



Top Stories

France gets a new prime minister

President Jacques Chirac of France has accepted the resignation of prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin and has named Dominique de Villepin in his place. The prime minister has responsibility for the day-to-day running of France.

The resignation of Mr. Raffarin comes shortly after the resounding refusal of the ratification of the treaty establishing the European Constitution in a referendum. While Mr. Raffarin was initially popular with the French citizens, he gradually lost support from the population. According to recent polls, only 22% of the population trusts him.

Huge Gay Pride parade held in Brazil

In what may possibly be the largest Gay Pride parade in the world, hundreds of thousands of people marched along the streets of São Paulo, Brazil today in the Parada do Orgulho GLBT de São Paulo. Many marchers were demanding the legalization of same-sex marriage. Organizers stated that 2.5 million people attended, and police stated that there were 1.9 million — figures which would make the event the largest of its kind in the world

Live 8 concert plans announced

In a press conference held at 13:00 UTC yesterday, Sir Bob Geldof, Elton John, and Harvey Goldsmith announced Live 8, a set of simultaneous free concerts to be held in Philadelphia, London, Paris, Rome, and Berlin on July 2, 2005, to raise awareness of Make Poverty History, a campaign to get the richest nations to cancel debt and increase aid to developing countries. The concerts are scheduled to occur just before the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, from July 6 to July 8.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Russian billionaire and businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky is sentenced to 9 years in prison in his tax evasion trial.
- In Bangkok, Thailand, the Canadian contestant Natalie Glebova is crowned Miss Universe 2005.
- Ex-FBI official W. Mark Felt admits that he was the Watergate source known as Deep Throat.
- Hamas have declared that they will be boycotting the re-vote which was requested in three Districts of the Gaza Strip.
- Police in Israel say they have uncovered an Industrial espionage plot involving 15 Israeli firms. 20 people have been arrested so far.
- China and Japan have opened two days of closed-door negotiations in Beijing aimed at resolving a long-running dispute over natural gas drilling rights in a disputed area of the East China Sea
- China claims that arrested Singaporean journalist Ching Cheong was spying.
- In Senegal, opposition leader Abdourahim Agne is charged with incitement to rebellion after he urged demonstrations against the president Abdoulaye Wade.
- The U.S. Supreme Court has overturned the conviction of defunct accounting giant Arthur Andersen on charges arising from the Enron scandal, on the ground that the jury instructions were faulty
- Indonesia intends to vaccinate 6.4 million children against polio in the next couple of days. There are already 16 cases in the country.
- China opens Three Gorges Dam to tourists.

Scottish Radio Holdings set to buy Highland Radio for €7m

Media group, Scottish Radio Holdings (SRH), has reached an agreement to purchase Donegal's popular Highland Radio for around €7 million (USD \$8.6 million). The Broadcasting Commission of Ireland has approved the deal in principle; but both the Competition Authority and the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment still are entitled to block the deal.

Highland Radio, which broadcasts in north Donegal, Ireland, first hit the airwaves in 1990. It is based in Letterkenny. SRH is a major player in the Irish media market; already owning both Today FM and FM104. Apart from operating radio stations, SRH is also a major player in the weekly newspaper market in the UK and Ireland, owning 45 titles.

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Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, from July 6 to July 8.

"20 years ago, at the time of the original Live Aid concert, I was a self-obsessed drug addict.", began Elton John. "I've grown up since". He then describe the aim of the concerts to raise awareness in the richest countries of the world of the plights of the poorest, and how his work on global AIDS awareness had impressed upon him the lack of awareness and ignorance that exists. "The Prime Minister of South Africa thinks that AIDS is something that is caused by poverty. I wish!"

Bob Geldof thanked the corporations who had already come forward to sponsor the event, including the BBC and AOL. In mentioning AOL he said that "20 years ago, almost nobody had a mobile 'phone", hinting at the possibility of AOL broadcasting the concerts to mobile telephones. Geldof also thanked The Prince's Trust, which had already booked Hyde Park for July 2, for stepping aside in favour of Live 8.

### **Chicken that crossed road let off fine by California court**

The \$54 fine for jaywalking incurred by the owners of a chicken in Johannesburg, California, has been thrown out of court.

The owners, Linc and Helena Moore, had been complaining to the local authorities about children riding bicycles in the middle of the road and their neighbours' dogs running around, and assert that as a consequence when their chicken escaped and wandered onto the road "it became a huge issue". They were fined \$54 on March 26, 2005.

Under the California state code, livestock is banned from highways, but not domestic animals. The fine was dismissed when Henry Mosier, the public defence lawyer for the couple, argued that the chicken was not livestock but a domesticated animal. The chicken also has an unalienable right to "get to the other side".

The Kern County Sheriff's Department has denied the allegation that the couple were fined because of their complaints, and the couple are seeking legal assistance for filing harrassment charges against the department.

### **Retired U.S. vets sue Donald Rumsfeld for excessive service cutbacks**

1,000 residents of the Defense Department-managed Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, D.C. filed a class-action lawsuit on May 24, asserting that the cut-backs in medical and dental services imposed by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld are illegal. The operating budget for the home was reduced from \$63 million in 2004 to \$58 million for 2005. The residents cite cuts in on-site X-ray, electrocardiogram, physical and dental services, and the closing of the home's main clinic and an on-site pharmacy.

Chief Financial Officer Steve McManus responded that the changes not only save money but also achieved improved efficiencies. "We're really trying to improve the benefits to our residents," he said.

Most of the home's costs are paid for by a trust fund and monthly fees paid by residents. By law, the Armed Forces Retirement Homes are required to fund, "on-site primary care, medical care and a continuum of long-term care services."

### **Ryanair profits jump 19% to €268.9m**



Ryanair, the Irish low fares airline, which last week celebrated twenty years in business, has reported a 19% increase in profits. The airline, which operates over 200 routes, revealed in its annual results that after tax profits had increased to €268.9m (US \$332 million), comfortably beating the median analyst forecast of €248m (\$306 million).

Group revenue rose by 24% to a record €1.34bn (\$1.66 billion), on the back of a

19% rise in passenger numbers to 27.6m (\$34.1 million). By 10:30am UTC, Ryanair shares had risen by 4.48% to €6.53 (\$8.06) ( on the Irish Stock Exchange (ISE), having hit €6.66 (\$8.22) earlier in the morning - briefly valuing Ryanair above the €5bn (\$6 billion) mark.

Despite the increase in profits, the firm told investors that the increased cost of fuel posed a serious threat for the future, however Ryanair has hedged 75% of next winters fuel needs at €38 (\$47) a barrel. CEO Michael O'Leary, told the media in relation to fuel costs, "Our outlook for the coming 12 months is more positive than it was this time last year"... "Clearly fuel costs remain high, and the market is volatile." He also reiterated that Ryanair would not impose fuel surcharges on customers.

Ryanair's 2004 record profit is larger than that of Easyjet (\$74m), British Airways (\$240m), and even its role model Southwest Airlines (\$313m). The fact that it made €248m on turnover of just €1.34bn makes it by some margin the world's most profitable major airline. One of the key methods of keeping costs to a minimum at Ryanair is by using less staff to carry more passengers, in comparison to its main competitors:

Ryanair employs 2,300 staff and carries 27m people a year;

11,700 passengers per staff member  
easyJet employs 3,600 staff and carries 24m people a year;

6,666 passengers per staff member  
Aer Lingus employs 3,900 staff and carries 7m people a year;

1,795 passengers per staff member  
Air France-KLM employs 64,000 staff and carries 65m people a year;

1,015 passengers per staff member  
British Airways employs 51,939 staff and carries 35m people a year;

674 passengers per staff member

Ryanair has a stated aim of raising its passenger numbers to above 70m within five years time, making it Europe's largest airline. The Dublin-based airline currently is awaiting delivery of 200 new planes from Boeing which it hopes to use to achieve this ambitious aim and to

replace its older aircraft.

*This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.*

## France gets a new prime minister



President Jacques Chirac of France has accepted the resignation of prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin and has named Dominique de Villepin in his place.

The resignation of Mr. Raffarin comes shortly after the resounding refusal of the ratification of the treaty establishing the European Constitution in a referendum. (See France votes no in EU referendum). While Mr. Raffarin was initially popular with the French citizens (polled at 60% of trust in 2002), he gradually lost support from the population, up to record levels; according to polls, only 22% of the population trust him (including only 2% who trust him strongly).

The prime minister has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the French government.

There are questions whether Mr. Villepin, who has never held elected office and has ascended mostly as a Chirac aide, will be received by the population and by the parliamentary majority. His nomination was immediately criticized by left-wing politicians, as well by the centrist Union for French Democracy, a junior partner in the ruling coalition, as a continuation of the same failed policies; Mr. Villepin was himself criticized as being out-of-touch. The Union for a Popular Movement, the party created for backing Chirac, has now rallied behind Nicolas Sarkozy, whose reciprocal distaste for Chirac and Villepin is well-published.

Jacques Chirac announced that Nicolas Sarkozy would be Minister of State (a honorific rank) in the government; it is yet unknown what his attributions will be, but it is rumored that he will become Minister of the Interior, a position whose main function is law enforcement and which he also held from 2002 to 2004. According to polls, Mr. Sarkozy is France's most popular politician.

## Natalie Glebova is elected Miss Universe

The 23-year-old Canadian delegate Natalie Glebova was elected on Tuesday morning as the new Miss Universe, in a ceremony held at Bangkok's Impact Arena.

Glebova is a professional model, height 1.79 m (5'11"), and received her Bachelor of Commerce in Information Technology Management and Marketing at Ryerson University. Born in Russia, emigrated to Toronto when she was 11. She beat four Latin American delegates in semifinals: Cynthia Olavarria (Puerto Rico), Renata Soñe (Dominican Republic, Laura Elizondo (Mexico) and Mónica Spear (Venezuela), as well as other 75 delegates from the same number of countries. Chananporn Rosjan, from Thailand, won the Best Costume Award, while Gionna Cabrera, from Phillipines, was chosen as Miss Photogenic and Tricia Homer, US Virgin Islands delegate, became Miss Congeniality.

Billy Bush y Nancy O'Dell co-hosted the ceremony.

Glebova received the Mikimoto crown, valued in 250,000 dollars, from Australian Jennifer Hawkins, Miss Universe 2004. Besides, Natalie will live in New York for one year, in one of the Trump Towers, with other several prizes. The first and last time a Canadian was elected Miss Universe was in 1982, when Karen Baldwin won the pageant.

Colombian designer Miguel De La Torre, who designed Glebova's wardrobe, declared that "Canadian beauty contestants have always been quite

classical. It's the first time a Latin designer is chosen. (...) At the very first days, Natalie was quite low-key, because being too notices is not good. To be with her is the best thing has ever happened in my professional life. Furthermore, to come here by the first time with two delegates (Glebova and Daniela Clerk from Nicaragua) and two gown dresses was a dream come true".

Glebova visited Colombia in April 2004 in order to take part in Miss Maja World pageant, held in the northern town of Corozal, Sucre, where she was the second runner-up, and went back there a few months ago to try the dresses designed by De La Torre. The Colombian designer has never participated at his country's national beauty pageant.

Thailand's prime minister haksin Shinawatra said the pageant was very positive for his country's tourism reactivation, after the tsunami tragedy. Thailand spent 6.5 million dollars in the pageant and used locations at Phi-Phi and Phuket beaches for the previous footages with delegates.

# Wikinews Back Page

- Today in History**
- 1495 - Friar John Cor recorded the first known batch of scotch whisky.
  - 1779 - Benedict Arnold was court-martialed for malfeasance.
  - 1922 - A police force in Northern Ireland called the Royal Ulster Constabulary was founded.
  - 1938 - The first Superman comic was published.
  - 1980 - The Cable News Network began broadcasting.

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