



Top Stories

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Featured story

Man takes armoured vehicle on rampage through Western Sydney

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Wikipedia Current Events

- At least 24 Pakistani soldiers are killed by a suicide attack by militants on a convoy in Waziristan near the Afghanistan border.
- Ten Sri Lankan soldiers die in fighting the Tamil Tigers in the Vavuniya district of northern Sri Lanka.
- The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles settles sexual abuse claims against its clergy at a cost of \$ 600 million.
- Iranian state radio reports that a

Wikipedia Current Events

South Korean flagged ship has sunk in the Sea of Oman off the coast of Iran with 13 crew members missing.

•The President of Russia Vladimir Putin signs a decree suspending Russia's participation in the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) pact.

•A shipment of fuel arrives in North Korea as part of an agreement to end its nuclear program. International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors are monitoring the shutdown of the Yongbyon reactor. North Korea later advises that it has shut the reactor down.

•The Australian Federal Police charge Dr. Mohamed Haneef with "providing support to a terrorist organization" in relation to the 2007 Glasgow International Airport attack and the 2007 London car bombs.

•The Royal Malaysian Police obtain a remand order to hold Nathaniel Tan for four days in connection to an investigation of a violation of section 8 of the Official Secrets Act, which pertains to "wrongful communication" of an official secret.

Man takes armoured vehicle on rampage through Western Sydney

Police have arrested and charged a 45 year-old man from Dharruk in Western Sydney after he went on a 90 minute rampage throughout Western Sydney in a armoured

personnel carrier. It is believed that the APC was privately-owned and was recently restored.

The man gained attention of the police shortly after 2 a.m. AEST when he was spotted destroying an electricity substation in Minchinbury. The man then led police on a rampage through Mt Druitt, Dharruk, Emerton, Glendenning and Plumpton where he brought down six mobile phone towers and relay sheds.

The rampage ended in Dean Park after the APC stalled as it was being driven towards another mobile phone tower. Police moved in and arrested the vehicle's driver.

Chief Inspector Guy Haberly from Mount Druitt Police said the man destroyed mobile phone towers by "crashing through the perimeter fence and colliding with structures causing significant damage".

The man was reportedly charged with break, enter and steal; predatory driving; six counts of malicious damage; possession of a prohibited drug; use of a weapon to avoid apprehension and driving in a dangerous manner. Police refused the man bail.

Fast evolution observed in butterflies

Scientists reported that they had documented very fast evolution in the butterfly species *Hypolimnys bolina*. After infection by *Wolbachia*, the fraction of the population that was male dropped drastically to about 1% of the total

population. However, after approximately ten generations (about a year) the male population had rebounded to about 39% of the overall population.

In the case of *H. bolina*, infected females were unable to have male offspring since the male embryos died early on. However, a gene arose which suppressed *Wolbachia*'s ability to kill the male offspring, and this gene spread rapidly through the natural *H. bolina* population.

At this time, it is unknown if the novel gene was a mutation or a pre-existing gene. However, researchers said that regardless, the findings constituted strong evidence that parasites can drive and substantially alter evolution. The research was performed by scientists at the University of Berkeley lead by Sylvain Charlat, a post-doc at Berkeley.

Wolbachia is a bacterium that is very effective at jumping from species to species, generally infecting arthropods such as insects. Since the bacterium resides in the cytoplasm of cells, males cannot pass *Wolbachia* onto their offspring because sperms only pass on their nucleus with the DNA, but females can. *Wolbachia* has thus adapted a number of strategies, such as killing male embryos of infected females or preventing infected males from reproducing with uninfected females.

Wolbachia is dangerous to hosts because it is able to easily jump species barriers and so has little reason to restrain itself -if an infectious organism kills it's host, it generally dies along with it. The bacterium is believed to be responsible for some extinction events as well as some speciation

events.

Reports: Bomb threats close 14 supermarkets in UK

Authorities have closed at least 14 Tesco supermarkets located in Lancashire, Suffolk, Dyfed Powys, Fife, Leicestershire, Humberside, West Mercia, West Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Strathclyde and London in the United Kingdom after receiving a security alert.

Witnesses say that authorities received a bomb threat and that the stores' car parks have been blocked off by police.

"Police came and told us it had received a bomb threat. They suggested we may want to close, but our manager has kept us open," said an unnamed worker at a shop near a Tesco in Barrhead, East Renfrewshire.

"Police are investigating a series of incidents in a number of locations across the country involving Tesco stores. Tesco is working with the police following a series of incidents. These stores have been temporarily closed as a precaution for public safety," said a police officer with the Hertfordshire police department. The police are treating their enquiries as a "criminal investigation."

It is not known why the shops were closed, but authorities have stated that a matter of public safety caused authorities to close the stores. No injuries are reported and police say they will remain at the stores until further notice.

Tour de France: Linus Gerdemann wins stage 7

Linus Gerdemann of Germany took a large lead up the Col de la Colombière and has won stage 7 of the 2007 Tour de France.

Gerdemann won by 3:38 over the chasing peleton and took over the yellow jersey from Fabian Cancellara of Switzerland. As a young rider, Gerdemann also gets the white jersey. Iñigo Landaluze was the only one close to Gerdemann and took second.

All the big names, thought to have a chance of winning the Tour, appeared to be in the peloton. This includes injured teammates Alexandre Vinokourov and Andreas Klöden.

Óscar Freire of Spain withdrew ahead of today's stage with back problems.

Creationist who threatened biologists threatened others at university

The Young Earth Creationist who sent threatening emails and letters to biologists at the University of Colorado at Boulder also sent threatening letters to the University chancellor G.P. Peterson as well as the vice-chancellor of undergraduate education and others.

The man who had sent the threats has been identified as Menacher "Michael" Korn, who was an Orthodox Jew before becoming Messianic Jew and who now self-identifies as Christian. (Messianic Jews are people who claim to be practitioners of Judaism who believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. Judaism and mainstream Christianity consider them to be Christians and generally not practicing Judaism). Claimed excerpts of the threats were posted on The Panda's Thumb, a biology blog that focuses on "the claims of the antievolution movement".

Among other statements, Korn compared evolutionary biologists

to child molesters and discussed killing the "enemies of Christian society" who are "terrorists against America". A spokesperson for Colorado University said that the excerpts were "consistent" with the threats but refused to confirm if they were actual excerpts. Korn had apparently distributed fliers on campus before and harassed professors however over the last few days the threats had become more extreme.

Australian police charge Indian doctor over failed UK bombings

Indian doctor Mohammed Haneef has been formally charged in Brisbane by the Australian Federal Police after being held without charge for the past 12 days in connection with the failed Glasgow Airport and London car bombings.

Dr Haneef, a distant cousin of Kafeel and Sabeel Ahmed who are accused of plotting the attacks provided Sabeel with a SIM card. It is alleged that UK police found the card in the possession of Mr Ahmed when he was arrested and informed Australian authorities.

During a bail hearing, the AFP claimed that Haneef had given his SIM card to the Ahmed brothers when he left the UK in July, 2006. It is alleged that he also shared a house in Liverpool with his cousins for up to 2 two years before moving to Australia. Police opposed bail for Dr Haneef, however the magistrate has reserved her decision until Monday due to the large amount of paperwork involved in the case. Dr Haneef remains in custody.

Speaking at a news conference in Canberra, AFP Chief Mick Keelty told reporters that Haneef had been reckless in giving his cousins a SIM Card. He further claimed that the "allegation involves

recklessness rather than intention".

Dr Haneef was arrested on July 2 at Brisbane International Airport where it is alleged that he was trying to leave Australia for India on a one-way ticket. He claims that he was going to visit his wife and newborn daughter although police have openly stated they do not accept Haneef's explanation. Up until his arrest, Dr Haneef had been working at the Gold Coast Hospital.

Under Australian counter-terrorism laws, Dr Haneef faces a maximum penalty of 15 years imprisonment if convicted.

Rural New Zealand crash leaves one child dead

A 12-year-old girl has died after the car they were travelling in slipped on ice and rolled off the side of the road near Darfield, Canterbury.

A Westpac Rescue Helicopter was also at the scene to offer services and help. Two were taken to hospital for a check up.

State highway 77 was closed while the scene was cleared up, creating a detour along Zigzag road. It reopened at 5.00 p.m. (NZST).

AFC Asian Cup: Iraq shock Australia, Japan overcome UAE

Iraq has defeated Australia 3-1 in their 2007 AFC Asian Cup Group A match at the Rajamangala Stadium, Bangkok, Thailand.

Iraq took the lead after twenty-three minutes when midfielder Nashat Akram scored. He curled in a free kick from around thirty yards out, and Salih al Sadwn rushed towards Australian goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer. Al Sadwn's presence sufficiently

distracted Schwarzer, who dived the wrong way.

The score remained at 1-0 until half time. Two minutes after the break, Australia equalised through striker Mark Viduka. The Australian captain managed to head a curling cross by midfielder Brett Emerton back across Iraqi Noor Hassan's goal and into the top corner.

However, Iraq scored twice to win the match, the former through a defensive error by Australia. Hawar Mulla Mohammed was played through with a lovely ball from a teammate, who had attracted the Australian central defence out-of-position. Mohammed slotted the ball home from 15 yards to re-take the lead.

Iraq sealed the three Group A points when Karrar Jassim Mohammed scored in the eighty-sixth minute. He managed to get on the end of a deflected shot and calmly tap the ball into an empty net, after goalkeeper Schwarzer had dived to defend the initial shot.

The win puts Iraq on equal-top of the group with hosts Thailand. If Iraq defeats or draws with Oman in their final Group A encounter, they will progress through to the quarter-final stage. Australia must defeat Thailand to remain any chance of progressing through to the next stage.

In the event that Australia win (ie. are on four points) and Iraq win or draw (ie. are on seven or five points), Australia will progress through to the next stage on head-to-head rather than Thailand despite having a possibly-worse goal difference. Goal difference (goals for minus goals against) is only used to separate two teams if they drew in their head-to-head

match in the group stage.

If Iraq lose to Oman and Australia win, all four teams will end up on four points. It is unclear how the head-to-head rule will be applied by the AFC in this situation, and it is probable that goal difference will be used.

In Group B, Japan defeated United Arab Emirates 3-1 at the My Dinh National Stadium, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Defending champions Japan took the lead when Naohiro Takahara scored after twenty-two minutes. Takahara doubled their advantage five minutes later when he sent a lovely volley into the right-hand side of the net after twenty-seven minutes, leaving Emirates goalkeeper Majed Maqdemi stranded.

Shunsuke Nakamura made it 3-0 before half time when he converted a penalty kick awarded to Japan on forty-two minutes. The Emirates scored a goal after sixty-six minutes through Saeed Alkas, but no comeback eventuated and the final score was 3-1 top Japan.

It leaves Japan equal on top of the Group B table with Vietnam on two points, with the teams locked on four points each. The winner of the match will take top spot in the group. In the event that the Japan-Vietnam match is drawn, both teams have a goal difference of +2. However, Japan have scored one more goal than Vietnam, and will take top spot in the group on that basis.

Qatar, the other team in Group B, must win against UAE and hope for a winner in the Japan-Vietnam match to progress, or else defeat the Emirates by three goals or more. Qatar drew both matches with Japan and Vietnam, meaning

it will come down to goal difference if two sides are equal on four points. The UAE cannot reach the quarter-finals stage.

Political pundits debate Fred Thompson's younger wife

Political analysts widely regard Fred Thompson as a potential, if not likely, candidate in the United States presidential election in 2008. Thompson is a lawyer, lobbyist, character actor and former Republican Senator for Tennessee now residing in McLean, Virginia near Washington D.C.

A recent article in The New York Times (NYT) labelled his wife, Jeri Kehn Thompson as a "trophy wife" and a potential liability in the 2008 race. The NYT article described her as having "youthfulness, permanent tan and bleached blonde hair" and wonders if "so-called values voters" would "accept this union."

Thompson and Kehn, married in June 2002, when he was 60 years old and she 35.

Television commentator and former Republican congressman Joe Scarborough compared Kehn to a stripper and asked if "she works the pole."

According to the Associated Press, "trophy wife" originally "meant the second (or third) wife of a corporate titan, a woman who was younger, beautiful and — equally important — accomplished in her own right."

ABC News says that the current definition of "trophy wife" suggests Donald Trump's ex-wife Marla Maples and the late Anna Nicole Smith as examples.

However, ABC News also questions whether Kehn fits this definition.

"Though she's blond, beautiful and nearly 25 years younger than her husband, Kehn Thompson, a political media consultant who previously worked for the Senate Republican Conference and a prestigious Washington law firm, doesn't appear to fit the typical description," wrote Emily Friedman.

Karen O'Connor, a political scientist and the director of the Women & Politics Institute at American University, said Thompson may lose support from Republican women, a group he needs. It may also make it difficult to gain the support of the "value voters", who already looking with skepticism when it was revealed he lobbied for an abortion-rights group.

"You have a situation where a candidate happens to have an attractive wife, therefore it's open season for smutty thoughts and lowbrow humor, and no concern for the fact that this is a wife and mother, a professional woman?" said Mark Corallo, a former Justice Department official who is a consultant and the chief media adviser to the Thompson campaign. "One picture on the Internet and all of a sudden she's reduced to being a bimbo?"

Two teenagers charged in alleged school attack plot

Two Long Island, New York teenagers, aged fifteen and seventeen, have been charged for their alleged involvement in a suspected plot to attack their school next April, on the ninth anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting massacre.

The plot was uncovered when the fifteen-year-old suspect lost his journal at the McDonalds restaurant where he worked. The journal was found by a fellow

classmate of the teenagers' school, who quickly turned it over to school officials.

The journal is alleged to have outlined the teenagers' plan to attack the school with guns and home-made bombs. The fifteen year old suspects' home and computers were searched and evidence was allegedly collected that he tried to purchase black powder explosives and machine guns over the Internet.

A video was also found in which the same teenager allegedly names some students and staff he would like to attack at the school. The seventeen-year-old who was also arrested was allegedly planning to aid in the attack on the school.

The two teens were arrested and held in Long Island jail on misdemeanor conspiracy which is punishable by up to one year in prison. The fifteen-year-old will appear in juvenile court on Friday and the seventeen-year-old suspect is expected to plead not guilty at a hearing.

Bounty for Osama bin Laden doubled

The United States Senate has voted to double the bounty placed on the capture or death of alleged al Qaeda mastermind Osama bin Laden.

The Senate approved the bounty increase, which now sits at US\$50 million, by an 87-1 vote on Friday.

It follows a series of reports which suggest that the group of terrorists behind the September 11 that hit New York and Washington were rebuilding its capacity to execute terrorist plots.

UN: New leads in Hariri murder investigation

A United Nations report has indicated that investigations into the death of former Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafiq Hariri, have identified a number of possible suspects.

Hariri was assassinated on February 14, 2005. Explosives equivalent to approximately 300 kg of TNT were detonated as his motorcade drove past the St George Hotel in the Lebanese capital, Beirut.

The UN team, which is headed by Belgian prosecutor Serge Brammertz, also said in its' report that the deteriorating political situation in Lebanon is likely to adversely effect the investigation as safety and other issues require extra attention.

Today in History

1410 – The Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania defeated the Monastic State of the Teutonic Knights in the Battle of Grunwald, the decisive engagement of the Polish-Lithuanian-Teutonic War.

1685 – James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, was executed for his role in the Monmouth Rebellion, an attempt to overthrow the King James II of England.

1799 – French soldiers uncovered the Rosetta Stone in the Egyptian port city of Rashid.

1823 – A fire destroyed the ancient Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls in Rome. The church would later be restored by 1840.

1974 – Greek-sponsored nationalists overthrew Archbishop Makarios, President of Cyprus, in a coup d'état and replaced him with Nikos Sampson.

Quote of the Day

Love is the extremely difficult realisation that something other than oneself is real. Love, and so art and morals, is the discovery of reality. ~ Iris Murdoch

Word of the Day

coy; adj

1. Pretending shyness or modesty.
2. (archaic) Quiet, reserved, modest.

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