



Top Stories

Prisoners escape from Afghan jail after Taliban attack

Most of the prisoners kept in the Kandahar jail have escaped after the building was attacked by a Taliban suicide bomber. The bomber attacked the main gate of the prison. Officials have confirmed that at least two guards died as a result of the incident.



UK drivers urged not to panic buy during delivery strikes

British drivers have been urged not to panic buy fuel because of the 4 day walk out by delivery drivers working for companies delivering to Shell petrol stations. Shell admitted that the walk out could leave some of its 1,000 forecourts without fuel.

Senior intelligence official suspended after leaving top secret files on train

A senior intelligence official in the United Kingdom has been suspended from his job pending an investigation into top secret documents that were left on a commuter train on Tuesday. The Cabinet Office confirmed that the documents, including reports on Al-Qaeda and Iraqi security forces, had been found on the train and handed in to the offices of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), who turned the files in to police.

ORIGINAL REPORT

Partially collapsed building in Buffalo, New York likely to be demolished

Reports say that a large three-story stable which partially collapsed in Buffalo, New York on June 11, and caused as many as five homes to be evacuated, is likely to be demolished.



Credit: DragonFire1024 (CC-BY 2.5)

Wikipedia Current Events

- tomatoes continues to worsen with 228 victims in 23 states.
- The United States Secretary of Defense Robert Gates invites Pakistan and Afghanistan to participate in an investigation of the Gora Prai airstrike.
- Cuban hurdler Dayron Robles sets a world record of 12.87 seconds for the 110 metre hurdles at a Golden Spike meet in Ostrava, Czech Republic.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Wildfires in northern California lead to the evacuation of residents in Paradise, California and Bonny Doon, California.
- Ecuadorean police arrest four men including three Colombians on suspicion of plotting an assassination of the President of Ecuador Rafael Correa.
- Tendai Biti, the Secretary of the Movement for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe, is arrested in Harare.
- Four thousand homes in Cedar Rapids, Iowa are evacuated as the Cedar River floods due to heavy rain in recent days.
- David Davis, the Conservative Shadow Home Secretary resigns as the Member of Parliament for Haltemprice and Howden in order to contest the Haltemprice and Howden by-election, 2008 on civil liberties issues.
- The Salmonella outbreak in the United States caused by tainted

Floodwaters swamp Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Cedar Rapids, Iowa – In the United States, the Cedar River continues to break records today as it floods Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The river is approaching its expected crest of over 30 feet, over 18 feet over flood stage and more than ten feet over the previous record high.

The downtown area is underwater, as well as several residential neighborhoods against the river.

All road bridges over the river in the area except for the Interstate 380 bridge are closed and covered with water, and one of the two railroad bridges has swept away. For a short time, the Linn County Sheriff's Department had closed I-380 to allow emergency services to use it, but later re-opened it, allowing traffic in the rightmost lane.

The river is expected to crest around 7:00 a.m. Friday morning (June 13).

Ariane rocket launches Skynet and Turksat spacecraft

An Ariane 5ECA rocket has successfully placed two communications satellites into Geosynchronous transfer orbit. Liftoff, from ELA-3 at the Guiana Space Centre occurred at 22:05:02 GMT this evening. The satellites launched were Skynet 5C, which will be used to relay secure communications for the British armed forces, and Turksat 3A, which will be used for commercial communications. Paradigm Secure Communications will operate Skynet 5C on behalf of Britain's Ministry of Defence, whilst Turksat 3A will be operated by Turksat, an organisation based in Turkey.

The launch was conducted by French company Arianespace. It was originally scheduled to occur in May, but was delayed when an incorrect guidance programme was found to have been installed on the rocket. It is believed that several commands intended for use by the Ariane 5ES, a variant of the Ariane 5 used to launch spacecraft such as the Automated Transfer Vehicle, had been installed by mistake.

Skynet 5C and Turksat 3A separated from the carrier rocket 26 and 31 minutes after launch respectively, into a Geosynchronous transfer orbit. They will perform burns of onboard engines to raise the perigees of their orbits, and inject into Geosynchronous orbits, approximately 35,000 kilometres above the equator. Turksat 3A, which was constructed by Thales Alenia Space, will be positioned at a longitude of 42°E, where it will replace the older Turksat 1C satellite. Skynet 5C, which was originally constructed as a backup spacecraft, will be placed at 17.8°W. It was built by EADS

Astrium.

This is the 30th orbital launch of 2008, and the third to be conducted by an Ariane 5 rocket. Overall, it is the 39th flight of an Ariane 5, and the 14th flight of the ECA variant. It is also the 25th successful launch of an Ariane rocket. The flight designation for the launch was V184, and the serial number of the rocket used was 540. The next Ariane 5 launch will occur in early July, with the Badr 6 and ProtoStar-1 satellites.

Speaking before launch, Arianespace Chairman Jean-Yves Le Gall described the mission as a "very important launch for us". Following launch, he said that he was "very happy to share this success with you", and that Arianespace could make a "guarantee to Europe's governments of their assured access to space". He commented on the fact that this was Arianespace's 25th consecutive successful launch, saying that this achievement "truly demands respect".

Patrick Wood, the Skynet 5C programme director at Paradigm Secure Communications described the launch as "another great achievement, and another major milestone", and that "we are extremely proud of it". Jean-Marie Robert, the manager of satellite programmes at Thales Alenia Space said that his company was "proud to have contributed" to the Turksat programme. Binali Yildirim, Turkey's Minister of Transportation, made a speech via telephone, thanking Arianespace for the launch.

Large forest fire continues to burn into third day in southern Norway

A large forest fire that started on

Monday, June 9 is still out of control in the municipality of Froland in southern Norway. The fire is the largest forest fire to occur in Norway since World War II.

The fire has spread extensively and it is estimated that approximately 2,500 acres of forest have been damaged. Approximately 15 cabins are reported to have burned to the ground, but as of yet, no permanent dwellings or farms have been damaged. However, many inhabitants have been evacuated due to the fire threatening their homes, including the entire villages of Mykland and Belland. There have also been some power outages due to power lines being damaged.

Approximately 140 persons, including fire-fighters from several fire departments, and personnel from the Civil Defence and the Home Guard are working to curtail the fire. Four fire helicopters have been deployed. The fire fighting is focused on areas where the fire threatens buildings.

Extremely dry weather, and difficult wind conditions, have caused severe difficulties in fighting the fire. Fire-fighters first had hope of gaining control on the morning of Thursday, June 12, but the wind changed direction during the day, causing a large extension of the fire. There is some hope that the weekend will bring some rain; however, this will likely not be enough to stop the fire. It could take several weeks before the fire is completely extinguished.

Euro 2008: Austria vs. Poland

Austria 1 – 1 Poland

Austria salvaged a draw from their group game against Poland after

referee Howard Webb awarded a controversial penalty in injury time, which Vastić duefully converted, becoming the European Championships' oldest ever scorer, at the age of 39.

Austria had several clear chances early in the match, Harnik failed to score when put through one-on-one with the outrushing Polish goalkeeper Boruc in the 11th minute. Guerreiro scored in the 30th minute for Poland, despite suspicions that he tapped in Saganowski's cross from an off-side position. Austria pushed for an equaliser in the second half but were held steadfastly by the Polish defence, including some stunning saves from Artur Boruc. In the third minute of injury time referee Howard Webb awarded a penalty to Austria after sighting shirt holding in the penalty-area, which Vastić scored in a dramatic finale.

Austria will face Germany in a must-win match on Match Day 10 (June 16, 2008), and will be without Sebastian Proedl, who will be suspended, having collected 2 yellow cards in both his appearances so far. Poland will face Croatia, and also must win to qualify for the Quarter-Finals.

Romanian fighter jet hit by UFOs

Officials from the Romanian Defense Military confirmed that one of their MiG-21 Lancer fighter planes was struck by four Unidentified Flying Objects on October 31, 2007, which shattered the plane's cockpit. The military also released a video captured by the plane's on-board camera as it was flying above Transylvania.

The recording shows solid bodies, which authorities are working to determine the identity of. Officials have already been able to

determine the bodies were not birds or pieces of another plane, a meteorite or ice. Rocket launches and ground artillery shots were also ruled out as possible explanations for the incident.

The pilot, Marin Mitrica, was injured slightly but managed to safely land the plane. The investigation was passed to the Security Committee of European Air Forces.

A similar incident happened in the United States in 1948. Captain Mantell, of the Kentucky Air National Guard, was sent to intercept a UFO that was in US airspace, and allegedly, he was shot down by the UFO. Further investigations revealed that he was unfamiliar with the F-51 (P-51 fighter plane of World War II era).

Cuba reforms wage laws to pay workers based on amount done

Cuba has reformed its wage system to pay workers on the basis of productivity. The communist state had previously paid all workers the same, and has done since the 1959 revolution.

The move, announced by Vice-Minister for Labour Carlos Mateu, is one of a series of changes introduced by Raul Castro, who took over from ill brother Fidel Castro. Mateu stated in Granma, the Communist Party of Cuba's newspaper, that workers who met targets would get a minimum bonus of 5%, that there would be no maximum salary and that managers whose teams increased production could receive a 30% bonus.

He said that there was previously no incentive for workers to work hard since they were always paid the same. Curently, the average wage for any profession is around

US\$20 (~€13) per month. It has been suggested by the media that this reform marks a possible break away from socialist and marxist principles, since previous reforms only lifted restrictions on ownership of luxury goods.

"It's harmful to give a worker less than he deserves, it's also harmful to give him what he doesn't deserve," commented Granma.

Finland, Estonia and Greece ratify the EU's Treaty of Lisbon

Finland, Estonia and Greece have all ratified the European Union's Treaty of Lisbon, also known as the Reform Treaty. This brings the total number of ratifications by member states to 18, with all 27 required to do so if the treaty is to come into effect.

The treaty, so named because the initial signing by the EU's members was at Lisbon, Portugal, is a replacement for a failed constitution that aims to streamline the EU's voting procedure and increase its efficiency, amongst other changes. It is also intended to simplify efforts and may even introduce the possibility of motions proposed by citizens. It amends the Maastricht Treaty, also known as Treaty on European Union, and the Treaty of Rome, also known as the Treaty establishing the European Community.

Finland's parliament voted to ratify the treaty by 151 votes to 27. The votes against came from most of the Left Alliance's MPs, a small majority of the Christian Democrats, the True Finns, three Social Democrats and three MPs from the ruling Centre party.

The Estonian Riigikogu also ratified the treaty. Foreign Minister Urmas Paet said that the treaty focused

on areas of key importance to the nation, saying "This is the first time that this sort of basic treaty will address, for example, a common European Union energy policy." He also said that it would negate the arguments against further expansion.

The Greek ratification likewise went smoothly. The EU welcomed the Greek approval, with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso saying "I would like to congratulate Greece on the successful approval of the Treaty of Lisbon by the parliament earlier this morning. I want to thank the Greek government and parliament for their unwavering support for the European Union and the new treaty." However, the opposition parties in the Greek government have requested discussion in Parliament of the possibility of conducting a referendum on the treaty; that debate is set to begin on June 17.

The treaty has already been ratified by Hungary, Slovenia, Malta, France, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, Austria, Portugal, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Latvia, Lithuania, and the European Parliament. Voters in Ireland went to the polls today, the only country holding a referendum on the matter.

Kai-fu Lee: Developers will rule the next-generation Internet world

The 2008 Google Developer Day started its second day today at Beijing International Convention Center, China. "Cloud Computing" was chosen as its theme for this event, driving more discussions between several participating programmers on the applications of Internet APIs.

"The battle of [operating]

platforms comes to an end in the presence, 'The Internet' will be the final survivor in this battle. With revolutions and risen-up products from different web era, an interactive platform for developers will be more and more opened. In the past, we [the public] gained informations from mass media, but now, interactions from Internet users are more and more frequent and active than the past. I believe that the Internet will continuously play the greatest role, developers will lead the revolution of next-generation Internet era." —Kai-fu Lee, Founding President of Google China.

Since Google Gears, Android, and the Google App Engine was already discussed in Japan, Google China announced that they will cooperate with several local internet communities including MySpace, Tianya Club, and Xiaonei Web on an interactive platform - "OpenSocial" in China.

Canadian Government apologises for Residential Schools

Stephen Harper, Canada's Prime Minister, apologized on behalf of the Canadian Government for its role in the Indian Residential School System in front of Aboriginal Leaders, elders, and more than 1000 outside the Parliament Building. Harper proclaimed, "The treatment of children in Indian residential schools is a sad chapter in our history. Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country." This apology was seen at more than 30 event around the country, and broadcast live on CBC Newsworld and CTV Newsnet.

The residential school system was created based on the Gradual

Civilization Act (1857) and the Gradual Enfranchisement Act (1869), which assumed the superiority of British Ways, prompting the need for Aboriginals to become "civilized" by becoming English-speakers, Christians, and farmers. The funding of the schools was provided by the Indian Act (1876) and by the federal government department, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and operated with the support of churches, generally the Roman Catholic Church and the United Church of Canada.

In the 1920s, attendance became compulsory for all children aged 6 to 15, and families who refused to cooperate were at risk of having the children removed by the government, and the parents sent to prison. The school systematically tried to destroy the aboriginal language and way of life, raising the idea of cultural genocide. Students were forbidden to speak their native languages, even outside the classroom, as to install the English or French language (and as result, to "forget" their native language), punishable by unreasonably severe corporal punishment. Practicing non-Christian faiths was also punishable by corporal punishment.

In the late 1990s, allegations of sexual abuse, as well as several physical and psychological abuse, arose, leading to large monetary payments from the federal government and churches to former students. The government also established the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, providing \$350 million to fund community-based healing projects, and provided another \$40 million in 2005.

On February 13, 2008, Australian

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a similar apology in the Australian House of Parliament.

On June 21, 2008, Indian Residential School Museum of Canada is scheduled to open on Long Plain First Nation, near Portage La Prairie, Manitoba.

Scientists suggest scaring toads to limit population

Scientists from the Northern Australian region Queensland have said that the population of cane toads could be limited by scaring them. The toads are considered a pest in many parts of Australia.

The scientists have reported that scared tadpoles will transform into toads prematurely, leaving them undersized and weak. The intimidation has been found by putting a squashed, dead tadpole into a pool and observing that some of the chemical signals given off by the corpse scare tadpoles already in the pool. The result is the early metamorphosis, and a weaker population of cane toads.

Euro 2008: Portugal vs. Czech Republic

Czech Republic 1 – 3 Portugal

Portugal all but secured a spot on the quarter-finals of the UEFA Euro 2008 yesterday, defeating the Czechs 3-1. This is the team's second consecutive victory in the championship.

Portugal took an early lead in minute eight when Deco scored after two attempts. The score was equalled by the Czechs in minute 17 when Sionko headed in from a corner. Portugal then retook the lead when Ronaldo low-driven the ball into the goal after a pass from Deco. Regulation time ended, and three minutes were added, giving the Czechs a chance to equal the

score, but all hope was lost when Quaresma scored one minute later, after receiving a pass from Ronaldo.

Portugal, as the winner of Group A, will kick off the knockout stage by playing the runner up from Group B in the quarter-finals on June 19.

2008 Google Developer Day starts from Yokohama, Japan

2008 The 2nd-annual Google Developer Day started its tournament in Pasifico Yokohama, Japan as its first stage. According to Google, this programmer-based event is similar to Google I/O, the largest programming event which is only available in USA and held earlier on May 28 & 29 in San Francisco, California.

Takuya Oikawa, Software Engineer of Google Japan, analyzed the future trend on programming and redefined the "3C". "There are three key features to drive on the next generation programming, that is, 'Client' [user-oriented], 'Connectivity', and 'Cloud Computing'," stated Oikawa.

Fumitoshi Ukai, the Software Engineer of Google Japan, has pointed out the importance of Google App Engine, and performed a SWOT analysis using the Sichuan earthquake as an example, and said: "The failure or success of Cloud Computing will be determined by three critical factors - ability of offline computing, language support, and quotas of databases."

After the Japan Stage, 2008 Google Developer Day will be held in China, Taiwan, Australia, Mexico, and Brazil during the month of June. The Europe Tour of Google Developer Day will kick off from London, England on

September 16.

Four Boy Scouts killed in Iowa tornado

A major storm suspected to be a tornado has reportedly killed four Boy Scouts camping at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch in Little Sioux, Iowa. Roughly ninety-five Scouts aged thirteen to eighteen and twenty-five adult staff members were believed to be camping at the time the alarm was raised. Most of the scouts were from Omaha-Metro Area, including Omaha and Bellevue, Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa. It is believed that the scouts had as little as twelve minutes to seek shelter from the time the alarm began to the time the storm hit. Early reports stated that thirty to forty scouts had been injured, that number was later reduced to twenty.

A spokesman for the Boy Scouts of America's Mid American Council, the region in which the camp was situated, has stated that the storm activated sirens but she couldn't confirm whether the scouts were staying in tents or buildings.

The Scouts were participating in a training exercise at the 1,800 acre ranch roughly 40 miles northeast of Omaha. Julie Tack, a spokesperson for Iowa Homeland Security, stated that the camp was littered with debris and downed tree branches after being struck by a tornado at or around 7:00 PM Central Daylight Time. Tack went on to say that a search and rescue team had been deployed to the area.

Camp counselors have stated that they were aware of the possibilities that storm was coming and they had heard the tornado sirens going off. There was no underground shelter for the scouts, however they had shelters designated and

emergency plans had been discussed the first day of camp. Officials said most of the boys were on a hike when storms moved in.

A camp staff member said that many scouts were injured when a fireplace in one of the shelters collapsed. Most of the injured scouts were treated at hospitals in Sioux City and Missouri Valley, Iowa. Six scouts were brought to the Missouri Valley hospital, most treated for minor injuries and broken bones. One scout suffered a broken hip and was transferred to Creighton University Medical Center in Omaha.

Mercy Medical Center, in Sioux City, have reported two patients arriving by helicopter at 8:13 PM with a third arriving by ambulance. A fourth patient arrived later, again by helicopter. A spokesman for the hospital said the victims are all juveniles and all have serious injuries. Mercy does not expect to receive more camp victims. The names of the victims have not been released.

Residents evacuated after partial building collapse in Buffalo, New York

At least two homes have been evacuated, and 14 or more are on standby to evacuate in Buffalo, New York after a very large three-story building partially collapsed on the city's West Side.

According to the Buffalo Fire Department, the number four side of an old horse stable at 428 Jersey Street off of Richmond Avenue collapsed from the roof line half way down the side. Material from the building fell into the yards of at least three neighbouring houses. Some of the bricks landed inside the building, while some fell into the yards of

some houses behind homes on Richmond Avenue, leaving a 'V' shape.

"[The building] is well worth the designation" as a historical landmark, states Tim Tielman of the Buffalo Preservation Board. Tielman states that he will likely bring the incident before the Board as early as Thursday, June 12 to discuss the issue.

"We don't want to demolish it until it is talked about and we consider options," added Tielman.

So far there are no reports of injuries. Firefighters plan on getting an aerial shot to determine if the building is in danger of totally collapsing. A detail will remain on scene until at least Thursday afternoon.

The building was first owned by a company called White Bros. and was used as a stable for a farm which once covered the land around the building for several blocks. Servants and workers of the farm were housed inside resident quarters situated at the rear of the building.

The building, the current owner of which is not known, covers nearly a half block. Much of the building's sides are home to vines, and a variety of gardens are planted along the perimeter of the building. Residents state that they will be "very disappointed" to see the building be demolished.

Repairs on the building were ongoing. The building is believed to have been built in the mid-1800's.

Norwegian national assembly votes to allow same-sex marriage and adoption

The Norwegian national assembly

voted Wednesday to change the existing marriage and adoption laws. After debating for several hours, the vote resulted in a 84 to 41 majority in favour of the new law which allows homosexual couples to marry and adopt children.

For the past several weeks, there have been extensive debate over the change, with both sides staging demonstrations in most of the larger cities in Norway. The last time Norway changed the laws regarding marriage was in 1993, when gay and lesbian people were allowed to form partnership unions with similar rights as marriages. The existing law attracted criticism in the last few years for discriminating against homosexuals, as they were denied marriage, adoption, and the use of assisted reproductive technology.

The new law, as proposed, allows marriages between homosexuals, granting them the same rights to religious services in connection with their marriage, as well as the right to adopt children with the same requirements being applied as to heterosexuals. The new law also allows lesbian couples to use assisted reproductive technology.

The new law does not require The Church of Norway to marry gays or lesbians, but it allows ministers to perform this service if the national church council permits it.

Another part of the new proposal, which would have concealed the identity of sperm donors, failed to gain a majority during the vote. Citing the right for children to know their biological parents as more important, a majority of the representatives voted against this part of the proposal.

Wikipedia Current Events

More than 80 countries and international aid organisations meet in Paris to develop a strategy for delivering billions of dollars in aid to Afghanistan.

- The People's Republic of China and Taiwan begin their first formal talks in a decade on improving cross-strait relations.
- Irish voters go to the polls for the Twenty-eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland to enable ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon of the European Union.
- In *Boumediene v. Bush*, the U.S. Supreme Court holds that foreign terrorism suspects held at Guantánamo Bay have constitutional rights to challenge their detention there in US courts.
- Washington Capitals forward Alexander Ovechkin wins the Hart Memorial Trophy as most valuable player for the National Hockey League 2007-2008 season as well as the Art Ross Trophy for most points and the Rocket Richard Trophy for top goal scorer.

Today in History

- 1525 – Martin Luther married Katharina von Bora, against the celibacy discipline decreed by the Roman Catholic Church on priests.
- 1886 – King Ludwig II of Bavaria was found dead in Lake Starnberg near Munich under mysterious circumstances.
- 1898 – The Yukon Territory was formed in Canada, with Dawson chosen as its capital.
- 1966 – The *Miranda v. Arizona* landmark ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court established the Miranda warning, requiring law enforcement officials to advise a suspect in custody of his rights to remain silent and to obtain an

attorney.

1971 – The New York Times began to publish the Pentagon Papers, a 7,000-page top-secret United States Department of Defense history of the United States' political and military involvement in the Vietnam War.

Quote of the Day

So long as all is ordered for attack, and that alone, leaders will instinctively increase the number of enemies that they may give their followers something to do.
~ William Butler Yeats

Word of the Day

razzmatazz n

1. Ambiguous or meaningless language.
2. Empty and tiresome speculation.

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