



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

Surprise demolition of partially collapsed building in Buffalo, New York met with opposition

Wikinews has learned that, in a surprising turn of events, the city of Buffalo located in New York, has ordered and begun an emergency demolition on a three story 19th century stable which partially collapsed on Wednesday June 11 causing at least five homes to be evacuated. Residents are not happy, and despite the short notice of the demolition, nearly 30 people showed up to protest it.



Credit: DragonFire1024 (CC-BY 2.5)

Wikipedia Current Events

Argentine police arrest farm leader Alfredo de Angeli and 14 other farmers in an order to end the farmers strike.

- Condoleeza Rice, the United States Secretary of State, criticises a planned expansion of Israeli housing in East Jerusalem as "not helpful" to the Middle East peace process.
- The Space Shuttle Discovery lands having successfully completed mission STS-124.
- The President of the United States George W. Bush and the President of France Nicholas Sarkozy warn Syria to break with Iran and state that they will not allow Iran to obtain nuclear

Wikipedia Current Events

weapons.

- A fire breaks out at Campsfield House, a privately run Immigration detention Centre near Oxford in the United Kingdom.
- A roadside bomb in the Farah Province of Afghanistan kills 4 United States troops.
- The magnitude 6.8 Mw 2008 Iwate Earthquake shakes Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures on Japan's main island of Honshū, killing at least 6 people and injuring at least 8 others.
- The French Defense Ministry announces France is increasing its military presence in Djibouti following border clashes with Eritrea. France has a mutual defense agreement with Djibouti.

Mugabe is 'prepared to fight' if Zimbabwe elects opposition

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, who is slated to face opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai in a run-off election on June 27, said today that the opposition would never govern Zimbabwe as long as he is alive, vowing to "go to war" if the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) wins the election.

"We shall never, never accept anything that smells of ... the MDC. These pathetic puppets taking over this country? Let's see. That is not going to happen," Mugabe said at the funeral of a former independence fighter. "It

shall never happen... as long as we are alive and those who fought for the country are alive," he added. "We are prepared to fight for our country and to go to war for it."

He described Tsvangirai and the opposition as "traitors" and characterized them as puppets of Great Britain and the "white man", who ruled Zimbabwe until the country gained independence in 1980. "This country shall not again come under the rule and control of the white man, direct or indirect," Mugabe said.

Mugabe accused British Prime Minister Gordon Brown of interfering in Zimbabwe's affairs, after Brown called for "free and fair elections" and "an end to violence" on Friday. "We have become the focus of the British and the Americans. The U.S. has provided \$70 million to the MDC for regime change ... and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown is interfering in our internal affairs," Mugabe said. "Once again we want to make it clear to the British and Americans that we are no one's subjects and will never be."

The opposition accuses Mugabe's ZANU-PF party of using violence and intimidation in an attempt to win the run-off election. According to the MDC, 66 of its followers have been killed in attacks since the contested March election, in which Morgan Tsvangirai won the most votes but failed to secure a majority.

Today, police arrested Tsvangirai for the fifth time in less than ten days. He was released a few hours later along with 11 of his colleagues. "It is clearly impossible to talk about a free and fair election in Zimbabwe," the MDC said following Tsvangirai's arrest.

"To suggest otherwise is to be clearly blind to the grave harassment, intimidation and violence that the people of Zimbabwe have had to endure over the past few years."

The Secretary-General of the MDC, Tendai Biti, appeared in court today after being arrested on Thursday. Prosecutors said they planned to charge him with treason, for proclaiming victory in the March election before official results were announced and for "publishing a document that was explaining a transitional strategy around March 26". Biti's lawyer says these charges could carry a death penalty.

On Friday, forty prominent African leaders, including former UN Secretary-Generals Kofi Annan and Boutros Boutros-Ghali, criticized the government of Zimbabwe in an open letter, demanding an end to acts of "intimidation, harassment and violence". Meanwhile, Mugabe said that veterans of Zimbabwe's liberation war would be willing to take up arms in order to prevent the opposition from coming into power.

Most complete dinosaur from Britain goes on display

Bristol, United Kingdom – The most complete dinosaur to be found in the United Kingdom has recently been put on public display. The scelidosaurus dinosaur was discovered on the Dorset coast, from which it was moved to Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery for public display. The director of Geology for the museum said, before the display was opened to the public, that "this is certainly a coup for Bristol." He then said that the museum was "pleased to have these outstanding specimens, [as] they are the best-preserved

dinosaur remains ever found in England."

Large numbers of people have visited the museum in the last few days to visit the dinosaur, which is believed to have died in a flood. The remains of the dinosaur's final meal are visible near the neck of the animal.

The children of the dinosaur were also recovered in Dorset, and they have been included in the display at the Bristol museum.

The scelidosaurus was a herbivorous dinosaur that lived in the Jurassic period, almost 200 million years ago.

Flooding closes highways in eastern Iowa, US

Interstate 80 is closed in Cedar County, Iowa, east of the Iowa City area, due to flooding from the Iowa River and Coralville Lake. The flooding that has devastated cities in eastern Iowa has travelled downstream and is now threatening Iowa City and Coralville, both of which have issued evacuations for low-lying areas. Flooding on the Cedar River earlier filled Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Cedar Rapids, Iowa, with record-breaking water levels.

Interstate 80 is closed between mile markers 266 and 267, with a 281-mile long detour to get around it: Eastbound through traffic must leave I-80 at Des Moines and travel north along Interstate 35 then east to Dubuque via U.S. Route 20, where it can move south along U.S. Route 61 to return to Interstate 80 at the Quad Cities, with westbound through traffic following the opposite route. Local traffic is being allowed, since this shuts off a 150-mile stretch of highway.

Interstate 380 has also been closed, between mile markers 4 and 10, due to flooding from the Iowa River and Lake Coralville. This, combined with the flooding of the bridges across the Cedar River at Cedar Rapids, effectively cuts Cedar Rapids off from Iowa City; the only way between the two cities, normally 30 miles apart, is a 281-mile long detour that takes drivers through Des Moines.

The Cedar River at Cedar Rapids crested today at a record-breaking 31.1 feet, nearly 20 feet above flood stage. The Iowa River is expected to crest at Iowa City at 33 feet, 11 feet over flood stage and 4.5 feet over the record, on the morning of June 17.

Foam manufacturer settles for US\$25 million over Station nightclub fire

Sealed Air Corporation, a packaging company based in Elmwood Park, New Jersey has agreed to settle legal action over the Station nightclub fire on Rhode Island in February 2003. The disaster killed 100 people with more than twice as many injured and this settlement is one of a series over the blaze.

The fire was triggered by pyrotechnics in use by hard rock band Great White who were performing at the West Warwick venue at the time. They ignited flammable soundproofing foam on the walls.

The latest settlement brings the total amount of settlements to \$148.815 million, although all of these settlements are still tentative and subject to approval by families and a judge. Other companies that have already settled include Clear Channel Broadcasting, whose rock radio station was the show's promoter,

Anheuser-Busch Inc., The Home Depot Inc., a pyrotechnics manufacturer and several other foam companies.

Others still defending in the case, which names dozens of groups and individuals, include Rhode Island state, the fire inspector that did not enforce regulations at the club, and American Foam Corporation, who sold more foam to the Derderian brothers.

The Derderians bought the club in 2000, whereas the foam allegedly manufactured by Sealed Air was installed in 1996. Sealed Air deny any wrongdoing, saying it was never proven that they indeed manufactured the foam and that the foam was being misused as soundproofing in any event.

Regardless of the origin of the foam, it was argued that it burned too easily and produced toxic fumes when it did.

The criminal case around the fire was resolved in 2006, with the Derderians and Great White tour manager Daniel Biechele - who ignited the pyrotechnics - charged with involuntary manslaughter. The Derderians pleaded no contest and Biechele pleaded guilty.

Biechele was released on parole and Michael Derderian is due for parole next year. His brother was sentenced only to probation and community service.

Sealed Air's insurance will pay the settlement.

Northern Japan hit by strong quake

A magnitude 7.2 earthquake has hit the region of Tohoku, a rural area of Northern Japan, killing 6 people, injuring over 140, triggering land slides with reports

of a bridge destroyed by the quake, several press reports.

As of June 14, 19:00 local time, approximately 10 people are missing, and 630 are isolated in three places due to land slides, NHK reports. Mainichi Shinbun reports many land slides happened in mountainous areas, cut down roads and several neighbourhoods are separated from the others.

The quake struck at 8:43 am local time, located about 5 miles (8 km) underground, approximately 280 miles (451 km) north of Tokyo in the northern prefecture of Iwate, which was felt as far away as the Capital. Mainichi indicated that Iwate and Miyagi Prefectures are severely damaged so that both governors invoke Disaster Aid Act to be effective in Ichinoseki and Kurikoma respectively.

Surprise demolition of partially collapsed building in Buffalo, New York met with opposition

Buffalo, New York - Wikinews has learned that, in a surprising turn of events, the city of Buffalo located in New York, has ordered and begun an emergency demolition on a three story 19th century stable which partially collapsed on Wednesday June 11 causing at least five homes to be evacuated. Residents are not happy, and despite the short notice of the demolition, nearly 30 people showed up to protest it. Demolition was not supposed to begin until Monday June 16.

At about 2:30 p.m. (eastern time) on June 13, demolition crew arrived at the stable located at 428 Jersey Avenue and began to unload heavy equipment which will be used to demolish the building. This came as a surprise to residents, as demolition was not supposed to start until Monday

June 16.

During the early afternoon hours on June 11, the Buffalo Fire Department was called to scene after residents called 9-1-1 stating that part of the building had collapsed. Material from the building fell into the yards of at least three neighboring 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.

At about 3:30 p.m. crews began to demolish a small portion of the stable located behind Joe Murray's home, a resident who lives behind a portion of the building on Jersey and Richmond avenues. While demolition was taking place, the section collapsed into Murray's backyard, prompting a call to police. Some residents who own home surrounding the building were inside Murray's house holding a neighborhood meeting when demolition began. No one was injured when the section collapsed.

"[The building] can come down any minute," stated Donna Berry of the Buffalo Police Department who also added that when police arrived on scene, they immediately put a stop to demolition, fearing the safety of surrounding residents and pedestrians.

"So many [of the] people [living around the building] are at risk, it makes me want to cry," added Berry.

Police, local politicians and area residents are concerned that demolition crews and the city are not taking the proper precautions to ensure the safety of residents during demolition.

"[There is] no protection for

neighbors. [This is] appalling and beyond negligence," stated Tim Tielman of the Buffalo Preservation Board who was referring to the negligence of the demolition crew.

"[In order to stop demolition] citizens must demonstrate direct harm to themselves," added Tielman.

The city's preservation board held an emergency meeting on Thursday to discuss the issue. Wikinews has learned that the owner of the building, Bob Freudenheim, gave the city permission to demolish the building because he would not be "rehabilitating the building anytime soon." Freudenheim was part-owner of the Hotel Lenox at 140 North Street in Buffalo and was also an advocate to stop the Elmwood Village Hotel from being built on the corners of Forest and Elmwood Avenues in 2006 and 2007, which Wikinews extensively covered. He also financially supported a lawsuit in an attempt to stop the hotel from being built. Though it is not known exactly how long Freudenheim has owned the stable, Wikinews has learned that he was the owner while fighting to stop the hotel from being built.

Tielman states that he was in contact with Freudenheim this morning. Tielman states that Freudenheim "is not spending a dime" to have the building renovated. Tielman states that Freudenheim has offered to sell the building to any interested party for only one US dollar, but that he "flip flops [his decision] constantly," sometimes wanting hundreds of thousands of dollars for the building. Wikinews has attempted to contact Freudenheim, but so far has been unsuccessful.

City building inspectors were also on scene evaluating the building and ensuring the safety of residents. Donald Grezebielucina states that "some people are on notice to vacate their properties", but also stated that no other precautions were being taken other than placing "tires and scaffolding" onto the side of 430 Jersey, which sits less than eight feet from the buildings East side.

"The gas has been shut off in case we lost the building, so there would be no explosions or anything like that. It's so unstable, the structural integrity is gone. The chemical composite of the trusses has changed dramatically and dry rotted. There are three vehicles in the basement which totally disappeared," stated Grezebielucina to the press while protesters yelled "save our building, save our neighborhood."

Wikinews has also learned that local residents have consulted a lawyer regarding the issue, and hope to petition the New York State Supreme court to issue an injunction to stop demolition. They states that Freudenheim should be "100% responsible" for his actions, and many are afraid that once the building is demolished, Freudenheim's charges of neglect will be abolished. Freudenheim is facing housing violations for neglecting the building. Though residents are fighting, Tielman states that "an injunction is unlikely."

"We had a letter of violation against him. He was supposed to have started work to stabilize the brick this Monday. We all hope this building could be saved. But we've got five houses evacuated and we cannot tolerate any further delay. We've got to get people back into

their homes in a safe condition," said Richard Tobe, Commissioner of the city's Permit and Inspection Services.

Demolition is set to resume at 8:00 a.m.in the morning of Saturday June 14.

Mike Lombardo, the Commissioner for the Buffalo Fire Department, believes that the building was built in 1812 or 1814, making it nearly 200 years old. It is one of only three stables still standing in the city.

Today in History

1667 – French physician Jean-Baptiste Denys administered the first fully-documented human blood transfusion, giving the blood of a sheep to a 15-year old boy.

1846 – To settle the Oregon boundary dispute, the United Kingdom and the United States signed the Oregon Treaty, extending the United States – British North America border west along the 49th parallel north that was first established by the Treaty of 1818.

1978 – King Hussein of Jordan married American Lisa Halaby, who takes the name Queen Noor of Jordan.

1996 – The Provisional Irish Republican Army detonated a bomb in the commercial centre of Manchester, England, injuring over 200 people and causing widespread damage to buildings.

2001 – Leaders of the People's Republic of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

June 15 is Pentecost in Eastern Christianity (2008); Father's Day in several countries (2008)

Quote of the Day

I protect my right to be a Catholic by preserving your right to believe as a Jew, a Protestant, or non-believer, or as anything else you choose. We know that the price of seeking to force our beliefs on others is that they might some day force theirs on us. ~ Mario Cuomo

Word of the Day

festinate adj

1. (obsolete) Hurried, hasty.

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