



Top Stories

Iraq rejects US probe clearing US troops of killings civilians in Ishaqi

Adnan al-Kazimi, close to Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki rejects US probe clearing US troops of killings civilians in Ishaqi. The U.S. military yesterday said that troops executed a family is "absolutely false" Police and local Iraqis said 11 was dead, and claimed that they were killed by U.S. troops before the house was leveled.

Human to human transmission of Bird Flu suspected in Indonesia

Human to human transmission of the H5N1 Avian Flu (Bird Flu) virus is suspected in an Indonesian nurse currently hospitalised who is showing symptoms of the virus. She had been in close contact with two children, brother and sister, who have died.

Featured story

Researchers discover giant asteroid impact crater in Antarctica

Researchers have found a giant asteroid impact crater under the Wilkes Land ice sheet of Antarctica and it may have been responsible for the creation of the dinosaurs, but may also have been the cause of a mass extinction.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The United States military finds

Wikipedia Current Events

its soldiers innocent of any wrongdoing in the Ishaqi massacre of 11 Iraqi civilians.

- Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, while continuing to maintain that his country has the right to continue development on their nuclear technology, says that he "will not pass judgment on the proposals hastily," referring to the incentives package being offered by the US, Russia, United Kingdom, Germany, France and China in order to dissuade Iran from further nuclear development.

- Human Rights Watch releases a video showing South Sudanese Vice President Dr. Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon bribing cult and rebel leader Joseph Kony and his second-in-command Vincent Otti of the Lord's Resistance Army not to attack southern Sudanese citizens.

- A Russian diplomat is killed and four kidnapped in an attack near the Russian embassy in Baghdad, according to Russian and Iraqi officials.

- In a special session of parliament, Montenegro declares its independence from Serbia.

- The Royal Canadian Mounted Police have announced the arrest of 17 suspected Islamic terrorists in connection to a planned terrorist attack around Toronto. The RCMP said that three tons of ammonium nitrate was seized. By comparison, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing used one ton.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Czech parliament election leaves the Czech Republic with a even split between party blocs.

- In response to his million dollar bill gospel tracts being seized from The Great News Network by the United States Secret Service, Ray Comfort, author, evangelist, and founder of Living Waters Publications, has stated that he will refuse to turn over his supply of tracts without a warrant, which was not given during the raid on GNN.

17 arrested in Canadian counter-terrorism operation

Seventeen people, including 5 minors, have been arrested in the Toronto area on terrorism-related charges. Over 400 officers, drawn from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), and the Toronto, Peel, and Durham police departments raided a dozen locations throughout the greater Toronto area. More arrests are expected overnight.

Anonymous sources have told Canadian Press that those arrested are suspected of links to al Qaeda, and that they had plans to detonate explosives somewhere in Ontario. According to BBC NEWS, three tonnes of ammonium nitrate, a common fertilizer which can be used as an explosive, have been seized. RCMP assistant commissioner Mike McDonnell stated, "To put it in context, the 1995 bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City

that killed 168 people was completed with only one ton of ammonium nitrate." In order to protect the investigation, he was unable to provide any information as to the potential targets, but did state that the Toronto Transit Commission was not targeted.

The suspects are currently being held under extremely heavy security at a police station in Pickering, just north of Toronto. According to RCMP spokeswoman CPL. Michele Paradis, "The investigation is ongoing." The suspects are expected to appear in court today, in Brampton. They have all been charged under Section 83 of the Criminal Code of Canada.

The following contains the names (source: CTV), released by the RCMP, that have been arrested. The list does not contain the names of the 5 charged minors. Under Canadian law, the police may not reveal any information concerning anyone under the age of 18. It is arranged by city of residence.

Toronto:

Fahim Ahmad, age 21
 Jahmaal James, age 23
 Amin Mohamed Durrani, age 19
 Steven Vikash Chand (aka Abdul Shakur), age 25

Mississauga:

Zakaria Amara, age 20
 Asad Ansari, age 21
 Shareef Abdelhaleen, age 30
 Qayyum Abdul Jamal, age 43
 Ahmad Mustafa Ghany, age 21
 Saad Khalid, age 19

Kingston:

Mohammed Dirie, age 22
 Yasim Abdi Mohamed, age 24

Iraq rejects US probe clearing US troops of killings civilians in Ishaqi

Adnan al-Kazimi, close to Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said "We have from more than one source that the Ishaqi killings were carried out under questionable circumstances. More than one child was killed. This report was not fair for the Iraqi people and the children who were killed".

The U.S. military yesterday made a statement about Ishaqi allegations that U.S. troops "executed a family ... and then hid the alleged crimes by directing an air strike, are absolutely false". Troops had been fired on and they returned fire and called in air support, which destroyed the house, killing one militant and "up to nine collateral deaths".

In March, the U.S. military said four people died when they attacked a house suspected of holding an al-Qaida operative. The house was destroyed by fire from the ground and air.

The BBC has video evidence that US forces may have been responsible for the deliberate killing of 11 Iraqi civilians:

- Turkiya Muhammed Ali, 75 years
- Faiza Harat Khalaf, 30 years
- Faiz Harat Khalaf, 28 years
- Um Ahmad, 23 years
- Sumaya Abdulrazak, 22 years
- Aziz Khalil Jarmoot, 22 years
- Hawra Harat Khalaf, 5 years
- Asma Yousef Maruf, 5 years
- Osama Yousef Maruf, 3 years
- Aisha Harat Khalaf, 3 years
- Husam Harat Khalaf, 6 months

The video tape, from a hardline Sunni group opposed to coalition forces, shows a number of dead adults and children at the site. Clearly gunshot wounds according to John Simpson, BBC world affairs.

Local Iraqis said there were 11 total deaths, and claimed that they were killed by U.S. troops before the house was leveled. An unidentified local said "After they handcuffed them, they shot them dead. Later, they struck the house with their planes. They wanted to hide the evidence. Even a 6-month-old infant was killed. Even the cows were killed, too"

Also according to Associated Press Police in Ishaqi say five children, four women and two men were shot in the head, and that the bodies, with hands bound, were dumped in one room before the house was blown up.

Riyadh Majid, nephew of Faez Khalaf, who was killed, said U.S. forces landed in helicopters and raided the home. Ahmed, Khalaf's brother said nine of the victims were family members who lived at the house and two were visitors.

The U.S. military said in March that the allegations were being investigated. On Friday said it was targeting and captured an individual suspected of supporting foreign fighters of the al-Qaida in Iraq terrorist network.

According to Reuters there is a widespread public perception that U.S. troops can shoot and kill with impunity and Iraqi leaders are too weak to do anything about it. Abdullah Hussein, an engineer in Baghdad, says to Reuters "Ishaqi is just another reason why we shouldn't trust the Americans", and continue "First they lied about

the weapons of mass destruction, then there was the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal and now it's clear to the world they were guilty in Haditha"

John Simpson, BBC Correspondent in Baghdad says "It's hard to find an Iraqi here who has not suffered, through his family, his friends, from the tough tactics the Americans use".

Wijdan Michael, Human Rights Minister, said a fact-finding commission will be sent to Ishaqi in the next few days.

Researchers discover giant asteroid impact crater in Antarctica

Researchers have found a giant asteroid impact crater under the Wilkes Land ice sheet of Antarctica and it may have been responsible for the creation of the dinosaurs, but may also have been the cause of a mass extinction.

"This Wilkes Land impact is much bigger than the impact that killed the dinosaurs, and probably would have caused catastrophic damage at the time," said Ohio State University Professor of geological sciences, Ralph von Fres.

"All the environmental changes that would have resulted from the impact would have created a highly caustic environment that was really hard to endure. So it makes sense that a lot of life went extinct at that time," added von Fres.

The crater is over 300 miles wide and was made about 250 million years ago by an asteroid nearly 30 miles wide. Researchers say that it may have caused an Earth-wide Extinction Level Event (ELE), but also may have created the dinosaurs in the process. It is

thought that nearly 96% of Earth's ocean life and at least 70% of animals on land were wiped out. The impact itself may also have caused the supercontinent Gondwana to break up, ultimately forming Australia.

Human to human transmission of Bird Flu suspected in Indonesia

Human to human transmission of the H5N1 Avian Flu (Bird Flu) virus is suspected in an Indonesian nurse currently hospitalised who is showing symptoms of the virus. She had been in close contact with two children, brother and sister, who have died. The sister, nine, was confirmed of having died from the virus by local lab tests. The brother was buried before any blood tests could be taken, but showed similar symptoms.

It was reported on Friday that an analysis has shown that the virus has not mutated, and the WHO has said that there was no evidence so far of human to human transmission.

Other members of the same family are currently ill, but all members have received the Tamiflu antiviral drug.

"I think it is a cluster. The local test from the victim in Pamulang is bird flu positive. The symptoms of the virus are very similar to previous clusters we've had. The parents are also suffering from flu, and we are giving them a full dose of Tamiflu now," said Indonesia's Health Minister, Siti Fadilah Supari.

"The characteristics of germ (the boy had) is very similar (to his sister's), and now their mother and father are suffering from flu. They are all in the Pamulang district," added Supari.

The nurse, whose initials are "C.I.," 25, has been put in isoation at Bandung's Hasan Sadikin Hospital, but officials say that her condition is stable and that her case may be the result of human to human transmission due to the fact that she has not had any contact with poultry.

"We could not confirm whether she is positive of having been infected by avian influenza virus or not, although she had earlier have contacts with siblings, 18-year old Ad and 10-year old Ai, who died of bird flu virus recently," said Hadi Yusuf, chief of the Bird Flu team at Sadikin Hospital.

"When she arrived at this hospital last night, her body temperature was very high, namely 39.6 Celsius degrees but now it has decreased to 37 Celsius degrees. After considering her contact with dead bird flu victims, we declared her a suspected bird flu case. But she is still fully conscious, her breathing problems are not too serious and she's not experiencing chest pain," added Yusuf.

The names of the children and the nurse have not been released.

Montenegro prepares to declare independence

Montenegro is preparing today to declare its independence from Serbia in a special parliamentary session in the capital, Podgorica. The official announcement comes two weeks after a referendum, where just over 55% of voters chose to support the split.

The 650,000-strong nation has been tied in this current union with Serbia since 1918, and the two countries are the last to remain joined since the dissolution of Yugoslavia. This evening, the alliance will come to an end to the

sounds of the Montenegrin national anthem, which will be played to mark the occasion.

The main feature of tonight's session is to be the reading of the official declaration, which prioritises Montenegrin membership of the European Union and NATO. A draft version of the document states that "Montenegro is determined to build its state policy by respecting the principles of the United Nations, EU, Council of Europe and Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe."

Despite initial intentions that the event be low-key, thousands are expected to turn out in celebration of the split. Among those not expected to attend the session is Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Koštunica, who openly supports pro-union movements. Koštunica is not the only Serbian official who is against the separation: Serbia and Montenegro's President, Svetozar Marović, has reputedly resigned today ahead of tonight's events.

The session is set to begin at 8pm local time (1800 GMT), and will include the presentation of a final report by Slovakian diplomat František Lipka, who is the head of the referendum's commission.

Shock in Greece as teenagers confess to murdering 11-year old missing boy

Alex Meschisvili, 11, was missing from his home in Veria, northern Greece, since February 3, 2006. Five months later, Greek public opinion is numbed as the developments of the missing child case bring five children, aged from 11 to 13, to admit that they killed Alex after a fight. According to the Police directorate of Imathia, the alleged murderers are two Greek

brothers, two Romanian and one Albanian boy.

The juveniles allegedly confessed to the act and have indicated the place where they buried the body in the center of Veria, at an abandoned house just behind the Municipal building.

While the search for the finding of Alex' body continues, the local Police bureau in collaboration with the Thessaloniki Police department continue their own investigation, based on all the information that there are since the disappearance of the 11-years old boy, reviewing all scenarios and any relevant information.

If there is confirmation of Alex Meschisvili's murder by the alleged juveniles, it will be the first known case of a teenager's murder by teenagers, in the crime history of Greece.

The Pirate Bay back online

The Pirate Bay is back online following the Swedish police raid of their office on May 31.

Pirate Bay has previously announced on their website that they "will be up and fully functional within a day or two". A Pirate Bay spokesperson identified as broke told Slyck News that if necessary, they'd reopen in another country. The reopened website is currently hosted in the Netherlands.

The web page titles have been changed to The Police Bay and the indexing capability is reduced, with the search function disabled, though this is expected to change. All searches are now returned with the error message: No hits due to politics The search function will be back later today

Searches can still be done with Google and other search engines by adding site:thepiratebay.org to the search. However, most attempts at downloading .torrent files result in 404 Not Found error messages

British police shoot man in anti-terrorism raid

At dawn this morning a team of 250 policemen stormed a building in Forest Gate, London, England. A part of the police teams were armed, while others were equipped with chemical weapons gear. Two men were arrested and one was shot in the raid made under the 2000 Terrorism Act.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Peter Clarke, the Metropolitan Police's anti-terror chief, said he had acted on specific intelligence, "we planned an operation that was designed to mitigate any threat to the public either from firearms or from hazardous substances."

The injury to the man who was shot was not life threatening and the Independent Police Complaints Commission, who have opened an investigation into the incident, say a single shot was fired. At Royal London Hospital where the man, later arrested, was taken armed guards were seen at the entrances.

The man who was not shot, said to be 20 years old, has been questioned at Paddington Green police station. Others at the address have been moved out - two residents have been treated in hospital for shock.

The search at the house in Lansdown Road is said to be ongoing. Police have closed Lansdown Road, Rothsay Road and Prestbury Road and a blind has

been erected around the premises. The Civil Aviation Authority report a four-day "no fly area" below 2,500ft is in force over east London.

The British intelligence agency, MI5, and the Health Protection Agency also had a role in the operation, which British Prime Minister Tony Blair had been told about. The raid is not thought to be linked to the London tube and bus bombings in July 2005.

Updates:

Police say the raid was carried out in search of a 'suicide vest' which could be used to release poison gas. Police say MI5 believe there exists 'firm intelligence' that such a vest exists.

As of Friday evening, police had yet to discover weapons, chemicals or any other evidence of a planned attack.

The two men arrested are believed to be 23 and 20 year old brothers, Abdul Kahar and Abdul Jalal, both of Bangladeshi origin. Abdul Kahar was shot in the shoulder during the raid, his injury is said to be non life threatening.

Australia in the midst of a "baby boom"

Australia would appear to be in the middle of a baby boom, with the largest number of births recorded since 1992. Figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed that 261,400 births were registered in 2005, 6,200 more than 2004.

Australian treasurer, Peter Costello believes his speech during the 2004 election may have influenced Australians to have more children. In 2004, Mr Costello said that each family should have three children. After seeing the statistics for

2005, he said "One for mum, one for dad, and one for the country - it was a light-hearted way of making a serious point,"

"I am delighted that at least some families have been taking up the challenge." said Mr Costello.

The Howard government believes that Australia's ageing population and low birth rates will threaten the country's economy in the future.

As part of the 2004 budget, the Howard government introduced a AUD \$3,000 maternity payment to all mothers who give birth to a child. As of July, the payment will increase to \$4,000. As a further incentive to have more children the government increased family tax benefits and from July, will allow families to claim a 30 percent childcare rebate (capped at \$3000 per year).

Wayne Swan, the opposition's treasury spokesperson said Mr Costello isn't the reason for the boom. "I am willing to let Peter Costello claim credit for higher interest rates, even higher fuel prices, but I think claiming his charms have lifted the national libido may be a bridge too far" he said.

New Zealand Greens party has new co-leader

New Zealand Greens party has elected a new party co-leader, Russel Norman at the AGM this weekend.

Russel Normans election to co-leader follows the death of previous co-leader, Rod Donald.

Russel Norman, 39-year-old, was elected on the first ballot at Silverstream, Upper Hutt on the Greens Annual General Meeting.

Norman was up against four other candidates, including MP Nandor Tanczos. Tanczos would have been automatically put in as co-leader if a remit had passed stating that a co-leader had to be a MP.

Dr Norman will make his first speech on climate change, June 4 2006.

"Members chose me for a variety of reasons, mainly because... I focused on the main issues for the Greens, around climate change, public transport, those kinds of things." Dr Norman said. Dr Norman said he would not try to fill Donald's shoes but make his own mark instead. He is the Greens party development coordinator in Wellington. He also holds a PhD in political studies.

National Rugby Competition to kick off in Australia

Following a three-day summit in Sydney rugby union officials reached a decision to start a National Rugby Competition in Australia in July of 2007. The aim of the competition will be to bridge the gap between Super 14 and club rugby. The competition will most likely be similar to similar to New Zealand's National Provincial Championship and South Africa's Currie Cup.

It was revealed that the eight-team competition will involve three teams from New South Wales, two from Queensland and one each from the ACT, Western Australia and Victoria. The QRU later revealed that one of the Queensland sides will most likely be playing out of Queensland Rugby's old home Ballymoore, with the other team going to either the Gold Coast or Northern Queensland.

Some Sydney clubs, in particular, Randwick and Sydney University Football Club were opposed to the competition, and want stand-alone status in the competition rather than being part of a culmative Sydney team, also believing that the competition will see them lose funding. Businessman John Singleton came out and showed his interest in having one of the NSW sides playing at Central Coast Stadium.

Super 14 players will be playing, but as there will be twice as many clubs as the Super 14, so there will be a lot of available spaces for club footballers. There is no plan for an immediate draft. Although Super 14 players will be playing, around 30 players will be unavailable due to Wallaby duties. The ABC have apparently expressed interest in broadcasting the games next year.

Senior Liberal wants centralised control over water resources

NSW Senator Bill Heffernan wants the Federal government to take control of all the nations waterways. He is calling for a referendum on this issue.

The move comes after the Federal government pulled out of the sale of the Snowy Hydro scheme because of community opposition

Mr Heffernan has accused the states of bad mismanagement of the waterways, and says that a central nationwide organisation should look after them, "Australians today should have great heart and great national pride in the fact that people power has convinced the politicians that we ought to retain one of the seven engineering wonders of the world in safe hands," he said.

New South Wales Environment Minister Bob Debus has rejected the proposal to give responsibility to the Federal government, he says he cannot see how they could manage it by themselves, "It has no particular skills to do so and we still need the states to be involved," he said.

Late Indian politician's son in critical condition after suspected drug overdose

Rahul Mahajan's condition has improved and has been taken off ventilator support. Rahul's CT scan report is normal and his vital parameters have shown an improvement. He will however, be kept under observation for another 3 days. "The condition of Rahul Mahajan has gradually improved over the last 12 hours. After due assessment of clinical status and investigation, our team of doctors found his vital parameters improving," a medical bulletin released by the Apollo Hospital said.

Rahul Mahajan, the son of late BJP leader Pramod Mahajan has been admitted to the Apollo Hospital in New Delhi in a critical state, apparently after a drug overdose. Rahul was found in an unconscious state in his father's residence in New Delhi early today morning. Vivek Moitra, Pramod Mahajan's secretary who was with Rahul at the party has been declared dead presumably as a result of the same drug. Police say the Rahul, Vivek and three other men were drinking champagne together and were also apparently consuming cocaine. This assumption is based of the fact that opiate traces were found in the deceased Mr. Moitra's pocket.

Doctors described Rahul's condition as "critical but stable". They said that details regarding

what led to his present condition would be revealed after the conduction of a toxicology test. Two domestic helps rushed the men to hospital in the early hours of today morning. The helps disturbed the scene by clearing up the glasses and the bottles. Traces of what seems to be cocaine were however found in one the glasses.

Rahul is currently on a ventilator and his condition will have to be closely monitored for the next couple of days. He was supposed to visit Assam tomorrow to immerse his father's ashes in the Brahmaputra. Mr. Pramod Mahjan died about a month ago after being shot by his brother. Rahul was on anti-depressants as a result of this.

Hackers hit Swedish police website

Hackers have brought the Swedish Police Service's website down. It is suspected this might be retaliation for the raid on The Pirate Bay on May 31.

The police's website went down on late June 1, after a Denial of Service attack sent large amounts of traffic to the site, causing it to crash.

Police spokesmen Lars Lindahl said today that a link with The Pirate Bay "is quite possible, but that is only speculation,". He added that a criminal investigation has started.

It was later revealed that the attack that kept the site down for almost a day was carried out by a 17-year-old student, who claims "it only took 10 minutes".

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in Forest Gate, London, England. A part of the police teams were armed, while others were equipped with chemical weapons gear. Two men were arrested and one was shot in the raid made under the 2000 Terrorism Act.

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The two men arrested are believed to be 23 and 20 year old brothers, Abdul Kahar and Abdul Jalal, both of Bangladeshi origin. Abdul Kahar was shot in the shoulder during the raid, his injury is said to be non life threatening.

Today in History

1615 - Forces under the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu took Osaka Castle in Japan.

1792 - Captain George Vancouver claimed Puget Sound for Great Britain.

1920 - The Kingdom of Hungary was split into five countries with the signing of the Treaty of Trianon in Paris.

1942 - The Battle of Midway began with a massive Imperial Japanese strike on Midway Atoll.

1989 - The People's Liberation Army cracks on the Tiananmen Square protests in Beijing.

June 04 is Independence Day in Tonga (1970)

Quote of the Day

"Nations, like stars, are entitled to eclipse. All is well, provided the light returns and the eclipse does not become endless night. Dawn and resurrection are synonymous. The reappearance of the light is the same as the survival of the soul."

~ Victor Hugo in Les Misérables

Word of the Day

rustic; *adj*

Definition

1. Country-styled or pastoral; rural.
2. Rough, crude.

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