

# Yale University to return Machu Picchu artefacts

Yale University has promised to return thousands of archaeological pieces taken from Machu Picchu nearly a century ago

The relics from the 15th century Inca citadel have been the focus of a bitter dispute lasting more than seven years. Peru says the artefacts were lent in 1911 but never returned. It filed a lawsuit against the university in 2008. The agreement comes after a concerted media campaign by Peruvian President Alan Garcia and his government. Marches fronted by ministers and the president himself were staged in Lima and Cuzco. Mr. Garcia even appealed directly to his US counterpart, Barack Obama, to intervene. In November, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York returned to Egypt 19 artefacts found in the tomb of King Tutankhamun.

Peru says it loaned the university around 46,000 items which included mummies, ceramics and gold and bronze pieces, soon after Machu Picchu's official discovery by a Yale scholar, Hiram Bingham, in 1911. But Yale says the number of pieces is far smaller and only 330 are suitable for display in a museum. It says it returned boxes of artefacts more than 80 years ago. Nonetheless talks between Peru and Yale seem to have gone well, with



A tourist couple takes pictures of Inca's citadel of Machu Picchu in Cuzco

the university pledging to honour Peru's rich heritage by returning all the pieces in its possession, provided it can continue to study them. Mr. Garcia acknowledged that Yale's

possession of the objects prevented them from being scattered among private collectors.

The artefacts are expected to be returned early next year in time for

the centenary of what Peru calls the re-discovery of Machu Picchu. The citadel is its top tourist attraction and most important archaeological site.

## News trumps celebrity in 2010 Web searches

News trumped celebrities in 2010 as the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and World Cup soccer in South Africa topped the list of most-searched items of 2010, according to Yahoo

It is the first time that news came up first since the technology company began publishing its yearly review a decade ago. Vera Chan, the company's senior editor and web trend analyst, said the BP oil spill was the most searched topic for a variety of reasons. "It became an issue about so many things, such as the environment, energy, workplace disasters and the role of big government. It became a lightning rod for people's anxieties," she explained.

The World Cup, on the other hand, was searched for as both a sporting event and a cultural experience. "People didn't just search for the players and the teams. It was a cultural learning experience. It was the first World Cup in Africa, and people wanted to learn about post-Apartheid South Africa," she said. "People also wanted to find out what that noise was — the vuvuzelas."

The list identified the top trends, searches and news items from several categories. All but one of the other top 10 categories reflected public fascination with celebrities.

## Full employment 'possible soon'

Germany's Economy Minister Rainer Bruederle has given an upbeat assessment of his country's recovery, including the assertion that 'full employment will soon be possible'

He said that Germans were 'doing well and spending again', and that domestic consumption was strong. Data released recently showed Ger-

man business confidence at a 20-year high. German optimism is in marked contrast with the gloom engulfing some European economies struggling with high debts. But despite the fact that many Germans are unhappy they will be contributing the bulk of the bail-out, Mr. Bruederle said confidence had returned following the global recession. "Germans are in an

expansive mood. We're investing again, we're consuming again, people are doing well and people are spending again," he said. He added that domestic demand was now contributing more than half of the country's economic growth, while 'the council of economic experts say next year 90 percent of growth will come from the domestic economy'.

## Nissan sets December 20th launch date for electric Leaf



A smartphone shows a battery residual quantity meter

Nissan said it will launch the Leaf in Japan on December 20th and days later in the United States as it bets on drivers' readiness to embrace the first globally mass-produced electric car

"We believe this is a true breakthrough and it will serve as a key for mobility of the future," Nissan chief

operating officer Toshiyuki Shiga said in Tokyo. "We believe this is the dawn of a new era." The Leaf — short for Leading Environmentally-friendly Affordable Family car — has enjoyed a crescendo of industry buzz and last month became the first electric vehicle to win European Car of the Year. The fulcrum of Nissan's green ambitions, the mid-

sized five-seat hatchback is already a sell-out in the United States on pre-orders. It will be launched in select European markets in early 2011.

Nissan said prices would start at 3.76 million yen (45,000 dollars), but the actual price customers would pay would start at 2.98 million yen as the environmentally friendly car will be eligible for subsidies. The automaker has gambled that its electric car will take off globally and overcome consumer concerns such as 'range-anxiety', or the fear that their cars will run out of juice between charging points. It said that on a full charge the car can reach a maximum speed of 145 kilometres (90 miles) per hour and its top driving range is 200 kilometres on a single eight-hour charge from a household charger, more than enough for everyday use of most motorists. For those in a hurry, it can be rapid-charged to 80 percent of capacity in 30 minutes at special charging stations.

## Irish Republic receives 85bn euro EU and IMF bail-out

European ministers have reached an agreement over a bail-out for the Irish Republic worth about 85bn euros

The deal will see 35bn euros go towards propping up the Irish banking system with the remaining 50bn euros to help the government's day-to-day spending. An average interest rate of 5.8 percent will be payable on the loans, above the 5.2 percent paid by Greece for its bail-out. Irish PM Brian Cowen said it was the 'best available deal for Ireland'. According to the prime Minister, it provides 'vital time and space to successfully and conclusively address the problems we've been dealing with since the financial crisis began'.

The Irish government has also said that interest payments on all state debt will account for more than 20 percent of tax revenues in 2014. The deal does not require the Irish Republic to change its low 12.5 percent corporation tax. The rescue package is the second to be approved in the eurozone this year following Greece's bail-out in May.

## HIV epidemic has 'halted', says UN

The number of new HIV infections and deaths from AIDS are falling globally, according to new statistics from the UN's programme on HIV/AIDS



There are now signs the epidemic is declining, it says, however, stigma and discrimination continue to cause problems for the estimated 33m people living with HIV. Last year there were 2.6m new HIV infections. This is down almost 20 percent since the peak of the AIDS epidemic in 1999. In 2009, 1.8m died from AIDS-related illnesses, down from 2.1m in 2004. The report says rates of treatment using anti-retroviral drugs have risen from 700,000 in 2004 to over 5m people in 2009. Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region most affected by the epidemic, with around 70 percent of all new HIV infections occurring here.

But infection rates are falling, particularly in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. There is a mixed picture in other parts of the world. Eastern Europe and central Asia show sharp rises in new infections and AIDS-related deaths. And the UN says bad laws and discrimination, particularly in respect to drug users and homosexuals, continue to hamper the fight against AIDS.

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