



Top Stories

Israeli barrage of Gaza continues with strike on PM's office

Israel has continued its barrage of the Gaza Strip with an attack on the office of the Palestinian prime minister.

France beat Brazil 1-0 to take last semi-final spot

In a quarter-final rematch of the 1998 Fifa World Cup final France beat Brazil 1-0 to progress to the semi-finals, Saturday.

Featured story

Purpose of mysterious website Eon8 revealed

On July 1, 2006 at Midnight Eastern Daylight Time, the purpose of Eon8 was revealed, turning out to be an experiment on how the public reacts to a lack of information. Eon8, prior to the revelation, was a website counting down to July 1 created by a 23-year-old web designer from Florida only known as "Mike".

Wikipedia Current Events

•The Space Shuttle Discovery's launch were thrown in doubt, with a 3 inch crack found in the foam insulation of its external tank. The launch is scheduled for 2:38 PM ET Tuesday, which would be the first launch on the United States Independence Day. However, NASA decided to proceed with the launch despite the crack.

Wikipedia Current Events

- North Korea says that they will respond to any pre-emptive attack from the US with an "annihilating strike and a nuclear war."
- Greece is suspended from international football competition by FIFA due to Greek government interference in the sport.
- At least 34 people die during a lunchtime subway accident in Valencia, Spain when two cars of a train derail and overturn. Early reports indicate the train was travelling too fast.
- The government of Tajikistan renamed the second and the fourth highest peaks of the Pamir Mountains into the Independence Peak and Avicenna Peak, respectively.
- Israel rejects ultimatum to release 1000 prisoners by 6 A.M. Tuesday, in exchange for information on its kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit. Israeli defense minister calls Syrian president to "open his eyes, because he is responsible".
- Israel Defense Forces troops kill two Palestinian militants in the northern Gaza Strip, on their way to attack Israeli armoured vehicles.
- Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov calls for the immediate unconditional release of kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit.
- Hockey player Steve Yzerman announces his retirement after 22 years of play.

Ex-101st Airborne Division soldier charged in Iraq rape, killing

U.S. federal prosecutors have charged a former U.S. soldier who served in Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division with raping and murdering a young Iraqi female and killing her family. The age of the rape victim was unclear; a neighbor of the family said the rape victim was 14 although U.S. documents estimated her age to be 24. All of the victims bodies were found burned in an apparent coverup.

Steven D. Green, a 21-year-old former Army private first class appeared in a federal magistrate's courtroom in Charlotte Monday. He was recently discharged because of an alleged "personality disorder."

The murder and rape charges grew out of a military investigation involving up to five soldiers in the March rape and killing of the female in Iraq and three of her relatives, one of them a younger female believed to be about 5 years old.

Prosecutors said Green entered the home of a family of Iraqi civilians, where Green shot the three relatives, and he and another soldier raped the female and killed her. An accompanying affidavit with photos taken by Army investigators in March showed the burned body of "what appears to be a woman with blankets thrown over her upper torso."

FBI agents arrested Green on Friday and he is being held in Charlotte without bond pending a transfer to Louisville, Kentucky.

FBI special agent Gregor J. Ahlers said Green and three other soldiers from the 101st's 502nd Infantry Regiment were working a traffic checkpoint in Iraq when they conspired to rape a female who lived nearby.

According to the affidavit, the soldiers changed their clothes before going to the female's residence to avoid detection. Then Green took three members of the family "an adult male and female, and a girl estimated to be 5 years old " into a bedroom, after which shots were heard from inside the bedroom.

"Green came to the bedroom door and told everyone, 'I just killed them. All are dead,'" the affidavit claimed.

The affidavit is based on interviews conducted by the FBI and investigators at Fort Campbell with soldiers assigned to Green's platoon. One of the soldiers claims he witnessed another soldier and Green rape the female.

"After the rape, (the soldier) witnessed Green shoot the woman in the head two to three times," the affidavit said.

U.S. officials have previously said they believed the Iraqi family was killed in sectarian violence.

Teenager faces murder charges after throwing a brick at motorway

A 15-year-old, whose name has not been released for legal reasons, is in court charged with murder after he dropped an eight kilogram concrete block on a car

and killed the driver.

Christopher Currie was driving along Auckland's southern motorway in a Honda Civic car last August when the concrete block smashed through the windscreen killing him instantly.

"[the] accused stood on the over bridge and timed the release of the concrete block to hit a car passing underneath" prosecuter Aaron Perkins told the High Court. The accused was positioned so that the driver was unable to see them and take evasive action. They later ran from the scene of the crime and bragged to friends about it.

The defence says that the accused did not mean to murder anyone.

There were three other passengers in the car which the Crown is scheduled to call on to give evidence, along with 33 other witnesses.

Devon prison rooftop protest ends peacefully

A rooftop protest at a Devon (UK) jail has ended peacefully after almost 28 hours.

The protest, involving 10 inmates, at HMP Channings Wood started after prisoners complained their meals were being prepared by sex offenders.

The category C training prison in Newton Abbot, Devon presently holds 663 inmates, with units dedicated to sex offenders and drug offenders.

A Home Office spokesman said: "The rooftop protest at HMP Channings Wood has ended peacefully with no injuries to prisoners or prison staff."

The Prison Service has so far refused to confirm the extent of the damage done during the protest, but it is believed to run into thousands of pounds with glass being smashed and paving slabs being torn up.

Earlier on Monday afternoon three prisoners had already given up their protest, leaving ten remaining on the roof. They eventually came down at around 6:30pm (BST) after speaking with trained negotiators

The Prison Service has launched an internal enquiry into the protest.

U.S. Officials: U.S. soldiers plotted rape, murder

U.S. officials said on Saturday, "Allegations known so far are that two soldiers allegedly raped an Iraqi woman and then allegedly one of the soldiers may have killed four Iraqi civilians located within that residence -- the woman, two other adults and a child." An official also said that investigators believe that American soldiers spent almost a week planning the attack before they raped an Iraqi woman and then murdered her and her family.

Apparently the allegations surfaced when an enlisted soldier disclosed he had heard that soldiers from his unit might have taken part in a rape and murder in March.

Investigators then "followed up and they interviewed a second soldier who said, 'Yes, I heard something similar,' ... but in the version he had heard, that the soldier or soldiers had returned from the alleged crime with blood on their uniforms," the U.S. official said.

Capt. Ihsan Abdul-Rahman, a local Iraqi police official, said a report on March 13 alleged that American soldiers had killed the family in the Khasir Abyad district but that he did not relay that report to American forces.

Al-Jazeera gave extensive coverage to the rape and murder allegations and one of the U.S. forces officials told The Associated Press that gasoline or lighter fluid was used to burn the woman's body in a cover-up attempt.

The U.S. official said at least four soldiers are being investigated while two other U.S. officials said on Friday that five were under investigation with one already having been discharged for unspecified charges unrelated to the killings and was believed to have returned to the United States.

A U.S. military statement issued in Baghdad said that the army was investigating an incident in which soldiers "allegedly killed a family of four Iraqi civilians in their home in the area of Mahmudiyah, south of Baghdad. A preliminary inquiry conducted found sufficient information existed to recommend a criminal investigation into the incident," the military said, adding that the "CID investigation began on June 24, and is ongoing."

U.S. Major General James Thurman said: "We are all about values, we are about standards in our military and our soldiers are disciplined, and I know that our commanders are constantly reiterating those type of things."

The U.S. military is also investigating allegations that US marines killed 24 civilians, including 10 women and children, in the Euphrates valley town of

Haditha last year. In addition, two US soldiers were charged last week with voluntary manslaughter for the killing of an unarmed Iraqi civilian outside his home. And this month a sailor and seven marines were charged with premeditated murder, kidnapping, and other offenses for the killing of a reportedly handicapped Iraqi in the town of Hamdania near Baghdad in April.

Major General Thurman said soldiers under his command had recently participated in a "values training" program.

Bathurst, NSW house damaged after being hit by truck

A house in Eglinton, a village suburb of Bathurst in Central-Western New South Wales has been significantly damaged after being hit by a truck just before 3 p.m. today. It is not known if anyone was inside the house at the time the accident occurred. Police said no major injuries were sustained as a result of the accident.

The accident occurred in light rain and the road surface was moderately wet.

It is believed that the truck was traveling along Eleven Mile Drive, Eglinton when a Subaru Forester pulled into its path from a side street. The Subaru had been required to give way to the truck. The truck struck the Subaru, hitting it and pushing it down the road before losing control and hitting a house on the opposite side of the road.

The driver of the truck was trapped inside his vehicle for around 15 minutes before being released by rescue personnel, the driver of the Subaru was taken by ambulance to the Bathurst Base

Hospital to ensure they were not suffering any major injuries.

When the truck hit the house, a gas line was ruptured creating a hazard for rescue crews. The pipeline's operator - Agility disconnected the line after the truck driver was rescued. Police also requested that electricity to the house be disconnected.

It was not until 4:15 p.m. that approval was given for the truck to be pulled from the house. It is expected that engineers from Bathurst Regional Council will inspect the house to determine if it is still structurally safe.

While it is not unusual in Bathurst for trucks to hit homes, it is unusual for such an accident to occur at this location. Most accidents of this nature occur on the Great Western Highway, which intersects the city and is a freight gateway to the region.

Parts of New Jersey government stopped as budget fails to clear Legislature in time

Numerous non-essential state services have been shut down indefinitely from July 1. These include road work, the New Jersey Lottery, and the Motor Vehicle Commission, with Atlantic City casinos and racetracks (which require state monitoring) and public beaches and parks closing after the Fourth of July.

As a result of Article VIII, Section II, paragraph 2 of the New Jersey State Constitution, the state is required to determine all debts for "as far as can be ascertained or reasonably foreseen" and provide for them in a single budget act. As the 2005-2006 Fiscal Year for the state ended with June 31 and the 2006-2007 budget has not passed

the state is blocked from expending any money, also by VIII, II, 2. The current ascertainment shows the state ending up in the red by 4.5 billion USD.

The main cause of the problem is a furious deadlock between the Democratic majority in the New Jersey General Assembly, the lower house of the New Jersey Legislature, which is given the power of starting the budget, and the Democratic Governor of New Jersey Jon Corzine. The main concern in Corzine's plan to raise taxes, such as the sales tax. The Assembly majority dislikes this and some in the New Jersey Senate, which has the power to block the budget, also disagree with his measure.

Originally the racetracks would close with the state lottery, however a court order has kept them running past the 4th. The casinos are attempting to get a similar exemption. "Critical" services like the New Jersey State Police, the state's prisons, hospitals, and such will continue to operate without funding. All non-essential employees of the state were given leave from July 1 on.

Members of both houses of the Legislature have been kept in the capitol, Trenton, to help a speedy passage.

A similar situation occurred in Minnesota exactly one year ago as the Legislature failed to pass the budget before they were forced to adjourn by a hard-wired date in the state constitution.

Full-length open source movie -Boy Who Never Slept- is released online

Amateur filmmaker Solomon Rothman has released a full-length

open source movie called 'Boy Who Never Slept.'

The movie is offered under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5 license; this allows people to use, edit, or share the movie in any way (except commercially) as long as they credit the creators.

All of the raw unedited footage, including audio files, is offered under a Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 license; as long as the creators are credited, users can do whatever they want with the files privately or commercially.

The open source movie and original files are available for free download or streaming from a variety of sources, including direct downloading from the Internet Movie Archives, video distribution sites like Google video and Veoh, via file sharing networks like BitTorrent, and more. The full list is found on the official movie website.

The film centers on the life of an insomniac writer who meets a teenage girl online, and a friendship that grows into an unlikely love story wrapped in harsh reality. The movie deals with various issues, including the romanticization of love, age-related issues in relationships, like statutory rape (he's 23, and she's 16), and the idea of love in the online realm.

Rothman, a writer, amateur filmmaker and web designer, lives in the Los Angeles Area. He wrote, directed and produced the movie with his partner, A. Brown. Producing the movie for \$200 while they were in college, they used friends as actors and later sold the camera on eBay to recoup the expense.

Rothman has spoken about the importance of exploring new possibilities in filmmaking, especially for amateur filmmakers, "I believe that everyone has the ability to tell at least one good story and I wanted the world to see the power of the Internet Community as a distribution source for amateur filmmakers. I released "Boy Who Never Slept" as an open source movie to encourage new filmmakers and to reach the largest possible audience on a budget absolutely anyone could afford."

The movie is unrated; it explores adult themes and contains graphic language and brief nudity.

Today in History

1187 - Saladin defeated Guy of Lusignan, King of Jerusalem, at the Battle of Hattin and captured the True Cross.

1776 - The Continental Congress of the Thirteen Colonies in British North America approved a Declaration of Independence.

1865 - Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll was first published.

1894 - The Republic of Hawai'i was proclaimed at Ali'iolani Hale in Honolulu, with Sanford B. Dole as the first president.

1976 - Operation Yonatan: Israeli commandos raided Uganda's Entebbe International Airport to free hostages taken by PLO and RAF hijackers.

July 04 is Independence Day in the United States, Filipino-American Friendship Day in the Philippines

Quote of the Day

"It contributes greatly towards a man's moral and intellectual health, to be brought into habits of companionship with individuals unlike himself, who care little for his pursuits, and whose sphere and abilities he must go out of himself to appreciate."
~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

Word of the Day

ululate; v

1. To howl loudly or prolongedly in lamentation or joy.

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