



Top Stories

21 dead in south Thailand attacks

In one of the deadliest days of the south Thailand insurgency, 21 people have died in attacks, including 12 soldiers who were killed by a roadside bombing and ambush on Thursday night in Yala, and seven people who were killed by gunman at a mosque in Songkhla. "This was the biggest single attack yet," a Royal Thai Army spokesman said.

Guantanamo detainee commits suicide

34-year old Abdul Rahman al-Amri, a former Saudi army veteran was alleged to have produced videos of the USS Cole bombing and the September 11 attacks, had been detained since 2002.

Featured story

Evan O'Dorney wins 2007 US National Spelling Bee competition

The 13-year-old from California spelt 'Serrefine' (a small surgical forceps) correctly to become United States champion.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Israeli troops kill a Palestinian man and seriously injure another in the West Bank town of Nablus.
- Three suspects are arrested in relation to a terrorism plot involving JFK International Airport in New York City with a fourth suspect being sought.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Scotland Yard detectives who went to Jamaica to probe Bob Woolmer's death come to the verdict of the murder investigation saying Bob Woolmer died of heart failure and was not murdered.
- Thousands of protestors and anti-globalisation demonstrators gather in Rostock, Germany to protest against the 33rd G8 summit to be held in Heiligendamm later in the week.
- Sporadic violence breaks out, with police attacked by rocks and bottles and some cars burned. Some 100 police officers are injured.
- The President of Algeria Abdelaziz Bouteflika accepts the resignation of his Cabinet after recent elections. The Prime Minister of Algeria Abdelaziz Belkhadem is expected to retain his position when a new Cabinet is chosen.

University of Florida coach Donovan signed to coach the Orlando Magic

Billy Donovan, the head coach of the defending Nation Champion Florida Gators college basketball team, has accepted an offer from the NBA's Orlando Magic to become their eighth head coach.

The terms of the deal call for Donovan to receive \$27.5 million over five years, or approximately \$5.5 million per year guaranteed over the life of the contract. On May 17, Donovan had received an

offer from Florida for a seven-year contract extension, which he never signed. Although its terms were never officially disclosed, sources say that the salary ranged from \$3 million to \$3.75 million per year guaranteed.

Donovan announced his acceptance of the Magic coaching job at a news conference in Orlando, Florida, at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, June 1. At another news conference at 4:00 p.m. the same day in Gainesville, he will officially announce his resignation as the head coach of the Florida Gators.

Donovan, who won two NCAA titles and three SEC titles in his eleven-year tenure with the Gators, has a career head-coaching record of 296-123: 261-103 with the Gators, and 35-20 in two seasons at the helm with Marshall.

In addition to turning down the Gators' contract extension, Donovan earlier was mentioned as a possible candidate with the Kentucky Wildcats, where he was previously an assistant, to replace Tubby Smith as their head coach. He was also mentioned as a possible candidate for the head coach job at the Memphis Grizzlies, replacing Mike Fratello.

The previous head coach of the Magic, Brian Hill, was relieved of his duties on May 23 after barely making the playoffs with a 40-42 season record, and being swept in the first round by the Detroit Pistons. Hill, who has a record of 267-192 overall with the Magic

(191-104 in his first stint, 1993-1997), was 36-46 in the 2005-06 season, his first season back, punctuated by a 16-6 finish that inflated hopes for this past season. Hill reportedly will be offered another job within the Magic organization.

Some experts speculate that the signing of Donovan will boost efforts to build a new arena for the Magic.

Four arrested in plot to bomb infrastructure at JFK International Airport, New York City

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) have reported that four arrests have been made in a foiled plot to blow up jet-fuel supply tanks and pipeline at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK), in New York City. The DOJ suggested the plot was interrupted in the early planning stages through cooperative law enforcement work in the United States and abroad.

The four arrested were identified by the DOJ in a press release Saturday as Russell Defreitas, a U.S. citizen and native of Guyana, Abdul Kadir, a citizen of Guyana and past member of the Guyanese Parliament, Kareem Ibrahim, a citizen of Trinidad, and Abdel Nur, also a citizen of Guyana.

Defreitas, a former employee of JFK was arrested in Brooklyn, New York. Kadir and Ibrahim were arrested in Trinidad. It was not made clear where Nur was arrested, however the DOJ indicated that the U.S. will initiate extradition proceedings for the three.

The DOJ alleged that the four began the planning in January, 2006 through to the present. It

was revealed that law enforcement officials believed the targets included buildings, fuel tanks, and fuel pipelines at JFK, which were to be destroyed with explosives. The primary pipeline target was the Buckeye Pipeline, which distributes fuel to depots as far away as Pennsylvania. It also serves New Jersey and various boroughs of New York.

It was alleged by the DOJ that the plotters "tapped into an international network of Muslim extremists from the United States, Guyana, and Trinidad, and utilized the knowledge, expertise, and contacts of the conspirators to develop and plan the plot, and obtain operational support and capability to carry it out."

Defreitas traveled from Guyana to JFK to allegedly conduct surveillance of the airport on four occasions in January 2007. According to the DOJ press release, the four plotters "obtained satellite photographs of JFK airport and its facilities from the Internet and traveled frequently between the United States, Guyana, and Trinidad to discuss their plans and solicit the financial and technical assistance of others."

U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York Roslynn Mauskopf described the scenario as "one of the most chilling plots imaginable." She went on to say at a news conference in New York that "the devastation that would be caused...is just unthinkable."

Cambodian lawmaker calls for ASEAN website to be blocked over missing land

Thirty-five square kilometers, or 13.5135755 square miles, or 3,500 hectares or 8,648.68835 acres.

However you figure it, it's a sizeable chunk of land.

And it's missing from Cambodia on the website for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, a 10-member regional body of which Cambodia is a member.

The apparent rounding down of Cambodia's territory, 181,035 square kilometers, on the ASEAN website, has some Cambodian lawmakers up in arms.

Parliamentarian Keo Remy, a member of the opposition Sam Rainsy Party, is calling for the ASEAN website to be blocked by Cambodia's Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications if the number is not corrected.

"We know that Cambodia has border disputes with its neighbors, and Khmer citizens are paying attention on these issues. We cannot accept such incorrect points. The most important thing is that the government should close this web site," Keo was quoted as saying by the Khmer-language daily newspaper Kampuchea Thmey.

Though Keo acknowledged the error could be an honest, if careless, mistake, he said it could mean something more sinister – that ASEAN is trying to undermine Cambodia's sovereignty, and that perhaps ASEAN is working for neighboring nations. It could even be treasonous, he said.

"If it was intentional and perpetrated by a Cambodian, this is treason. It is like not knowing your own parents," Keo was quoted as saying by Deutsche Presse-Agentur.

Other lawmakers also called on the

Cambodian government to take action.

"The royal government must react urgently, especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation," Monh Saphan, a Funcinpec parliamentarian was quoted as saying by Kampuchea Thmey. "The website [must] be corrected, because it affects the territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Cambodia."

And non-governmental organization leaders weighed in.

"The state's figure is more important and appropriate than figures of other organizations. Therefore, we should urge the government to check this issue," Seng Theary, executive director of the Center for Social Development, told Kampuchea Thmey. "We also wonder where ASEAN got this figure."

Kek Galabru, president of the Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights, said that incorrect figure is most likely a mistake, but said the government should investigate it. "Otherwise a small problem might turn into a bigger issue," she said.

Government spokesman and Information Minister Khieu Kanharith said he would investigate, and called for cooler heads in the meantime.

Border disputes are a hot-button political issue in Cambodia, which has some long-standing unresolved boundary conflicts with neighbors Thailand and Vietnam.

Cambodia joined ASEAN in 1999, the last country to gain admittance to the regional geo-political and economic body for Southeast Asia. It was founded in 1967 by

Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Other members are Brunei, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Bob Woolmer not murdered, says Scotland Yard detectives

Scotland Yard detectives, who went to Jamaica to probe Bob Woolmer's death, came to the verdict of the murder investigation saying Bob Woolmer died of heart failure and was not murdered. Reports said the Jamaican detectives would announce at a press conference the following week that they were no longer treating the death as murder and instead believed Woolmer died of heart failure caused by chronic ill health and possibly diabetes.

On March 18, 2007, following Pakistan's shock defeat by Ireland in the 2007 Cricket World Cup a day earlier, Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer was found unconscious in his hotel room at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in Kingston, Jamaica and died hours later. On March 22, Jamaican police confirmed that a murder investigation has been launched due to the circumstances of Woolmer's death, specifically that he had died of asphyxia and was then being treated as a murder investigation.

Lower court in China sentences Food and Drug official to death for taking bribes

On May 29, 2007, the former head of China's State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), Zheng Xiaoyu, was found guilty by a lower court of accepting bribes and dereliction of duty. The court handed down a death sentence along with the confiscation of personal assets. Zheng will appeal the ruling.

Zheng, 62, was determined to

have accepted bribes totaling 6.49 million yuan, or US\$811,200. He was head of the SFDA from 1998 to 2005. In Chinese law, capital punishment can be imposed on individuals found guilty of accepting bribes greater than 100,000 yuan, or \$12,500, if "the circumstances are especially serious".

It was revealed that, as head of the SFDA, Zheng had asked for and accepted bribes to guarantee licences to unqualified pharmaceutical companies. The companies were subsequently involved in the manufacture and distribution of counterfeit or inferior drugs. Zheng's sentence "was based overwhelmingly on the devastating consequences of [his] crimes in his position of power," said the state-run China Daily newspaper.

While Zheng was head of the SFDA, several health scandals in China unfolded for which the SFDA had responsibility. Dozens of deaths in China have been attributed to poor quality drugs and unsafe food products. In Anhui province, a health crisis arose from baby formula found to contain no nutrition. At least 13 babies died in the incident, which occurred in 2004. In another case, ten deaths were attributed to poor quality antibiotics.

More recently, wheat and rice gluten products from China, used in the manufacture of pet food, were found to contain melamine, which may have caused the deaths of many pets in the United States and Canada.

Zheng's harsh sentence may be the result of China's embarrassment by the recent scandals and its concern over international credibility. "I don't

think the government has in mind massive changes, but it clearly wants to improve official performance through a series of smaller reforms," Mao Shoulong, public policy expert at the Renmin University of China, told Reuters.

According to an opinion piece in the China Daily, Zheng's forthcoming execution is being used as an example to help dispel the belief, by the Chinese public, that government officials receive preferential treatment in court. "The country may need Zheng's execution to be convinced of the leadership's resolve to end corruption at high levels," said the China Daily.

Six kidnapped Chevron workers released in Nigeria

Six employees of Chevron Corporation have been released today. The group, which comprised four Italians, an American and a Croatian, were kidnapped by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta on May 1, 2007.

On the day of their capture, the Movement announced that the hostages would be freed after one month. The six men were handed over to Chevron's officials after one month and one day.

Previously unknown Indian tribe discovered in Brazil

The Indian tribe, thought to have had little previous contact with civilization, was found in a remote area of the Amazon, approximately 2000 km to the north of Rio de Janeiro. It comprises 87 members. Called Metyktire, they are reported to be by and large naked, except for the men who use a penis sheaths, and the women shave the top of their heads.

The reason for their not being discovered before now is thought

at least to be partly due to the lack of larger rivers in the area, which makes communication difficult. The discovery was made when two members of the Metyktire tribe suddenly showed up in the Kayapo tribe village, in the Menkregnoti reservation of the Amazon. The Metyktire tribe is a subgroup of the Kayapo tribe, with which it has had little significant contact, but the members speak an archaic form of the Kayapo language.

In order to protect the members of the tribe from diseases they might lack resistance to, the Brazilian government has forbidden contact with them except for a team of doctors which has been sent in to examine them.

Video of kidnapped BBC journalist released

A video has been released by the captors of Alan Johnston, the BBC Gaza correspondent who was kidnapped on March 12, 2007. Johnston has been missing longer than any foreigner kidnapped in the Gaza Strip.

Johnston was shown in the video to be wearing a red sweatshirt, and seemed to be in good health. The video appeared on the internet site Al-Ekhlaas, often used by Islamic militants. It bears the logo of the Army of Islam, the Palestinian militant group that had been believed to be holding the 45-year-old reporter, and opened with Arabic chanting and verses from the Quran.

In the video Johnston stated: "They [the captors] have fed me well, there has been no violence towards me at all and I'm in good health." Johnson called for an end to Western sanctions against Palestine and also blamed Israel for all the problems that the Palestinian people was enduring.

The BBC made a petition for Johnston's release, and has now been signed by over 130,000 people. The video ended with Johnston about to outline conditions for his release, only to have the tape cut away to an as yet unidentified voice in Arabic demanding freedom for Islamic prisoners, including a radical cleric with ties to al-Qaeda imprisoned in Britain.

Dutch TV kidney reality show was a hoax

A Dutch reality TV show broadcast yesterday evening which was designed to show a terminally ill woman choosing a patient to receive her kidneys has been shown to be a hoax. The Big Donor Show had attracted considerable condemnation earlier in the week when outline details had been released. The producers said that the programme was made to highlight the shortage of Dutch donors.

The "donor", known only as "Lisa", was an actress, although the three individuals competing for the kidneys were real patients requiring kidney transplants. The choice was to have been made based on the history and profile of the "contestants" and conversations that the actress is indicated to have had with their families and friends. Viewers were also invited to send in their advice by text message during the programme.

At the point in the show when the choice of recipient was to have been revealed, the show's presenter Patrick Lodiers revealed that the exercise had been a hoax. "We are not giving away a kidney here, that is going too far even for us," he said.

Political parties in The Netherlands together with medical organisations and kidney specialists had united in condemning the programme prior to its broadcast. Joop Atsma of the ruling Christian Democratic Party had said "It's a crazy idea. It can't be possible that, in the Netherlands, people vote about who's getting a kidney." Professor John Freehally, immediate past President of the UK Renal Association stated that "the scenario portrayed in this programme is ethically totally unacceptable", continuing that the show would cause confusion and anxiety rather than contributing further to an understanding of transplants. He also pointed out that the set up of the programme bears no relationship to the processes for making decisions about transplants in normal circumstances.

However, speaking after the broadcast, Dutch Minister for Education, Culture and Science Ronald Plasterk, claimed that the show was a "fantastic stunt" and kidney patient Caroline Klingers watching the programme at a treatment centre in the town of Bossum praised it saying that it would be "good for the publicity and there are no losers".

Speaking at a news conference after the programme, a producer said "We have only done this cry for help because we want to solve a problem that shouldn't be a problem", and this view was underlined by presenter Patrick Lodiers who claimed that it was "reality that was shocking" in that about 200 people die in the Netherlands each year waiting for a kidney where the average waiting time is more than four years. Bart de Graaff, the founder and former director of the TV

station which broadcast the programme, died from kidney failure at the age of 35 after spending years on a transplant waiting list.

The programme was made by Endemol, the company which makes Big Brother and which is not immune from criticism. On Wednesday of this week it was required by UK regulator Ofcom to broadcast an apology for its handling of potentially racist material involving Indian actress Shilpa Shetty in the January 2007 Celebrity Big Brother in the UK. Ofcom had received a record number of 44,500 complaints.

Evan O'Dorney wins 2007 US National Spelling Bee competition

13-year-old Evan O'Dorney, from California in the United States, has won the 2007 Scripps National Spelling Bee championship in Washington, D.C.

He spelt the word 'serrefine' correctly to defeat second place Nate Gartke, of Canada, and win the 80th annual bee. Gartke, from Spruce Grove, Alberta, was trying to become the first Canadian to win the championship.

O'Dorney, from Danville, said he knew how to spell the word, which is a noun describing small forceps, immediately after the pronouncer read it out.

The winner received \$US35,000 in prize money and a trophy, as well as a scholarship, savings and a set of reference works.

O'Dorney, who finished in a tie for 14th in last year's spelling bee, only stumbled once in 2007's competition, when he had to restart 'schuhplattler', a German word.

The bee, which started with a competition-record 286 entrants on Wednesday, were narrowed down to 59 at the start of the final day. It was then whittled down to 15 finalists, and ten faltered over the next two rounds to leave a final group of five: four Americans and the Canadian Gartke.

Three more were eliminated, on the words 'aniseikonia' (a visual defect), "oberek" (a Polish folk dance), and "cyanophycean" (a kind of algae), leaving O'Dorney and Gartke.

The final pair matched each other with correct spellings for three rounds, until Gartke mistakenly added a 'h' into 'coryza' (a medical word), eliminating himself and leaving O'Dorney as the champion.

O'Dorney said after his win that spelling is not his favourite subject. "My favourite things to do were math and music, and with the math I really like the way the numbers fit together," he said.

Neopets to become TV series

The popular Neopets website has become an interstitial television series, to air later this month on Nickelodeon in the United States. These interstitials introduce viewers to creatures on the virtual pet site, at the same time revealing clues that direct kids to the website to unlock games.

Kyra Reppen, Neopets' senior VP and general manager, commented to World Screen: "The Neopets Mini-Shows bring together Nickelodeon's powerhouse of expertise in making content for kids and tweens with the talented creative team at the Neopets studio. These animated shorts will bring to life the characters and adventures that make up the

virtual world of Neopia."

ACT kids TV awards handed out in Toronto, Canada

The Alliance for Children and Television, a Canadian organization, announced its 2007 Awards of Excellence winners. Honouring the best of children's television, the awards were held in the Canadian Broadcasting Centre in Toronto, Ontario, the headquarters for the CBC television and radio networks.

- Grand Prize: Poko, Halifax Film, CBC
- Special Jury Prize: This is Emily Yeung, marbledmedia/Sinking Ship Entertainment, Treehouse
- All Genres Age 3-5: This is Emily Yeung, marbledmedia/Sinking Ship Entertainment, Treehouse
- All Genres Age 9-12: The Snow Queen, Amberwood Entertainment, CBC
- Animation Age 3-5: Poko, Halifax Film, CBC
- Animation Age 6-8: If the World Were a Village, 9 Story Entertainment, YTV, CBC, TVO, SRC, Treehouse
- Animation Age 9-14: 6teen, Nelvana, Teletoon
- Interstitial: Roll Play, Sinking Ship Entertainment, Treehouse/SRC
- Best Website: www.zimmertwins.com

Today in History

- 350 - Roman usurper Nepotianus of the Constantinian dynasty proclaimed himself Roman Emperor, entering Rome with a group of gladiators.
- 1940 - World War II: The remaining Allied forces protecting the Dunkirk evacuation surrendered, giving the Germans a tactical victory in the Battle of Dunkirk.
- 1992 - The High Court of Australia

delivered its landmark legal decision in *Mabo v Queensland*, recognising the land rights of the Aborigines.

1998 - An InterCityExpress high-speed train derailed near Eschede, Lower Saxony, Germany, causing 101 deaths and 100 injuries.

2006 - Montenegro declared its independence, ending the union of Serbia and Montenegro.

June 03 is Trinity Sunday in Western Christianity (2007).

Quote of the Day

We are on the cusp of this time where I can say, "I speak as a citizen of the world" without others saying, "God, what a nut."
~ Lawrence Lessig

Word of the Day

- besmirch; v
- 1. To make dirty; to soil.
- 2. To tarnish the reputation of.

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