

Top Stories

Many dead in Egyptian resort blasts



A string of at least four, possibly seven explosions in Egyptian resort towns in the Sinai early Saturday morning has left at least 30 people dead and over 100 more wounded.

Bomb explodes on busy Beirut street



A bomb exploded on a busy, restaurant lined road, just 2 hours after U.S. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice left Beirut today.

Small plane crashes in central Berlin



A small single-engine ultralight aircraft has crashed on a lawn between the Reichstag building, the seat of the German parliament, and the Bundeskanzleramt, the seat of the chancellor, in Berlin. The aircraft crashed at approximately 2000CET. Amateur footage aired by the ARD shows the plane rapidly descending before crashing on the lawn and bursting into flames. Witnesses at the scene were unconvulsive about the heading of the plane. Some stated that it was targeting the Reichstag while others said that the pilot tried to steer away from it. He was killed in the crash. People near the scene attempted to fight the fire with hand-held extinguishers, however the aircraft was mostly destroyed by the time the emergency services arrived.

The German authorities have ruled out terrorism. German Air-traffic control suggested that the pilot may have intended to commit suicide.

reportedly occurred outside hotels. A witness told the AP that the four-star hotel Ghazala Gardens has "completely burned down".



The Ghazala-Gardens, one of the targeted hotels

In October of last year, 34 people were killed in explosions in nearby resort areas. Officials blamed those attacks on violence related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Local police are saying at least 30 people have been killed and more than 100 were wounded.

The BBC is reporting that at least 49 people have been killed.

The Reuters news agency quotes Doctors at the scene saying many of the injured are in critical condition.

Reuters also indicates that the explosions may have been caused by car-bombs.

Featured story

U.S. House votes to renew expiring Patriot Act



The U.S. House of Representatives voted Thursday night to renew several provisions of the

Patriot Act which was established after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The final vote was 257-171, this now makes 14 of the 16 original provisions of the Patriot Act permanent and will extend the other two for an additional 10 years.

Multiple blasts reported in Egyptian resorts



A string of at least four, possibly seven explosions in Egyptian resort towns in the Sinai early Saturday morning has left at least 30 people dead and over 100 more wounded.

One blast occurred at 1am in Sharm el-Sheikh, apparently in the market area, and two others about 15 minutes later in Naama Bay, a nearby resort. The explosions

Bomb explodes on busy Beirut street



A bomb exploded on a busy, restaurant lined road, just 2 hours after U.S. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice left Beirut today.

Rice had made a surprise visit to pledge her support for Lebanon after the Syrian troop pull-out earlier this year

The blast went off in front of a restaurant on Monot Street and damaged three cars, a security official told The Associated Press.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Rep. Barbara Lee introduced a Congressional Resolution of Inquiry which, if passed, will require the White House and the U.S. State Department to "transmit all information relating to communication with officials of the United Kingdom between January 1, 2002, and October 16, 2002, relating to the policy of the United States with respect to Iraq."
- About 25 people are killed and 100 injured in a series of car bombs in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh at about 0100 local time (2200 UTC Friday).

The bomb is believed to of been placed either under or inside a parked car on a sideroad close to the privately run Saint Joseph University on the edge of Christian east Beirut. LBC Television initially said that 6 people had been injured, mostly by flying glass and that the car belonged to local resident Joseph Nadim. The estimate on the number of injured has since risen to 12.

This information comes before an official announcement from any government agency.

Major police operation in west London

A major Police Operation took place this afternoon in west London. The operation is centred around an Internet Cafe near Harrow Road. The BBC reports that armed police and a police dog have been deployed.

Houst Monfaradi, a witness at the scene, said "There's what looks like a bomb disposal-type vehicle, armoured, and there's several armed officers around it," "From my window I can see 20 doors down what looks like a bomb disposal type vehicle, it's armoured and there are several armed officers around it...About half an hour ago police officers ran up my road telling everyone to get inside their houses...Anyone who even puts their head out, they scream 'get inside your house'...About 15 minutes ago I saw a little remote controlled vehicle...It went round to the left and then it disappeared from my view...It was followed by a couple of armed officers with shields."

Man arrested in connection with yesterday's London bomb attempts



Suspect running from point of bomb attempt.

Scotland Yard says the arrest took place at a residence in Stockwell, south London and was "part of the investigation into the incidents of July 21st." The man is being held at Paddington Green police station under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Officials will not comment on whether the suspect was one of the four whose pictures were released after being caught by CCTV camera's.

Just after 6pm BST police arrested a man at the Snow Hill rail station in Birmingham under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act. The station was evacuated and cordoned off because of two suspicious suitcases found at the station. The suitcases were examined and later found not to contain explosives. The BBC reports that the man who was arrested will not be facing charges.

Snow Hill station re-opened at around 8pm BST.

Metropolitan Police release photographs of July 21st suspects

The London Metropolitan Police have released photographs of suspects wanted for the attempted bombing of three Tube trains and one bus in London on the 21st of July.

Anyone who sees any of these men should call 999 immediately. Anyone with further information on the suspects or who knows their whereabouts should call the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 321.



Oval Underground suspect.



Warren Street suspect.



Westbourn Park suspect.



Route 26 bus suspect.

MG Rover sold to Nanjing Auto



A popular MG model: The TF.

Administrators PriceWaterHouseCoopers (PWC) have announced that the British car company MG Rover and its engine manufacturer Powertrain Ltd has been sold to Chinese company Nanjing Automobile for an unknown sum of money. The company beat bids from Shanghai Automotive (SAIC), despite being the smaller of the two.

MG Rover collapsed this Spring, after struggling to make a profit for several years.

SAIC had tried to buy only the engine plant and then transfer it to China, but in June Nanjing Automobile approached PWC with a combined bid for both the car manufacturing company and Powertrain. This Monday SAIC bid for both but the offer was inferior to Nanjing's.

Nanjing has indicated that it too will move the engine production plant to China, along with some car manufacturing. However it also intends to continue building cars in Britain, and establish an engineering research and design centre there in an effort to expand its sales globally. Nanjing intends to start hiring at once.

Fisherman in Virginia charged with killing alligator



A Virginia man who allegedly clubbed to death an alligator he hooked while fishing, is under consideration by the U.S. Attorney's Office in Richmond for destroying a "threatened species". But according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service web page of delisted species on the Endangered Species Act, the American alligator was removed from the list in 1987.

The reason cited for its removal was the species had recovered.

Fisherman Max Belle reportedly used an oar to bring into submission the 44-inch-long, 9 pound creature when he brought it to the boat. Belle was fishing on the Chesterfield County Falling Creek Reservoir, where the alligator was first sighted in May.

An alligator is not native species in the mid-Atlantic region of the USA, and it is thought that it was released by someone who once kept it as a pet. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) employee attempts to capture and relocate it were unsuccessful. The native habitat of the alligator is in regions of the Southeast, starting from the Carolinas and moving southwards to Texas.

The fisherman's attorney, David P. Baugh, said area residents surrounding the reservoir are happy the alligator is gone. Referring to the support for Mr. Belle of reservoir neighbors, he said, "... next time they [USDA] will ask to hire Mr. Belle to come catch the alligator." His client received a court summons Thursday and is prepared to pay a \$300 fine and \$50 court costs if he is found guilty of the federal misdemeanor crime.

It took investigators two weeks to positively identify the toothy crocodile as an American alligator, (*Alligator mississippiensis*).

U.S. Rep. Tom Tancredo clarifies 'nuke Mecca' comments

Representative Tom Tancredo (R-CO) has clarified his earlier statement that "you could take out their holy sites," in the event of a nuclear attack upon the U.S. by Islamic terrorists. Rep. Tancredo has refused to make any apologies, saying "When we bombed Hiroshima, when we bombed Dresden, we punished a lot of people who were not necessarily (guilty). Not every German was a member of the Nazi Party. You do things in war that are ugly." However, Tancredo emphasized that he was speaking hypothetically and not necessarily suggesting policy.

The remarks, made in a July 15th radio interview, hosted by Pat Campbell of WFLA in Orlando, Florida, have drawn support from conservatives groups such as Northeast Intelligence Network and Free

Republic, and have offended the American Muslim community. In the interview, Tancredo discussed his request for information from the Justice Department regarding the claim of evangelical Christian journalist Joseph Farah that al-Qaida has smuggled multiple nuclear weapons into the U.S. mp3 file alt.

Armed police shoot man dead on London Underground

London Metropolitan Police have confirmed that armed police officers shot and killed a man at Stockwell Underground station just after 10 a.m. BST this morning. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Police have revealed that the shooting was directly connected with yesterday's attempted attacks, but that the man was not one of the four bombing suspects. Sir Ian Blair, the Commissioner of London Metropolitan, told a press conference this afternoon that the man was challenged by police officers but refused to follow instructions. Police sources have indicated that the man who was shot had been followed covertly, and after he was confronted he ran off and was followed on foot by up to twenty police from street level into the Underground station.

London Underground suspended some services on the Victoria and Northern lines, citing a request by the police. The Northern line was then completely suspended for a short time mid-afternoon after a security alert at Mornington Crescent Station.

The London Ambulance Service have dispatched ambulances and the air ambulance to the scene. The Metropolitan Police have cordoned off a 200 metre perimeter around the station.

Passenger Briony Coetsee said: "We were on the Tube and then we suddenly heard someone say 'get out, get out' and then we heard gunshots."

Mark Whitby, who was sitting just five metres from the incident, told BBC News: "I saw an Asian [of South Asian origin] guy run onto the train hotly pursued by three plain-clothes police officers. One of them was carrying a black handgun - it looked like an automatic - they pushed him to the floor, bundled on top of him and unloaded five shots into him. He was wearing a large

coat, unusual for the time of year." Reports from ITV News suggested that the person shot was another suicide bomber. Sky News (web) reported the same, [1] but later reported that "initial examinations [...] did not discover any explosives on the suspect." [2]

Meanwhile, The Times reported that police believed the man to be one of the would-be bombers who escaped after the 21 July attacks. BBC News reported that the man had been under surveillance as a result of CCTV footage from the 21 July crime scenes.

BBC in London alerts: At-a-glance reports: Police say the man shot at Stockwell had been followed by surveillance officers because he had emerged from a house linked to the investigation into Thursday's blasts.

U.S. House votes to renew expiring Patriot Act



President Bush in Baltimore: "We're constantly monitoring intelligence reports. And part of our job is to collect intelligence, look at it, analyze it, and if it's a problem that relates to a security system at a local level, we'll let you know as quickly as possible." 2005-07-20

The U.S. House of Representatives voted Thursday night to renew several provisions of the Patriot Act which was established after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The final vote was 257-171, this now makes 14 of the 16 original provisions of the Patriot Act permanent and will extend the other two for an additional 10 years.

The two provisions which were only extended for 10 years have been called unconstitutional by some civil liberties advocates as well as several law makers from both the right and left. They say that the provisions give law enforcement "sweeping powers" that could be abused. However, President Bush as well as several Republican and Democratic members of Congress say that the provisions have been used judiciously and provide key tools

needed to fight terrorism.

House lawmakers widely viewed the uncontroversial provisions of the Patriot Act as breaking down "the wall" that was a barrier to communication and cooperation between FBI and CIA agencies. The two provisions which received 10-year extensions were concerned with allowing roving wiretaps, and the other with allowing searches of library and medical records. In a pre-vote Q & A, U.S. federal attorney Paul McNulty explained that a federal search in those intrusive situations require independent federal judge approval, which is granted under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in Section 215.

The U.S. Senate's reauthorization of the Patriot Act has differences from the House version. Both bills head to conference committee to be combined into one cohesive law.

In a Wednesday morning address to a gathering at the Port of Baltimore, in Maryland, President Bush called on congress for passage of the act: "The Patriot Act is expected to expire, but the terrorist threats will not expire. I expect, and the American people expect, the United States Congress and the United States Senate to renew the Patriot Act, without weakening our ability to fight terror, and they need to get that bill to my desk soon." The sunset provision of the act is due take effect at the end of this year, in which case the act would expire.

Rep. Barbara Lee calls for U.S. Congress probe into Iraq War planning

Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), co-chairwoman of the Out of Iraq Caucus and a member of the International Affairs Committee, along with 26 co-sponsors, proposed yesterday a Resolution of Inquiry in the House of Representatives which, if passed, will require the White House and the State Department to "transmit all information relating to communication with officials of the United Kingdom between January 1, 2002, and October 16, 2002, relating to the policy of the United States with respect to Iraq." The resolution, was submitted in the House of Representatives and referred to the U.S. House Committee on International Relations.



Barbara Lee

The resolution comes in response to questions that have been raised about the handling of pre-war intelligence by the Bush administration, and the planning and execution of the Iraq war. "We would like to see a member of Congress look into whether or not the president committed impeachable offenses," said John Bonifaz, a constitutional lawyer. "We've been having that discussion with a number of offices."

Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary Minority leader, recently met with John Bonifaz and representatives. But Conyers is reluctant to take such a bold step just yet. "My inclination at this time is not to do something like that," Conyers said, although he noted that he wanted to press for an investigation in other ways, including sending committee investigators to London.

Earlier this month, Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) said at a forum held by Conyers "If you read the record of the writing of the Constitution, 'high crimes and misdemeanors' had a very particular meaning at the time of the drafting of the Constitution. It certainly didn't mean lying about sex, but it might well mean lying to the Congress about a large public purpose such as Iraq.", referring to Republican's filing of such a resolution in 1998 in an effort to remove Bill Clinton from office.

Rep. Barbara Lee's resolution of inquiry is a less-drastring parliamentary maneuver that would ask the administration to provide more information related to the claims in classified British memos that suggest that pre-war intelligence in Iraq was "fixed" in order to justify the invasion. The Resolution of Inquiry is a privileged resolution, which means that if it is not acted on in 14 legislative days after it is introduced, the member of Congress who introduced it is entitled to request that it be brought to the House floor for a vote. The committee may

take the matter up right away, and could vote it down before the August recess. If they do not, they will be required to take it up by September 16th.

Prime Minister, Police chief urge London to 'get moving again'

British Prime Minister Tony Blair has made a statement at 10 Downing Street saying that the explosions in London today were "to scare people and to frighten them, to make them anxious and worried".

He broke off his meeting with Australian Prime Minister John Howard to make the statement, with Howard alongside him.

Blair went on to say how the "police have done their very best, and the security services too, in the situation, and I think we have just got to react calmly and continue with our business as much as possible as normal".

London Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair also released a statement urging Londoners to "get moving again", stating that the sites of the four explosions were secure and the situation was under control.

Three tube lines remain closed: the Victoria, Northern and Hammersmith & City Lines. The Bakerloo line is suspended between Paddington to Piccadilly Circus. Replacement shuttle bus services are running.

Police are appealing to anyone who may have photos or mobile phone images from any of the incident scenes, either at the time of the incident or shortly before, to send them online to: www.police.uk.

Chinese yuan revalued against dollar



The government of China has decided to stop its currency peg to the U.S. dollar. The country will revalue its currency, the yuan, for the first time in a decade. This comes after international pressure from Western

countries, especially from the United States. The yuan will now be linked to a variety of different currencies.

The People's Bank of China has announced a 2.1% revaluation increase which will allow the yuan to fluctuate +/- 0.3 yuan in daily trading. This means, like other currencies, that closing prices one day become opening prices the next day.

The U.S. government has been pressuring China to revalue its currency since China joined the WTO. The U.S. said that China has kept the yuan up to 40% under its real value to increase exports, thus giving China an unfair advantage against western industrial competitors as well as industry in developing nations.

Since the announcement the yuan has strengthened to 8.11 yuan to the US dollar instead of 8.28 as it has been for the last ten years. This means the yuan is more expensive and that Chinese goods will become more expensive in western countries.

Economic growth in China might also slow down, but it has been soaring for the last several years. This could have serious consequences in China, but a People's Bank of China person has said that the exchange rate will be "basically stable".

China linked the yuan to the dollar in 1997 during the major economic crisis in Asia. This has provided the stability which has allowed the Chinese economy to grow over the last ten years. This move will make China vulnerable to future financial fluctuations.

This move could also mean that the US dollar would fall if China switches from holding dollars to holding for example the euro or other strong currencies.

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Today in History

1926 - Fox Film Corporation bought the patents of the Movietone sound system for recording sound onto film.

1952 - Farouk of Egypt abdicated after a coup d'état.

1962 - Telstar relayed the first live transatlantic television signal.

1967 - The 12th Street Riot began in the predominantly African American inner city area of Detroit, Michigan.

1983 - Air Canada flight 143, the "Gimli Glider", crash-landed in Gimli, Manitoba without loss of life.

Quote of the Day

"The private detective of fiction is a fantastic creation who acts and speaks like a real man. He can be completely realistic in every sense but one, that one sense being that in life as we know it such a man would not be a private detective." ~ Raymond Chandler

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