

NEWS

National and world news in brief

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Attempted Papal assassin freed

ISTANBUL, Turkey: Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who attempted to assassinate Pope John Paul II nearly 25 years ago, was freed Thursday from a prison in Turkey.
The attack, which occurred on May 13, 1981, sent shockwaves through the Catholic world when Agca shot the Pope several times at point blank range. Agca was apprehended immediately, and the Pope survived the attack.
The Pope publicly forgave his would-be assassin only three days after the attempt took place, and Agca has since become a devout Christian who claims he will "write the new Bible." At his trial in 1981, Agca claimed that he was fulfilling a prophecy given by the Virgin Mary to the children of Fatima, Portugal. To the surprise of many, the Vatican confirmed his claim 14 years later, and that he had acted by the prophecy.
Agca's family was glad to have him back after being pardoned by the Italian government. "We are happy. We endlessly thank the Turkish state," said his brother, Adnan.

U.S. joins European calls for action against Iran

BERLIN, Germany: The United States joined its allies in Europe today in asking for Iran to be referred to the UN Security Council after the government broke UN seals on its nuclear technology and resumed development.
U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Thursday that the U.S. joined the European Union "and many other members of the international community in condemning the Iranian government's deliberate escalation of this issue."
The Iranian government maintains that the technologies in question are being researched for the sole purposes of power generation and "peaceful uses."
"Nuclear research officially resumed at sites agreed upon with (U.N.) inspectors," said Mohammed Saeedi, an Iranian spokesman.
UN Secretary General Kofi Annan expressed his concerns with the Iranian government in a phone call earlier this week.
"Basically, I called him to urge him to avoid any escalation, to exercise restraint, to go back to give the negotiations a chance, and that the only viable solution lies in a negotiated one," he said.
"He, in turn, affirmed to me that they are interested in serious and constructive negotiations, but within a time frame, indicating that last time they did it for two-and-a-half years with no result."
Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov of Russia, which had been building a nuclear reactor in Iran to provide power without further Iranian research, shared the feelings of the United States and the European Union expressing "a deep disappointment over Tehran's decision to leave behind the moratorium on all activities tied with uranium enrichment, resuming research work in this sphere." These actions marked the end of over two years of effort by the EU to dissuade Iran from continuing nuclear research.

Governor Schwarzenegger injured in motorcycle accident

LOS ANGELES, California: Arnold Schwarzenegger, governor of California, was in a motorcycle accident Wednesday with his 12-year-old son after failing to successfully navigate a curving mountain road.
Governor Schwarzenegger ended up with 15 stitches and a political punch in the gut, but the city decided not to press charges despite discovering the fact that the governor does not have a motorcycle license.
"The city attorney will not file any charges," said Officer Grace Brady, spokeswoman for the Los Angeles Police Department. Despite concluding that he was unlicensed to operate the vehicle, the department "cannot go back and cite the governor because we did not witness the driving."
When asked why he has driven motorcycles for years without appropriate licenses, Governor Schwarzenegger said, "I never thought about it."
The State of California also decided not to pursue legal action, claiming that since he was driving with a sidecar, the motorcycle may not be considered a motorcycle. State Department of Motor Vehicles spokesman Mike Miller said that since the state laws made no specific mention that a motorcycle with a sidecar is still considered a motorcycle, he didn't need to be licensed.
"From our perspective, there is no violation," Miller said.

Asian Bird Flu pandemic threatens Turkey

TOKYO, Japan: Turkey has reported more new human cases of the Avian Flu in recent weeks and the World Health Organization (WHO) claims that the threat of a pandemic is growing daily.
Shigeru Omi, a regional director for WHO, said that the main threat for widespread human contagion still remained in Asia but steps needed to be taken to contain the disease.
"As the new cases of human infection with the H5N1 virus in Turkey show, the situation is worsening with each passing month and the threat of an influenza pandemic is continuing to grow every day," he told a conference centering on the disease in Tokyo on Thursday.
Experts claim that the longer the virus remains in poultry flocks, the better the chances are that it will evolve into a strain more seriously threatening to humans. So far, 147 cases of Avian Flu have been confirmed in humans, with 78 of those being fatal, leading to a human mortality rate of over 53%, and with one recent death under investigation.
However, WHO officials maintained that there is "no reason to panic," despite the recent spread to Europe and reports that it may be transferring to humans more easily, and that more steps can be taken now to help halt its spread.



Source: CNN.com, Yahoo! News

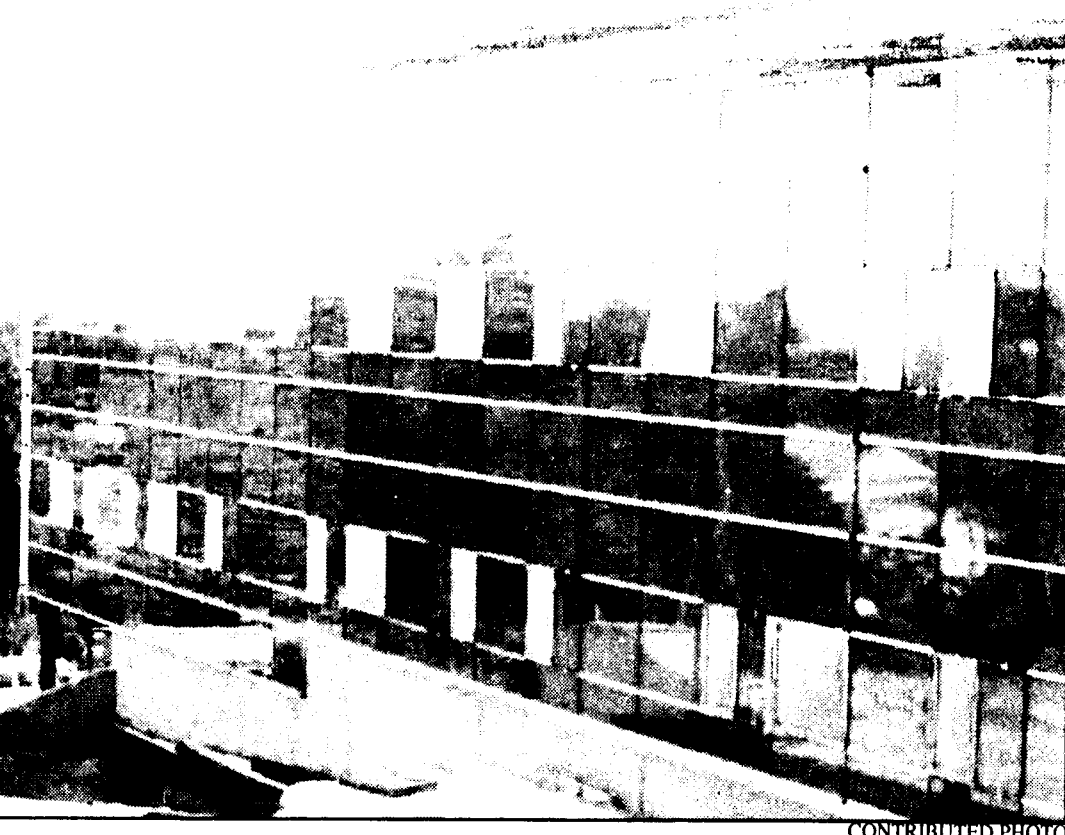
REDC getting closer to completion

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Construction on the newest building on the campus of Penn State Erie is nearly complete. College officials say that construction of the \$30 million Research and Development Center (REDC) building should be finished by Feb. 15. Funds for the project were supplied by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through a grant.
The university had been presenting the project to the Commonwealth for nearly 10 years. After years of planning, the project finally began and construction started on Feb. 28, 2004. College officials say the main goal of this project is to provide students with a facility to enhance their education.
The REDC will host the new School of Engineering and Technology and the School of Business. Consisting of three total

floors, the REDC will house more classrooms in it than any other building currently on campus. Since the building is built on a slope, the ground floor is dedicated to two large lecture halls and a computer lab.
Wireless Internet will be available in the two lecture halls and elsewhere throughout the building. The first floor has a computer lab, seven additional classrooms and engineering labs. Food services will also be offered on the first floor via the cyber cafe. Similar to the operation of the coffee shop inside Brunos, the cafe will offer packaged sandwiches, snacks and a quick refreshment. Common areas will give students the opportunity to grab a snack or a quick conversation with a friend.
Offices will occupy the second floor, along with a view of the new lab. The lab is two stories high and allows students on the second floor to look down into the lab and view

the cranes. This lab will provide students with new technology and a large working space to gain important hands on work experience.
Classroom sizes are about the same size as the current classrooms on campus, which hold about 30 to 40 students per class. Each of the two lecture halls can individually hold 48 students per class. With a convenient location, students will be able to access the new building fairly easy. For example students who reside in the apartments will merely have to walk downhill to class.
Where to park? John Ream, Director of Business and Operations, expects a shift in parking. "We have been building parking over at the Junker Center in anticipation of the building coming online. We are looking at building additional parking to support the REDC." Students will be able to visit the newest addition to the Behrend campus by this February.



The construction of the Research and Economic Development Center should be finished by Feb. 15.

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