC)
- Nearly 1,000 detainees at the Abu Ghraib prison are released this week at the request of the Iraqi Government, the largest number of prisoners freed since the start of the war.

Afghani heroin shipment shot down in Tajikistan

On August 22, Tajikistan border guards spotted and shot down a home-made aircraft with heroin, on route from Afghanistan.



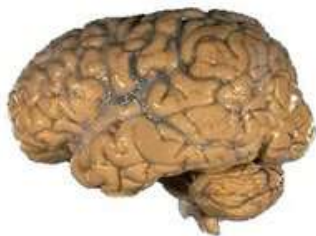
were written in advance, according to visitors at the IRC channel. The 100,000th article is believed to be about a minister of the Faroe Islands, Jógvan við Keldu, according to announcement pages on the site minutes after the mile stone was passed. Some concerns were raised, however, and a wikipedian claimed on the Village pump that the article Epiglottal klusil (linguistic subject) was number 100,000.

The Swedish edition is said to have been started in May 2001, but didn't start growing until November 2002 when several contributors arrived. The 50,000 mark was passed less than a year ago.

Swedish Wikipedia operates using the same basic principles as its larger English language sister edition, which include writing from a Neutral Point of View and making content open using the GNU Free Documentation License.

The size is quite large compared to the number of speakers of Swedish worldwide. The Swedish edition is larger than more widely spoken languages such as Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese and Hindi. The reason to this is somewhat unknown, but discussions on the central discussion forum of the site called Bybrunnen (literal translation of "Village pump") say that is because articles are considerably shorter than on other Wikipedias and that the Internet connectivity is very high in Sweden. Other Wikipedias for languages spoken in Northern Europe (including Norwegian, Danish and Finnish) also have quite a lot of articles compared to the number of speakers.

UK study claims men more intelligent than women



In a study accepted for publication by the British Journal of Psychology, Dr. Paul Irwing (Manchester Business School, Senior Lecturer in Organizational Psychology) and Prof. Richard Lynn (University of Ulster, Professor Emeritus)

conclude that men are on average five points ahead on IQ tests. The study also found that men outnumbered women in increasing numbers as intelligence levels rise. There were twice as many with IQ scores of 125, a level typical for people with first-class degrees. When scores rose to 155, a level associated with genius, there were 5.5 men for every woman.

Professor Lynn has a number of previous articles arguing that there are differences in intelligence between racial groups. In a 2003 study, he found a correlation between average IQ and prosperity in 60 countries. In a letter to *The Psychologist*, Professor Lynn claimed "Men have larger brains than women by about 10% and larger brains confer greater brain power, so men must necessarily be on average more intelligent than women." Most psychologists view brain size as less significant than numerous other gender differences. One reason brain size may not be significant is that the majority of the brain is not involved in "providing intelligence" but rather performs mundane tasks; such as regulating pulse and breathing, processing inputs from the five senses, and providing redundancy in case of brain damage. Larger brains may contain more space devoted to such functions, and the same or even less space devoted to intelligence. Colloquially, elephants and whales have brains many times the size of the human brain, yet do not appear to be more intelligent.

Earlier this year, the president of Harvard University, Lawrence Summers, sparked a controversy when he suggested that "intrinsic aptitude" was responsible for the low numbers of women at the top in many fields, especially in science and engineering. In response to Summers comment, Stephen Pinker and Elizabeth Spelke held a debate on the conclusions which can be drawn from the extensive existing scientific research on gender differences. Spelke held that discrimination remained the the primary factor keeping women from going into physics, mathematics, and computer science; while Pinker suggested that life choices were more important today. This debate is considered an exceptionally good introduction to the subject for lay-persons.

Several subtle points popularized by the Pinker vs. Spelke debate are relevant to the

Irwing & Lynn study. First, females benefit significantly from single sex education, but single sex education has little impact upon males. As a consequence, the Irwing & Lynn study can not lay claim to a biological difference, unless it restricts itself to women attending all girls schools. Secondly, the process of natural selection leads males of any species to have more variance in most traits. As a result, Stephen Pinker suggests that one should find "more geniuses and more idiots" among human males (see Pinker slide 41). As a consequence, any omission of people at the lower end of the IQ spectrum would bias the average male IQ upward.

Neither Pinker nor Spelke suggests brain size is particularly important. However, both agree that men and women have different mental strengths and even handle various mental tasks differently. Both see these differences as an asset to the scientific community.

IQ tests have been criticized for testing how similar a person's thought processes are to the author of the tests, primarily men, rather than how intelligent they are. In particular, some tests have been biased towards thought processes where males are dominant, such as 3D spatial rotation and visualization. Tests devised by females would be more likely to emphasize female strengths, such as computation and communication. Many modern IQ tests attempt to control for gender differences by including more questions targeted at female strengths. However, such efforts are hampered by the lack of a clear definition of intelligence.

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Today in History

475: Flavius Orestes took control of Ravenna, the capital of the Western Roman Empire, forcing Emperor Julius Nepos to flee.

1565: Pedro Menéndez de Avilés founded St. Augustine in Spanish Florida, the oldest continually occupied European settlement in the continental United States.

1845: The first issue of Scientific American was published.

1850: The romantic opera Lohengrin by Richard Wagner premiered.

1963: Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Quote of the Day

"The superior man, when resting in safety, does not forget that danger may come. When in a state of security he does not forget the possibility of ruin. When all is orderly, he does not forget that disorder may come. Thus his person is not endangered, and his States and all their clans are preserved." ~ Confucius

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