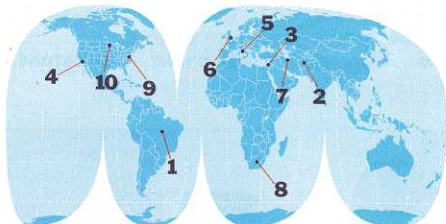




# The World

10 ESSENTIAL STORIES



A member of the Brazilian air force surveys the sea for remains of the Air France jetliner

## 1 | Brazil

### What Happened to Flight 447?

On June 2, search teams combing the Atlantic Ocean discovered bobbing wreckage from the Air France jet that vanished between Brazil and West Africa two days earlier. But the mystery of why the Airbus A330 went down may endure—a lead investigator suggested that the doomed aircraft's voice and data recorders may never be plucked from the mountainous ocean floor, more than a mile below. Meteorologists suspect the wide-body jet encountered a band of towering thunderstorms packing 100-m.p.h. (160 km/h) winds as it flew from Rio de Janeiro to Paris, but the precise cause of the catastrophe remained unknown. All 228 people aboard the airliner are presumed dead, making this the deadliest crash in Air France's history and the world's worst aviation disaster since 2001.

## 2 | Afghanistan

### Bringing Back Body Count

Reversing decades of military policy, the U.S. Army has begun regularly releasing statistics on the number of enemy combatants killed in Afghanistan—a figure nearing 2,000 over the past 14 months. The practice of disclosing enemy death tolls was abandoned after the Vietnam War, when they were reportedly inflated to project the illusion of victory. U.S. military officials say releasing casualty tallies will help counter insurgent propaganda.

## 3 | Israel

### Obama, Unsettled

President Obama's hopes of delivering important Israeli concessions to Arab leaders during his landmark Middle East trip dimmed after Israel demurred on

**NATURAL GROWTH** Settlers say their adult children need new homes, but 37% of settlements' population increase comes from new arrivals

his call for a halt to the expansion of Jewish settlements into Palestinian territories. Despite repeated U.S. calls for a freeze on new construction, settlers justify

expansion as a way to accommodate the "natural growth" of their communities, shipping in trailer homes, building illegal houses and bulldozing new roads to connect them.



A gamer demonstrates a prototype of Sony's forthcoming motion-control device at E3.

## 4 | Los Angeles

### Stalking the Wii

In a bid to combat Nintendo's Wii—the best-selling game console since 2006—Microsoft and Sony announced motion-based controls of their own at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3). Sony's wireless wand emits light tracked by a camera, while Microsoft's Project Natal eliminates the controller entirely, using a 3-D system to detect a player's body movements. Don't rest your thumbs yet: Sony's device won't be available until 2010; Microsoft has yet to set a release date.

## 5 | Rome

### 'Spicy' Affair Stays Hot

**Allegations by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's wife in early May that he had an improper relationship with an underage model have embroiled the popular leader in scandal on the eve of elections for the European Parliament. Berlusconi has vigorously denied any "spicy" activities with Noemi Letizia, now 18. Meanwhile, authorities have banned publication of photos allegedly showing seminaked women cavorting at his Sardinian villa.**

## 6 | London

### Bad News Blears

Communities Secretary Hazel Blears became the fourth member of Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Cabinet to resign in a scandal over British lawmakers' lavish expenses that has implicated more than 200 of Parliament's 646 members. The crisis has prompted calls for the embattled Prime Minister's removal and reports of a likely government shake-up.

## 8 | South Africa

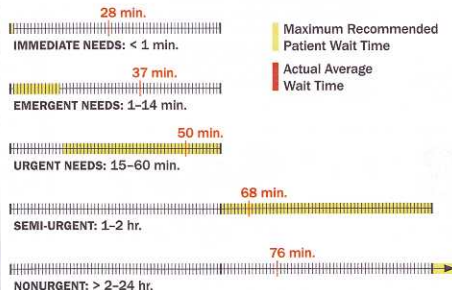
### Underground Tragedy

The bodies of at least 61 illegal miners were discovered in an unused shaft owned by South Africa's Harmony Mining Co., the world's fifth largest gold producer. The incident, one of the worst in the nation's history, highlights the growing problem posed by unauthorized mining operations, which are exploiting thousands of miles of unpoliced tunnels amid high unemployment rates and spiking gold prices.

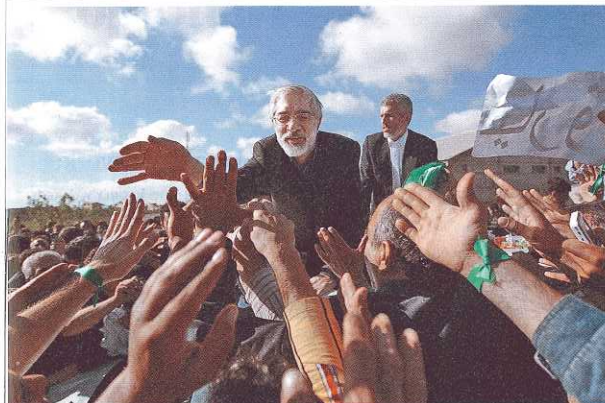
## 9 | Washington

### Putting the Emergency Back in Emergency Room

According to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, wait times in ERs across the nation are at worrying lengths. Largely because of overcrowding, patients can languish twice as long as recommended by medical associations; those in need of the fastest attention may wait nearly half an hour for care.



SOURCE: U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE



## 7 | Tehran

**ELECTION SHOWDOWN** With Iran's presidential election quickly approaching, competition among the four main contenders is heating up. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and former Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi (above) are the current front runners; they face off against Mohsen Rezaei, former chief of the Revolutionary Guard, and respected cleric Mehdi Karubi. On June 3, during a televised presidential debate, reformist candidate Mousavi came out with guns blazing, accusing Ahmadinejad of "undermining" Iran's dignity and criticizing his "mismanagement" of the country's faltering economy. Voting begins on June 12.

## 10 | Minnesota

### The Eternal Senate-Seat Battle

More than 200 days after voters went to the polls, Minnesota has yet to seat its junior U.S. Senator. On June 1, the state's supreme court heard arguments on the intricacies of absentee-ballot rules, which the incumbent candidate, Republican Norm Coleman, contends were inconsistently applied and would therefore invalidate a lower-court ruling that Democrat Al Franken won the race by a margin of just 312 votes. The court is expected to rule on the issue within weeks. Franken's admission to the Senate would give Democrats a 60-vote majority, which would enable them to override Republican filibusters.



vs.



**NORM COLEMAN** Supports offshore drilling, gun rights and a gay-marriage ban. Hinted at a federal appeal if he loses in Minnesota's Supreme Court.

**AL FRANKEN** In favor of universal health care, renewable energy, fair trade and immigration reform. Was declared the victor by recount.

### ( RECESSION WATCH )



When the going gets tough, Latvians ... go blonde. Saddled with a **troubled economy that is expected to shrink as much as 18% this year**, the former Soviet nation enlisted the help of more than 500 towheaded beauties to lead a "Go Blonde" weekend on May 30-31. The feel-good extravaganza included sporting events, fashion shows and a parade through the capital, Riga, where rioting erupted in February over rising unemployment.



Numbers: **52%**

Percentage of Americans who believe torture is justified to prevent terrorist attacks, according to a recent survey

**83%**

Increase in the amount of time Americans spent on social-networking sites in April, compared with the same month a year earlier

**2.3**

BILLION Estimated years scientists now say the earth will remain habitable before the sun fries it—about 1 billion years longer than previously thought

**19,273**

Number of swine-flu cases confirmed by the World Health Organization, which announced it is close to declaring the virus a pandemic