



Top Stories

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Adrian dissipates, producing heavy rains and mudslides



Hurricane Adrian appeared to have dissipated over Honduras Thursday night, but is still providing heavy rainfall to the region.

At 8 a.m. PDT, the center of now Tropical Depression Adrian was dissipating at 15.0° N, 87.5°W; inland over western Honduras. Its is moving toward the northeast at about 17 mph (28 km/h), containing maximum sustained winds of 30 mph (45 km/h), with higher gusts.

Weather



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The three journalists: Sorin Miscoci, Marie-Jeanne Ion and Ovidiu Ohanesian

The three Romanian journalists kidnapped in Iraq on March 28 were freed yesterday. The Presidency issued a release stating that Marie-Jeanne Ion, Ovidiu Ohanesian and Sorin Miscoci, as well as their guide, Mohamed Munaf, were under the protection of the Romanian authorities as of 13:44 UTC, yesterday. Romania's president, Traian Băsescu, assured people that, for the journalists' release, no ransom was given and there was no negotiation in terms of changing Romania's foreign policy. Romania's 860 troops will remain in Iraq. Ion Vasile, the father of Marie-Jeanne Ion, said that he was happy that his daughter is in safe hands, and considers that, after her release, he feels she has been "born again". He said, "It's an immense happiness, for which we prayed 53 days!" A Hercules plane left Romania yesterday, at 16:30, for Iraq. For security reasons, the journalists were not boarded onto the plane during the night. It is expected that they will return with this plane today, leaving for Bucharest.

Restrictions imposed in China textile trade with U.S.



In an effort to ease complaints by the U.S. and Europe about a heavy influx of low priced Chinese goods, China will raise export tariffs on 74 categories of textile products in June. This follows plans from the U.S. to impose quotas on Chinese textiles and clothing.

Products likely to see an increase from the Chinese move include synthetic fiber shirts, trousers, knit shirts and blouses, cotton shirts, and combined cotton yarn. Last week, similar restrictions were imposed by the U.S. on cotton trousers, knit shirts, and underwear. Currently, a 2.5 cent charge per item is imposed; the new tariff will raise this to the equivalent of 12 cents per piece now. While this is a four-fold increase, it is not expected to affect consumer prices. Because of this, some doubt the tariff will have any effect on correcting the trade imbalance.

This move is in response to U.S. trade quotas imposed due to concerns that increased Chinese goods would put U.S. textile manufacturers out of business. According to Auggie Tantillo, executive director of the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition, a textile industry group in the U.S., the move will preserve 10,000 U.S. jobs. The new U.S. trade quota will limit the growth of Chinese textile imports to 7.5 percent compared with shipments over the past year.

Prior to January 1, a global quota system helped regulate the trade. With the quota system gone, fears have arisen that a flood of Chinese goods will undercut U.S.

competitiveness in the market. China is able to market its goods cheaply due to an artificially weak yuan. The U.S. Treasury criticized the China yuan policy as "highly distortionary", posing a major risk to China's economy itself and to global economic growth. They challenged China to revalue its currency to bring it to a level they believe will allow fairer competition between global manufacturers.

China has disputed the charges of the U.S. Treasury. Chinese Commerce Minister Bo Xilai said, "I believe they are not reasonable".



Laura Jones, a representative of large retailers, also criticized the move, saying "These restrictions on imports from China will do absolutely nothing to help the U.S. textile industry -- and the government knows it."

China has seen a boom in economic growth in recent years due to growing trade surpluses with the West, but economists worry that the trade gap will cause longer term global economic problems. China's textile and apparel exports are the most noteworthy example, with exports up over 1,000 percent in some categories this year and the rapid loss of marketshare and jobs by U.S. textile manufacturers.

Beginning in 1978, the Chinese economy has been transforming from a Soviet-style centrally planned economy to more of a free market style system, under the rigid political control of Communist Party of China.

To this end, the government has leveraged foreign trade to stimulate economic growth. The result has been a four-fold increase in GDP, making China

the sixth largest economy in the world. By 2012 the People's Republic of China may have the highest GDP in the world.

According to U.S. statistics, from 1999 to 2004 China's trade surplus with the U.S. doubled to \$170 billion. Wal-Mart is China's seventh largest export partner, just ahead of the United Kingdom.

However, the gains from their "Socialism market economy" have not been without problems. The Chinese leadership has often experienced the worst results of socialism and Capitalism: bureaucracy, lassitude, corruption, and inflation. Inflation rates have been an on-going challenge, reaching as high as 17% in 1995.

Environmental deterioration is a longer-term threat to economic growth. In 1998, the World Health Organization reported that China had seven of the 10 most-polluted cities on Earth. Another concern among some economists is that China's economy is over-heating, and due to its global economic expansion this could have major repercussions among other nations.

Typically, wages have been low and working conditions poor, with workers living in restrictive dormitories and working at boring factory jobs. However, recent labor shortages have started improving conditions, and raising the minimum wage towards the equivalent of 100-150 US dollars per month. The labor shortages are in part a result of a demographic trend caused by strict family planning.

#### Venture capital investment in Ireland soars by 35%



Venture capital investment in Ireland has leapt by 35% in the first quarter of 2005, according to a new report by Ernst & Young. The report found that Europe-wide venture capital investment increased by a healthy 19% on the same period in 2004.

Total investment in Ireland was €42.11m (US\$52.8m, £28.9m) for the first 3 months compared to €31.23m (US\$39.1m, £21.4m) in the first quarter of last year. The report found that 85% of the capital was invested in the information technology sector; largely helped by a successful €15m fundraising by Corvil Networks.

€880.3m (US\$1.1bn, £605m) was raised throughout Europe in almost 200 separate deals, with €407.3m of that invested in the IT sector.

#### Mongolia's ex-communists ahead going into Sunday's election



"Communism was much better," said Tshhiriin Daariimaa Saturday on the eve of Mongolia's presidential elections. Polls predict that many Mongolians plan to vote for their former communist rulers — the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP).

Under communism, "everyone worked for the collective farm," Daariimaa said. None of her children has a steady job these days.

Myatav Choijav is a Mongolian who shares that view; "Now, some people are very rich and some are very poor. In the old times, the government took better care of us ordinary people," Choijav said. "Now, the government is very far away from us, especially if you live in the countryside and take care of sheep. Everyone was equal under communist rule," Choijav said.

Tseveenjav, a 70-year-old sheep herder, agrees: "I will support the MPRP. They always do the right thing."

Tseveenjav wears the traditional Mongolian thick boots and hat while sitting upon his horse with a dead marmot

hung from his saddle. Falcon and Tiger, his sheepdogs, help him keep watch over 500 sheep.

Sambuu Ganbaator, a member of the Democratic Party, has a different opinion from most of his neighbors.

"Too many people forget what the MPRP did to Mongolia," he said. "They kept Mongolia under a brutal dictatorship. You weren't allowed to speak your mind." Now, he said, "you can say anything you want to say and do what you want to live a happy life."

The MPRP's candidate, Nambariin Enkbayar, leads the polls and the ex-communist party has said that it is now committed to democracy.

### Endangered cow cloned in Brazil



The Junqueira breed clones "Porã" and "Potira".  
Photo: Lindomar Cruz/ABr

The Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, Embrapa, which is linked to the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply, has created two clones from a Junqueira cow. The Junqueira is an endangered species. It is estimated that there are less than 100 of them on Brazilian territory.

The cloned calves were created using cells from the ear of a nine year old cow. The first clone, called "Porã" was born on April 10, weighing 55 lbs. (25 kg), after 292 days of gestation. "Potira", the second cloned calf was born, weighing 64 lbs. (29 kg), on April 24, after a 290-day gestation period. The clones are healthy, and are being monitored by Embrapa researchers.

The breed Junqueira is popular for meat and milk production. In addition, they are used as work animals. The first cows

were brought to Brazil by Spanish and Portuguese settlers. The breed developed inside Sao Paulo, during the 18th and 19th centuries. The cows' long horns are their most prominent indentifying characteristic. The horns were originally used to make "berrante", a Brazilian instrument used by cowboys to call cattle.

The Embrapa researcher, Arthur da Silva Mariante said that the research will continue and that other wild animals threatened by extinction may also be cloned.

The clones are part of the doctorate thesis of Lílian Iguma, a member of the research team.

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The competition was held in Palace of Sports in downtown Kiev, Ukraine, after its entry, Ruslana, had won the 2004 contest singing Wild Dances. Semi-finals had been held on May 19, 2005. 10 out of 25 countries with the highest scores in the semi-finals then joined 14 already pre-qualified countries in the final. Both events were televised across Europe.

More than 6000 spectators attended the event. Organisers hope that it will boost Ukraine's image abroad and increase tourism, while the country's new government hopes that it will also give a modest boost to the long-term goal of acquiring European Union membership.

Bulgaria and Moldova took part for the first time while Hungary returned after a

hiatus since 1998. Lebanon had been expected to make its debut appearance but decided to withdraw. For the first time in the history of the contest, Ireland failed to qualify.

The hosts for the event were Maria "Masha" Efrosinina and DJ Pasha, a TV Presenter and Radio DJ.



### Martin claims victory in Charlotte

The non-points Nextel All-Star Challenge for the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series started with controversy and ended with a popular victory for one of the sports' veterans.

Mark Martin, competing in his last full Nextel Cup season, led 24 of 90 laps to win the All-Star Challenge for the second time, having done so in 1998.

Martin took the lead from Elliott Sadler on the 72nd lap of the race, and never looked back, defeating Sadler by over half a second.

The Nextel All-Star Challenge is a non-points race that invites Nextel Cup race winners from the previous edition of this race to the upcoming edition, as well as former Nextel Cup Series champions, and former winners of this race. There is a last-chance transfer race, the 30-lap Nextel Open, with the winner advancing to the main event, and a second driver getting in through a fan vote, though the fan vote winner must finish on the same lap as the winner. The Nextel Open is for drivers who have never won a race, or haven't won a points-paying race in a long period of time.

Brian Vickers won the Open with a move that rubbed some fans-as well as the driver he beat-the wrong way.

Just over 200 yards from the finish line, Vickers tapped Open pole-sitter Mike Bliss from behind, causing him to slide

across the grass and end up second. Vickers got into the All-Star Challenge itself, but Bliss, who set the track record with his pole-winning lap, was none too happy with what transpired, saying afterward, "He spun me out. The only thing, I wish I would have turned right and wrecked (him)." 2004 Busch Series champion Martin Truex, Jr. finished tenth in the Open, but won the fan vote to get into the All-Star Challenge.

A lap 35 crash in the All-Star Challenge itself eliminated seven drivers alone, with Truex being one of them. It started when Tony Stewart tagged Joe Nemechek, who in turn hit Kevin Harvick. Kasey Kahne, Terry Labonte, and Michael Waltrip were involved as well.

Harvick was upset to be involved, but he ended up taking his frustrations out on Nemechek, not on Stewart. Nemechek fired back, saying, "Kevin thinks he owns the world, and he ain't squat....He was just being an idiot, just being Kevin." The accident brought out the red flag. Only one other caution took place, this being displayed on lap 71, when pole-sitter Ryan Newman spun and crashed in turn two, with teammate Rusty Wallace eventually becoming involved.

The All-Star Challenge itself is divided into three segments. The first segment is 40 laps long, the second 30, and the third and final segment 20. Mark Martin won the first segment, with Newman winning the second. Of course, Martin won the third and final segment to claim the race.

For his efforts, Martin won \$1,101,325. He said over the radio that he will race in this event next year, as long as current car owner Jack Roush gives him a car. This was marked as Martin's first Nascar Nextel Cup victory since Dover on June 6, 2004.

#### Wikipedia Current Events

-Helena Papparizou wins the 2005 Eurovision Song Contest, becoming the contest's first winner from Greece.  
-Hurricane Adrian, the first storm of the 2005 Pacific hurricane season, becomes the first named tropical system to make

landfall in El Salvador since 1997 and dissipates over Honduras. At least two deaths were reported in Guatemala following a mudslide caused by the heavy rain.

-In Canada, Prime Minister Paul Martin's Liberal government narrowly avoids collapse after the Speaker of the House of Commons breaks a tie vote on the federal budget, averting the predicted 39th Canadian federal election.  
-The death toll in the Marburg virus outbreak in Angola reaches 311.

#### Today in history

1533 - The marriage of Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII of England was annulled.

1568 - The Eighty Years' War broke out when Dutch rebels led by Louis of Nassau invaded Friesland in the Battle of Heiligerlee.

1873 - The North West Mounted Police was established in the Northwest Territories, Canada.

1934 - American bank robbers Bonnie and Clyde were ambushed by police and killed in Black Lake, Louisiana.

1969 - British rock band The Who released the rock opera Tommy.

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