



Top Stories

UN aid convoys face increasing attacks in Darfur

A dramatic escalation in attacks by armed bandits is affecting the World Food Programme's ability to operate in the region, where it feeds more than two million people.

Australia drops charges against Indian doctor

A review found insufficient evidence to support the charges of "recklessly" providing material support to terrorism laid against Dr. Haneef for giving his mobile phone SIM card to a relation allegedly involved in the Glasgow airport attack.

Featured story

Empire State Games come to White Plains, NY

The Empire State Games is an annual Olympic-style competition for amateur athletes from the state of New York, United States.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The President of the United States George W. Bush urges the United States Congress to pass legislation to expand potential surveillance targets.
- The death toll from the Summer 2007 United Kingdom floods rises to nine as police find a body near Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire.
- Seven killed in police firing in the Khammam district of Andhra Pradesh, India as protest rally turns violent.

Wikipedia Current Events

- War in Afghanistan: A British soldier is killed by a rocket attack in the Helmand Province.
- The Lal Masjid in Islamabad is closed indefinitely following a suicide bombing with Pakistan authorities warning of more bomb attacks to come.
- Dr Mohamed Haneef, the Indian doctor freed in Australia of supporting terrorism indicates that he would like to return to India as soon as possible. He later receives clearance from the Australian Government to leave tonight.
- Bernard Kouchner, the French Foreign Minister, arrives in Lebanon to reduce tensions between the Prime Minister of Lebanon Fouad Siniora and the pro-Syrian opposition. (BBC)
- Rwanda abolishes capital punishment.

Australia drops charges against Indian doctor

Australian prosecutors have dropped charges against Dr Mohamed Haneef, the Indian doctor held in Australia in connection with last month's attack on Glasgow airport.

The Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Bugg, said on Friday that a review he carried out found that there was insufficient evidence to support the charges of providing material support to terrorism laid against Dr. Haneef and that

"embarrassing" mistakes were made.

Dr Haneef was released from gaol and into "residential detention" until Immigration Minister, Kevin Andrews reviews his earlier decision to cancel Haneef's visa.

Mr Bugg said that a prosecutor had told a Brisbane court incorrect information. He said that one of his prosecutors told the court that the SIM card at the centre of the affair was found in a Jeep which was laden with explosives and driven into Glasgow International Airport on June 30.

"The first related to the SIM card and was based on a misunderstanding of the facts," Bugg said.

"The second related to the residence of Dr. Haneef in the U.K. and was based on incorrect material provided by the AFP."

Australian Federal Police chief Mick Kelty denied that the AFP had made any mistakes and said investigations would continue. He refused to rule out laying further charges against Dr Haneef.

Australian Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews who previously suspended Dr Haneef's work visa after he was granted bail has said he will review his decision to cancel the visa on character grounds. Mr Andrews said that Haneef had to reside in a place of his choosing and was free to move about the community but had to

report to Immigration officials daily by telephone and in person every few days.

Speaking last night, Prime Minister John Howard attempted to distance his government from the affair claiming that his government had no control over how the police operate.

Australian civil rights groups and political parties have strongly criticised the handling of the investigations.

Cast of Bratz appears in Canada to promote film release

The four stars of Bratz appeared Thursday in Toronto on the television series MuchOnDemand, to promote their new film.

While a great deal of computer animated, direct-to-DVD Bratz films have been made, as has a relatively successful television series, Bratz: The Movie is the first time the characters have appeared in live action.

The film centres around four "BBF"s, best friends forever, Yasmin (Nathalia Ramos), Jade (Janel Parrish), Sasha (Logan Browning) and Cloe (Skyler Shaye). Each has a distinct personality, talents, and fashion sense, which each friend supported. But entering high school, they suddenly face being lumped into social cliques, enforced by senior Meredith Baxter Dimly. Torn apart, they eventual decide to find peer pressure head-on, as "the Bratz".

Director Sean McNamara commented in press materials, "The producers, writers and I hung out and talked about the fact that we had all lost friendships during high school, not because you want to but you start meeting new

people and start hanging out with people that are into the same things as you."

"This theme of cliques still happens even when you grow up, it's in the business world — hey they are everywhere," McNamara continued. "I think that's what I'm trying to say with this movie is that you don't have to be part of a clique exclusively. You can have friends all over the place and still be with kids that are into what you're into... be with your jock friends, your science friends, whomever."

Actress Logan Browning comments, "Friendships are so important because you can think that you can go to school and be by yourself and be the coolest girl but without true friends, you're going to be stuck in your life."

The movie is produced by Avi Arad, a producer of the Spider-Man and X-Men trilogies, The Hulk, The Fantastic Four, The Punisher, and Ghost Rider.

Arad feels that "If we can unite kids without taking away their individuality, that's fantastic."

MuchOnDemand is a long-running program MuchMusic, Canada's primary music channel. The program airs every weekday at 5 pm ET, as an hour-long per broadcast viewer interactive television program.

European football: Santa Cruz to Rovers

Paraguayan footballer Roque Santa Cruz has left Bayern Munich for Blackburn Rovers. Roque Santa Cruz signed a 4 year deal. Roque Santa Cruz became expendable after major signings by Bayern Munich. Santa Cruz became 5th choice striker after Luca Toni,

Miroslav Klose, Lucas Podolski and Jan Schlaudraff. Blackburn Rovers beat Manchester City, Porto and Espanyol for the signature of Roque Santa Cruz. The fee is reported to be around £3.4million.

Santa Cruz experienced an injury-plagued and trophy-laden eight-year career in Munich. Santa Cruz scored 31 goals in 155 league appearances and 7 goals in 51 UEFA Champions League games for Bayern Munich. He won 5 German titles, 4 German Cups and 1 UEFA Champions League title with Bayern Munich.

Blackburn coach Mark Hughes was quoted as saying, "Santa Cruz is a young player, an international with a good reputation who is playing at a top European club." and "The good thing from our point of view is that his fitness levels are fine as he has been playing in the Copa America."

Tour de France: Levi Leipheimer wins stage 19

Levi Leipheimer of United States has won stage 19 of the 2007 Tour de France in a time of 1h 2' 44".

"I feel this is maybe the best day of my life," said Leipheimer. "It's my first Tour de France stage win and after this I think I deserve to stand on the podium in Paris."

Alberto Contador of Spain keeps the yellow jersey. He is now only 23 seconds ahead of Cadel Evans, who took second place in this 55.5 km individual time trial stage.

Leipheimer is in third overall, only 31 seconds behind Contador and 8 seconds behind Evans. When were the top three this close heading into the final stage? As close as it is, there will probably be no change at the top tomorrow.

"I've done all I could," said Evans. "I lost 55 seconds in the ascent of the Col de Peyresourde - that is where I lost the Tour," he added, recalling stage 15.

"I'm not going to attack Cadel on Sunday. He's a better sprinter anyway." said Leipheimer, who seems to enjoy that his team Discovery Channel Pro Cycling has almost certainly won both the yellow jersey for Contador but also the team classification where they hold a massive advantage. "We've won this Tour and have two stage wins," he said.

Empire State Games come to White Plains, NY

The Empire State Games is an annual Olympic-style competition for amateur athletes from the state of New York, United States, encompassing several divisions allowing athletes of all ages to compete. In 2007, it is hosted by Westchester County and takes place July 25-29, 2007. In all, some 6,000 athletes are expected to participate.

"I think the Empire State Games is one of the best things that's happened to Westchester County," Buster LaBarbera, 74, of New Rochelle said. "It's good for the economy and it's just a great thing."

Long Island had made a bid to host the games but lost out to Westchester. "Once done, it's done," said Bob Kenney, region director for Long Island, at the opening ceremonies. "We can't look back. We can't hold grudges." Long Island may submit a bid for the games in 2010 according to Kenney.

Saturday, the Criterium cycling events took place in White Plains. Starting at 7:00 a.m. EDT (UTC-

4), races for both men and women began at Martine Avenue at Court Street in downtown White Plains.

Criterium races (those are age brackets for the masters series):
 Masters Men 45-54, 12 miles
 Masters Men 35-44, 18 miles
 Open Men, 25 miles
 Open Women, 18 miles
 Masters Men 55-64, 65+, 10 miles
 Masters Women 35-44, 45-54, 55+, 10 miles

Street closures included: Quarropas Street, Mamaroneck Avenue, Martine Avenue, and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Parts of Court Street and Grand Street had limited access. Road closures began at 5:00 a.m. The course was basically a large square.

Wikinews was there to cover the men's open event race. Points were awarded for sprints on certain laps. #5 from Long Island region won the points standings. results to follow

Today in History

1030 – King Olaf II fought and died in the Battle of Stiklestad, trying to regain his Norwegian throne from the Danes.
 1588 - Anglo-Spanish War: English naval forces under command of Lord Charles Howard and Sir Francis Drake defeated the Spanish Armada off the coast of Gravelines, France.
 1947 – ENIAC, the world's first general-purpose electronic digital computer, was turned on in its new home at the Ballistic Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, remaining in continuous operation until October 2, 1955.
 1957 – The International Atomic Energy Agency was established, promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

1981 – A worldwide television audience of over 700 million people watched Diana Spencer marry Prince Charles of Wales at St Paul's Cathedral in London. July 29 is Ólavsøka in the Faroe Islands; National Anthem Day in Romania.

Quote of the Day

We must plan for freedom, and not only for security, if for no other reason than only freedom can make security more secure. ~ Karl Popper

Word of the Day

leitmotif; n

1. (music) A melodic theme associated with a particular character, place, thing or idea in an opera.
2. A recurring theme.

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