



### Top Stories

#### **Kidnappers of BBC reporter Alan Johnston deny that he will be released**

In a video broadcast on al-Jazeera and made by the Army of Islam, a militant group which claims responsibility for kidnapping BBC News reporter Alan Johnston, has denied that a deal has been reached with Hamas that would secure his release.

#### **31 children rescued as UK police shut down global paedophile ring**

Police in the UK have shut down a global internet paedophile ring in a ten month operation that involved 700 suspects in 35 different countries. 31 children have been rescued.

### Featured story

#### **Cockpit voice recorder retrieved from wreck of Kenya Airways Flight 507**

A search team in Cameroon has found the cockpit voice recorder from the May 5 wreckage of Kenya Airways Flight 507.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Air strikes in Afghanistan on a suspected Al Qaeda headquarters kill several militants as well as civilians including children.
- Ingel Cabrera wins the 2007 U.S. Open Golf Championship at Oakmont Country Club in Oakmont, Pennsylvania.
- Linate Airport in Milan, Italy, is

### Wikipedia Current Events

closed for three hours at dawn to allow wildlife experts to trap 80 hares which have bred in recent months and are confusing ground radar.

- Audi wins their seventh 24 Hours of Le Mans in eight years, including their second straight win with a diesel R10 prototype.
- A Canadian pilot and five British passengers die in a plane crash in Malawi.
- Mahmoud Abbas, the President of the Palestinian National Authority, outlaws armed factions of Hamas.
- At least 35 people die in Kabul, Afghanistan, as the result of a bombing of a police bus.
- French voters go to the polls to elect a new French National Assembly. The centre-right Union for a Popular Movement (UPM) wins a comfortable majority, however, the left did make some gains with senior minister Alain Juppe losing his seat in Bordeaux.

#### **EU awards partial victory to Finland over wolf hunting case**

On June 14 the European Court of Justice awarded a partial victory to Finland in a case in which the European Commission alleged that Finland was issuing licenses to hunt wolves in a manner contradictorily to rules laid down by the Commission, partly dismissing the commission's case. The case was initially filed in 2005. Crucially, Finland's wolf

management plan will not be changed as a result of the decision.

The court said that the commission had not proved that Finland was issuing the licenses in a manner that threatened the survival of the country's wolf population, estimated at around 250, and Finland themselves claim the number of Finnish wolves has recently doubled.

The court ruled that despite two cases where Finland was found to be in the wrong, this did not amount to "constant and general administrative practice amounting to a breach." Finland had issued the licenses on a preventative basis, but EU regulations state that there must be proof of damage or other danger which can only be solved by killing the animal(s) involved, and thus Finland was breaching the Habitats Directive.

The court ruled that both sides should pay their own legal costs as both had failed in at least one of their claims.

"The European Court of Justice ratifies the main lines of the wolf population management plan," the Finnish agriculture ministry said.

"When planning future wolf policy in Finland, the ministry will take note of the court of justices decision on the wolf and the grounds for it".

However, the ministry also said

that it would still issue permits to prevent "very significant loss or damage" providing a survey no more than a year old showed that hunting could actually prevent this loss or damage.

"The crucial point of the decision is that the current system, based on hunting permits granted by the game management districts, is not contrary to the habitats directive," the ministry said in a statement.

"The game management districts can continue to grant permits to hunt wolf within the limits laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry."

### **Lewis Hamilton wins 2007 United States Grand Prix**

McLaren Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton won from pole FIA Formula-1 2007 United States Grand Prix at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. This became his second successive win since the start of the season and in his driver's career with seven consecutive podium finishes.

Fernando Alonso, his teammate, showed best results during free practice sessions and two qualifying sessions, but made a crucial mistake in the third, which lead Hamilton to his second pole. Alonso pushed hard on his teammate and once tried to overtake him using slipstream effect on the banking, but the young Briton driver was on the better trajectory and saved the lead.

Both Ferrari drivers, Felipe Massa and Kimi Räikkönen, showed third and fourth results in qualification and were able to maintain them to from the starting grid to the end of the race.

Heikki Kovalainen driving for Renault successfully ended with his 5th place right ahead of Jarno Trulli's Toyota and Mark Webber's Red Bull-Renault.

19-year-old German Sebastian Vettel, who replaced Robert Kubica after the Poland driver crash his BMW in the previous race, showed a good results in the qualifying sessions and in the race, closing up top 8 drivers in the same lap as the winner.

Despite of a recent speculations in the media about inequality of the drivers in the McLaren team, Fernando and Lewis, went to the podium hugging one another.

Lewis now leads the drivers' championship with 58 points, 10 ahead of Alonso. Team McLaren leads the constructors' championship with 106 points, 36 ahead of Ferrari.

### **NTSB releases updates on status of 3 major US investigations**

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the agency responsible for investigating transportation accidents in the United States, released updates on three major investigations on June 14.

The NTSB, well known publically for its involvement in the investigation of aviation incidents which involve harm or loss of human life, is also an agency that oversees the transportation of refined petroleum and gas products, chemicals and minerals.

The agency determined the cause of a natural gas pipeline explosion that killed six. It also detailed the cause of an accidental release of 204,000 gallons of anhydrous ammonia from a pipeline in an

environmentally sensitive area, and released preliminary information involving two commercial aircraft coming within 30-50 feet of each other on a runway.

#### **Pipeline explosion**

In the gas explosion disaster, the towing vessel Miss Megan, which was of specifications that did not require inspection by the United States Coast Guard, was being operated in the West Cote Blanche Bay oil field in Louisiana by Central Boat Rentals on behalf of Athena Construction on October 12, 2006. The Miss Megan was pushing barge IBR 234, which was tied along the starboard side of barge Athena 106, en route to a pile-driving location. Athena Construction did not require its crews to pin mooring spuds (vertical steel shafts extending through wells in the bottom of the boat and used for mooring) securely in place on its barges and consequently this had not been done. During the journey, the aft spud on the Athena 106 released from its fully raised position. The spud dropped into the water and struck a submerged, high-pressure natural gas pipeline. The resulting gas released ignited and created a fireball that engulfed the towing vessel and both barges. The master of the towing vessel and four barge workers were killed. The Miss Megan deckhand and one barge worker survived. One barge worker is officially listed as missing.

The NTSB blames Athena Construction for the disaster, citing in the final report that Athena Construction's manual contained no procedures mandating the use of the safety devices on the spud winch except during electrical work. It was found that if the Athena 106 crew had used the

steel pins to secure the retracted spuds during their transit, a pin would have prevented the aft spud from accidentally deploying. Furthermore, the spud would have remained locked in its lifted position regardless of whether the winch brake mechanism, the spud's supporting cable, or a piece of connecting hardware had failed.

The NTSB also found that contributing to the accident was the failure of Central Boat Rentals to require, and the Miss Megan master to ensure, that the barge spuds were securely pinned before getting under way. The Board noted that investigators found no evidence that the Miss Megan master or deckhand checked whether the spuds had been properly secured before the tow began. While Central Boat Rentals had a health and safety manual and trained its crews, the written procedures did not specifically warn masters about the need to secure spuds or other barge equipment before navigating. The NTSB stated that the company's crew should have been trained to identify potential safety hazards on vessels under their control.

NTSB Chairman Mark Rosenker said of the investigation's results "Having more rigorous requirements in place could have prevented this accident from occurring. Not only do these regulations need to be put in place but it is imperative that they are enforced and adhered to."

The NTSB has made a number of safety recommendations as a result of this accident and the subsequent investigation. Recommendations were made to Athena Construction and Central Boat Rentals to develop procedures and train the employees of its barges to use the

securing pins to hold spuds safely in place before transiting from one site to another.

The most major of the other recommendations are:

To the Occupational Safety and Health Administration:

- Direct the Maritime Advisory Committee for Occupational Safety and Health to issue the following documents document to the maritime industry: (1) a fact sheet regarding the accident, and (2) a guidance document regarding the need to secure the gear on barges, including spud pins, before the barges are moved, and detailing any changes to your memorandum of understanding with the Coast Guard.

To the U. S. Coast Guard

- Finalize and implement the new towing vessel inspection regulations and require the establishment of safety management systems appropriate for the characteristics, methods of operation, and nature of service of towing vessels.

Review and update your memorandum of understanding with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to specifically address your respective oversight roles on vessels that are not subject to Coast Guard inspection.

Anhydrous ammonia spill

The NTSB also released the result of it's investigation into an environmental disaster in Kansas on October 27, 2004 in which 204,000 gallons (4,858 barrels) of anhydrous ammonia was spilled from a ruptured pipeline in Kingman into an environmentally

sensitive area. Chemicals from the pipeline entered a nearby stream and killed more than 25,000 fish, including some fish from threatened species.

The incident reached the scale that it did due to operator error after the initial rupture. The 8 5/8-inch diameter steel pipeline, which was operated by Enterprise Products Operating L.P., burst at 11:15 am in an agricultural area about 6 miles east of Kingman, Kansas. A drop in pipeline pressure, indicating abnormal conditions or a possible compromise in pipeline integrity, set off alarms displayed on the computerized pipeline monitoring system. Shortly after the first alarm the pipeline controller, in an attempt to remedy the low pressure, increased the flow of anhydrous ammonia into the affected section of pipeline. A total of 33 minutes elapsed between the time when the first alarm indicated a problem with the pipeline and the initiation of a shutdown.

In its initial report to the National Response Center (NRC), the pipeline operator's accident reporting contractor reported a release of at least 20 gallons of ammonia, telling the NRC that an updated estimate of material released would be reported at a later time. No such report was ever made. Because of the inaccurate report, the arrival of representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency was delayed by a full day, affecting the oversight of the environmental damage mitigation efforts.

The cause of the rupture itself was determined to be a pipe gouge created by heavy equipment damage to the pipeline during construction in 1973 or subsequent excavation activity at

an unknown time that initiated metal fatigue cracking and led to the eventual rupture of the pipeline.

"We are very fortunate that such highly toxic chemicals of the size and scope involved in this accident were not released in a populated area," commented Rosenker. "Had this same quantity of ammonia been released near a town or city, the results could have been catastrophic."

As a result of this accident, the NTSB made the following safety recommendations:

To the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration: Require that a pipeline operator must have a procedure to calculate and provide a reasonable initial estimate of released product in the telephonic report to the National Response Center.

Require that a pipeline operator must provide an additional telephonic report to the National Response Center if significant new information becomes available during the emergency response. Require an operator to revise its pipeline risk assessment plan whenever it has failed to consider one of more risk factors that can affect pipeline integrity.

To Enterprise Products Operating L.P.:

Provide initial and recurrent training for all controllers that includes simulator or noncomputerized simulations of abnormal operating conditions that indicate pipeline leaks.

"The severity of this release of dangerous chemicals into the community could have been prevented," said Rosenker. "The safety recommendations that we have made, if acted upon, will

reduce the likelihood of this type of accident happening again."

**Runway incursion**  
As well as concluding their investigation of the above accidents, the NTSB also released preliminary information regarding a serious runway incursion at San Francisco International Airport between two commercial aircraft on May 26, 2007.

At about 1:30 p.m. the tower air traffic controller cleared SkyWest Airlines flight 5741, an Embraer 120 arriving from Modesto, California, to land on runway 28R. Forgetting about the arrival airplane, the same controller then cleared Republic Airlines flight 4912, an Embraer 170 departing for Los Angeles, to take off from runway 1L, which intersects runway 28R.

After the SkyWest airliner touched down, the Airport Movement Area Safety System (AMASS) alerted and the air traffic controller transmitted "Hold, Hold, Hold" to the SkyWest flight crew in an attempt to stop the aircraft short of runway 1L. The SkyWest crew applied maximum braking that resulted in the airplane stopping in the middle of runway 1L. As this was occurring, the captain of Republic Airlines flight 4912 took control of the aircraft from the first officer, realized the aircraft was traveling too fast to stop, and initiated an immediate takeoff. According to the crew of SkyWest 5741, the Republic Airlines aircraft overflew theirs by 30 to 50 feet. The Federal Aviation Administration has categorized the incident as an operational error.

The NTSB sent an investigator to San Francisco, who collected radar data, recorded air traffic control communications, and flight crew

statements, and interviewed air traffic control personnel prior to the NTSB making the preliminary release.

### **Two Katyusha rockets fired into northern Israel**

Reports say that at least two Katyusha Rockets fired from Taibeh Lebanon, have landed inside northern Israel in the town of Kiryat Shmona. There were no injuries or deaths reported, but a car was damaged.

"Two Katyusha rockets landed in Kiryat Shmona, and caused damage to a vehicle and roads. There were no injuries. Bomb disposal experts are examining the damage caused," said a spokesman for the local police department.

Almost a year ago, Hezbollah militants fired nearly 4,000 thousand rockets into Israel for almost a month, but police and the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) do not believe Hezbollah is responsible for this attack, instead it is reported that Palestinian militants are responsible.

Kiryat Shmona and other towns and cities in northern Israel have been placed on high alert.

### **BBC reporter could be released within next few hours**

A spokesman for the Hamas organisation has indicated that the BBC reporter Alan Johnston kidnapped in Gaza on 12 March would be released within hours.

"The BBC journalist will be released within the next hours, today", said Abu Osameh al-Mo'ti, Hamas spokesman from Iran.

Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas official in Gaza was however more cautious about the situation, saying that

"There are encouraging indicators that he will be released in the near future. But we cannot determine this in terms of hours."

Later, a spokesman for the group said to be holding Alan, the Army of Islam denied the release was imminent. The group is demanding that Abu Qatada, described by the United Kingdom government as "significant international terrorist", be released and said that "If they don't meet these demands there will be no release of this prisoner."

Earlier this month Johnston appeared in a video in which the group holding him demanded that Britain released Muslim prisoners.

The UK Foreign Office described the ongoing confusion as distressful to Alan Johnston's family and friends. The BBC has said that "We are watching developments very closely."

### **Collision of Challenger-60 and Boeing-757 prevented in Moscow sky**

On June 13 air traffic controllers in Moscow prevented what ultimately became a near-miss from becoming a serious midair collision. The incident occurred when a Bombardier Challenger 60 business jet violated controllers' instructions and flew into the path of a Boeing 757.

According to an official release, the Challenger had been instructed several times to ascend to no higher than 1,800 metres. However, the light jet proceeded to a height of 2,070 metres without authorisation, taking it into the path of a 757 which was approaching nearby Vnukovo International Airport.

The two aircraft came close enough that the Traffic Collision

Avoidance System on board the Boeing was activated and provided an audible alert to the crew. Meanwhile, air traffic control noticed the emergency and guided the two planes away from each other.

### **4.5-kilometre bridge to link Crimea with Russia**

Last week a presentation of the bridge linking the Crimea with the Krasnodar region of Russia took place in Ukraine. The project cost of the deal is estimated at US\$480 million. According to specialists, the bridge can be built within two years given adequate preparation.

The bridge project includes building a highway with the width of 15 metres; there will also be a possibility of the bridge supporting a future oil pipeline. The total length of the bridge will be about 4.5 kilometres.

The bridge over the Strait of Kerch could become a transit way to more than 10 million people a year and should decrease the travel distance from Ukraine to the Krasnodar Region by 450 kilometres.

### **Vietnam reports first bird-flu death since 2005**

A 20-year-old man from Ha Tay Province, northern Vietnam, died of H5N1 on June 10, in a Hanoi hospital, Vietnamese state-run media reported yesterday.

The death from the strain of avian flu was the first in Vietnam since 2005. Four other people are known to be infected with the virus since last month.

### **Protest leaders deliver message to Thai junta**

Leaders of daily demonstrations against the military government of Thailand delivered a message

today to the Council for National Security, calling on the junta to resign immediately and allow elections to go forward.

The protest leaders had planned a mass march of around 10,000 people yesterday from the Sanam Luang staging ground in Bangkok to army headquarters, but decided against it when heavy rains hit, reducing the demonstration's numbers.

### **Seven arrested in southern Thailand**

Police in southern Thailand said today they have arrested seven suspects in the insurgency in a raid in Yala.

Violence was also reported in neighboring Narathiwat, where the 16-year-old son of a teacher was gunned down at a grocery shop in Tak Bai district. Also in Tak Bai, a school was burned.

### **468 slaves in Chinese kilns freed, boss arrested**

A massive police investigation in China into the enforced labor in Shanxi province has led to the discovery of at least 468 slaves, as young as 14, press-ganged into working in brick kilns.

Yesterday, police captured Heng Tinghan, the boss of the brick kiln, who is accused of starving and beating workers.

### **Today in History**

1812 - The United States declared war against the United Kingdom, officially beginning the War of 1812.

1815 - Napoléon Bonaparte fought and lost his final battle, the Battle of Waterloo.

1858 - Charles Darwin received a manuscript by Alfred Russel Wallace on evolution, which prompted him to publish his

theory.

1940 - World War II: Charles de Gaulle, leader of the Free French Forces, made an appeal to the French people following the fall of France to Nazi Germany, rallying them to support the Resistance.  
 1979 - The United States and the Soviet Union signed the SALT II treaty, placing specific limits on each side's stock of nuclear weapons.  
 June 18 is Autistic Pride Day.

**Quote of the Day**

The day after Columbine, I was interviewed... The reporter had been assigned a theory and was seeking sound bites to support it. "Wouldn't you say," she asked, "that killings like this are influenced by violent movies?" No, I said, I wouldn't say that... The reporter looked disappointed, so I offered her my theory. "Events like this," I said, "if they are influenced by anything, are influenced by news programs like your own. When an unbalanced kid walks into a school and starts shooting, it becomes a major media event. Cable news drops ordinary programming and goes around the clock with it. The story is assigned a logo and a theme song ... The message is clear to other disturbed kids around the country: If I shoot up my school, I can be famous..."  
 ~ Roger Ebert

**Word of the Day**

- brocard; n
- (law) A legal maxim usually expressed in Latin, traditionally used to concisely express a wider legal principle.

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