



Muslim leaders don't accept "pressured" apology

Islamic parties in Pakistan say the Newsweek apology is a transparent attempt to defuse Muslim anger. Qazi Hussain Ahmed, the head of an Islamic party alliance told the BBC that Newsweek's clarification held no weight. "There have been reports by the prisoners who have been released from Guantanamo Bay of desecration of the holy Koran, and different atrocities perpetrated on them. Therefore, the clarification of Newsweek has no meaning."

Weather:



Citizen "podcasting" goes mainstream

Infinity broadcasting, one of the largest radio companies in the U.S.A., announced its KYOU Radio, the world's first-ever podcasting radio station, began broadcasting on Monday, May 16 at 9:00 a.m., ET. The podcasts will also be available on San Francisco's KYCY-AM at 1550 AM.

The new format allows any listener to create a podcast and upload it to the station. Infinity said that its "All Podcast" format, "is going to give voice to your vision." Infinity will try to sell advertising on the programs, though they do not plan to pay the podcasters for their work.

Audio Wikinews is among other individually-produced content which will be featured on the station.

Croatian local elections: results pending

Official results of the local elections held in Croatia yesterday are still pending, but according to exit polls and preliminary results the currently ruling party, Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) has performed poorly.

HDZ has a lead in nine of 21 counties, and the second largest party, Social Democrat Party of Croatia (SDP) has a clear lead in three out of four big cities, including Zagreb. Four years ago, HDZ won 15 counties. Ivo Sanader, the current Prime Minister of Croatia and the leader of HDZ, said at 23:00 local time yesterday: "HDZ is the winner of local elections. Our politics on state level was approved."

Milan Bandić, in front of the list of SDP, Croatian Peasant Party (HSS) and Croatian Party of Pensioners (HSU) will be able to form a government in the Zagreb assembly on his own. Most of the other places will probably see formation of coalitions, since hardly anybody is receiving majority support.

Police find owner of Wendy's chili finger



On May 13, San Jose police announced they identified the person whose finger tip Anna Ayala claimed she found in a bowl of Wendy's chili. Police say that Ayala's husband, James Plascencia, was a work associate of the man who five months ago lost the finger tip in work related

accident.

The owner of the finger, who at this time remains nameless, lost his finger tip while working at an asphalt company back in December 2004. Police were able to trace it after receiving information from Pat Hogue, who called a Wendy's hot-line. Hogue worked as a cost estimator at an asphalt company at the same time as the co-workers Pascencia and the man who lost the portion of his little finger.

The tipster was unaware, until after Ayala's arrest, of the connection between the Wendy's "finger-pointer" and her husband Plascencia. Police believe the finger was given to Ayala's husband. They do not know how it was transported or preserved during the five months until it turned up in the bowl of chili. More arrests are possible, according to police.

Anna Ayala was arrested on April 21. She has been charged with one count of attempted grand theft in connection with the Wendy's incident, and one count of grand theft in an unrelated mobile home sale.

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12th century Andalusian Qur'an

Newsweek magazine apologized to the victims of last week's deadly protests in Afghanistan, which were sparked when a Newsweek report stated that U.S. officials defiled the Koran.

But Islamic parties in Pakistan say the

Newsweek apology is a transparent attempt to defuse Muslim anger. Qazi Hussain Ahmad, the head of an Islamic party alliance told the BBC that Newsweek's clarification held no weight. "There have been reports by the prisoners who have been released from Guantanamo Bay of desecration of the holy Koran, and different atrocities perpetrated on them. Therefore, the clarification of Newsweek has no meaning."

Reuters reported that Muslims said they suspected that pressure from Washington was behind the magazine's backing off. On Monday, presidential spokesman Scott McClellan had criticized Newsweek's initial response to the incident, saying it was "puzzling."

Newsweek did defend its reporting and said its investigation is continuing into allegations that the Koran had been desecrated by U.S. personnel.

"Unfortunately relations are so bad at this point that the perception will linger," said Ibrahim Hooper of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. "Many people won't believe it. They'll believe the magazine was pressured into doing a retraction." Hooper said.

"We will not be deceived by this," Sadullah Abu Aman, an Islamic cleric, told Reuters in Afghanistan.

The magazine said it had made a mistake in its May 9th report regarding the accusations, which led to violent anti-American protests in Afghanistan. Over 16 were killed, and more than 100 were injured. While many officials supporting the protests vowed for non-violence, some in the streets threatened to start a religious war against the United States.

Newsweek's Editor, Mark Whitaker, said the magazine's error was reporting confirmation by U.S. military investigators that Guantanamo personnel flushed the Koran down a toilet. The source claimed to have read of the event in an investigative report, but was later unable to confirm that it was in the report

and not in another document.

Mr Whitaker told Reuters, "As to whether anything like this happened, we just don't know. We're not saying it absolutely happened but we can't say that it absolutely didn't happen either."

A Newsweek reporter said in a Reuters interview that his information was from a "knowledgeable government source".

Ethiopians vote amid opposition charges of fraud



Millions of voters in Ethiopia are choosing between a powerful government which has close ties to the West but is considered by some to be totalitarian, and a coalition of little-known opposition parties that has promised greater political freedom and economic development. The democratic ballot is only the third in the country's history.

A small crowd of supporters enthusiastically greeted Prime Minister Meles Zenawi as he arrived at the polling station in Adwa. The town of Adwa, located about 25 kilometers east of the ancient city of Axum, is also the prime minister's birthplace.

Meles did not address the crowd. But he told reporters he believes the national elections represent an important milestone in Ethiopia's quest to become a full-fledged democratic state.

"I fought to make sure the Ethiopian people have the right to make their decisions," Meles said. "I am now exercising it as an Ethiopian and I am very proud of our achievement."

Meles is seeking his third five-year term in office. His ruling party, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), has been in power for 14 years. During that time, the party has not been

challenged in this mostly poor, subsistence farming region.

The party was the only one listed on the ballot paper in Adwa.

The ruling party says none of the major opposition parties bothered to register and campaign for votes in this remote area. But opposition leaders say electoral officials, whom the opposition accuses of being pro-government, would not allow their parties to register or campaign in the area.

The accusation is just one of numerous complaints of irregularity the opposition has lodged.

Hailu Shawel, the head of Ethiopia's opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy, cast his vote in an opposition stronghold south of the capital Addis Ababa. Shawl says that in his opinion the balloting has not been the model of democracy that people had hoped for.

"I think disaster is looming. Everywhere there is fraud being perpetrated," said Mr. Shawel. "The marker that they [the voters] were given, it washes off even without water. In other areas, they mark ballot papers with EPDRF signs and giving to people to put in the ballot boxes. And the people are fighting back, saying, 'No, we are not going to do that. Give us the clean paper.' So, the whole process is really jeopardized at the moment."

The government denies that it has been trying to prevent a fair vote, noting that the opposition received unprecedented access to state-owned media and were given permission to stage mass demonstrations ahead of the ballot.

For the first time, more than 300 international observers, including 150 from the European Union and 50 from the U.S.-based Carter Center, are in Ethiopia to monitor the elections. They fanned out before dawn to visit some of the 31,000 polling stations set up throughout the country.

The observers say they plan to investigate reports of any irregularities, but most say they have not seen any serious problems, largely calling the polls honest and fair. Final results are not expected until early June.

In previous elections held in 1995 and 2000, the ruling EPRDF won by overwhelming margins, giving the party a solid majority in parliament.

About 25 million of Ethiopia's 71 million people are registered to vote. The elections are being closely watched in the West as a key test of Ethiopia's commitment to democracy and being a stabilizing force in the volatile Horn of Africa region.

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MPAA sues six BitTorrent sites linking to TV shows



The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) is suing six websites for hosting BitTorrent links to TV programs.

The MPAA is a movie industry trade group representing most U.S. studios. The MPAA claims that these sites allow users of BitTorrent software to find and download illegal copies of various TV programmes.

Five of the sites sued are registered in the U.S., and the sixth site is registered in Spain. The sites sued are Shuntv.net, Zonatracker.com, Btefnet.net, Scifi-classics.net, Cddvdheaven.co.uk, and Bragginrights.biz

According to research by Envisional, recent surveys report downloads of TV programmes are up by 150% in a year. Most of the downloads, 70%, used BitTorrent sites. With smaller size than movies and broadband access, popular shows often appear within hours of airing

on TV.

The MPAA has filed over 100 lawsuits since December against operators of BitTorrent sites. The MPAA has also sued individuals, but has not reported how many.

CEO of the MPAA, Dan Glickman told the BBC "Since we began shutting these sites down, the time that it takes to download a file on BitTorrent has increased exponentially which means the experience of downloading copyrighted films and TV shows is not what it used to be. We intend to make it even worse. Protecting the television industry is essential."

Kahne takes Checkered Flag at Richmond

Kasey Kahne rode into victory early Sunday morning at Richmond International Raceway in the state of Virginia, USA, in his first Nascar Nextel Cup victory. Kahne, who drives a Dodge, and is sponsored by the same company, won automaker competitor Chevrolet's sponsored race.

The 25-year old from Huntersville, North Carolina had previously gained the pole position for Saturday's night race on Friday. Early in the race, second-place finisher Tony Stewart took lead from Kahne, continuing on to lead over 100 cumulative laps in the race. At lap 234 of 400, Stewart spun out coming out of a turn, which resulted in Kahne regaining the lead. After two more lead changes between the two, Kahne led the last 7 laps to take the checkered flag.

Points leader Jimmy Johnson crashed his car early into the race, taking a last-place finish. He continues to lead the cup series in points.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The National Assembly of Kuwait legalizes women's suffrage, allowing all women ages 21 and older, subject to Islamic law, to vote in elections in Kuwait in 2007.
- Uzbek troops kill over 400 people in

Andijan during protests in eastern Uzbekistan over the trials of 23 accused Islamic extremists. President Islam Karimov defends the act.

-In Taiwan, political parties supporting new amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of China win with 249 of 300 seats in the National Assembly election.

Today in History provided by Wikipedia:

1792 - The New York Stock Exchange was formed.

1846 - Adolphe Sax patented the saxophone.

1902 - The Antikythera mechanism, the oldest known surviving geared mechanism, was discovered in a shipwreck off the Greek island of Antikythera.

1943 - World War II: RAF Dam Busters successfully deployed bouncing bombs in Operation Chastise.

1995 - After 18 years as Mayor of Paris, Jacques Chirac was inaugurated as President of the French Republic.

Today's fact provided by Wikipedia:

Jean Kambanda, prime minister of Rwanda during the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, was the first and only head of government to plead guilty to genocide.

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