



Top Stories

New video released shows BBC journalist Alan Johnston wearing 'explosive belt'

A new video has been released by the kidnapers of BBC News reporter Alan Johnston, who was kidnapped whilst returning from work in Gaza City 105 days ago.

Audio tape released of missing Israeli soldier

Kidnapped Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, 20, is believed to be alive, and Hamas has released an audio tape where Shalit says he needs to be hospitalized and that he regrets that Israel has not met the demands of the kidnapers.

Featured story

Election of new 7 wonders of the world: deadline approaching

The results of the New Seven Wonders of the World election, a proposed revision of the ancient wonders, will be announced on July 7, 2007 (or 07.07.07).

Wikipedia Current Events

•Conoco Phillips and Exxon Mobil reject a deal with PDVSA, the nationalised oil company of Venezuela about a deal over the future participation in development of reserves in the Orinoco Belt.

•Middle East leaders President of Egypt Hosni Mubarak, the President of the Palestinian Authority Mahmoud Abbas, the Prime Minister of Israel Ehud

Wikipedia Current Events

Olmert and the King Abdullah II of Jordan meet to support Abbas' leadership of the Palestinian Authority. Olmert announces that he will release 250 Palestinian political prisoners as a gesture of goodwill.

•Iran invites an International Atomic Energy Agency to Tehran to discuss its nuclear program.

•The United States Supreme Court issues three 5-4 split decision rulings limiting student freedom of expression, barring ordinary taxpayers from challenging governmental funding of faith-based initiatives, and allowing "issue ads" to air on television close to election dates.

•A plane crashes in Cambodia, with 22 on board. Efforts to locate the wreckage have thus far failed.

Election of new 7 wonders of the world: deadline approaching

The New Open World Foundation will announce the results of the New Seven Wonders of the World election on July 7, 2007 (or 07.07.07). The ballot itself will close on midnight the day before. The Foundation proposes a revision of the ancient Seven Wonders of the World, of which only the Great Pyramid of Giza still exist.

Among the 21 candidates left over after the previous election round ended on January 1, 2006, the Acropolis and the Maya

archeological site of Chichen Itza were doing well in earlier rankings. A spokeswoman for the Foundation said earlier this month that the result is wide open.

The election ceremony will be held in Lisbon, Portugal. Hollywood actress Hilary Swank, British actor Sir Ben Kingsley and Bollywood actress Bipasha Basu have been announced as hosts, astronaut Neil Armstrong will be present, and performers will include Jennifer Lopez and Chaka Khan.

The finalist countries of New Seven Wonders.

Some in India fear however that the Taj Mahal might not make the A-list. In the Bihar town of Muzaffarpur, sex workers are asking people to cast their vote for the monument in Agra. "We are doing it in our own small way to promote the 17th century monument of love," said prostitute Shahnaj Bano. Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan ordered the construction of the mausoleum when his favourite wife died. People of all walks of life have joined the campaign in India: for example, hundreds of lawyers in Rajkot collectively casted their vote to support the Taj in the world wonder poll.

India's Tourism and Culture Minister, Ambika Soni, previously pitched in the campaign by personally voting for the Taj Mahal, but government officials confirmed that they did not officially support the initiative of the for-profit organisation. "The campaign is not

backed by any government agency, though we feel it is good and in the interest of the tourism industry as a whole to promote the Taj Mahal," declared Sudhir Kumar, the Agra chief of the Indian government's tourism department, to the Indo-Asian News Service.

India is not the only country trying to get a monument elected. Brazil's soccer team for example, urged Brazilians to vote for Christ Redeemer, the statue in Rio de Janeiro.

Criticism on methods

The campaign started in September 1999 with a website by Swiss businessman Bernard Weber. One year later, one million votes had already been cast, and today the total number of internet, text message and telephone votes has surpassed 50 million -possibly the largest global poll ever.

Earlier on in the elections, promotional campaigns have been able to severely influence the top seven. An e-mail chain letter in Turkey caused the nation to set the voting record in February 2002. After the site had been noticed in China, the country took the lead in weeks, according to the Foundation website.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in a press release on July 20 reaffirmed that it has no link with the initiative, which it says would reflect "only the opinions of those with access to the internet". The Foundation 'Campaign Milestones page' however claims that "more than 25 percent of the world's population is now aware of the N7W campaign" after the media attention around the time the final round began on January 1, 2006. UNESCO also criticised the lack of

scientific foundations the project has, compared to the method of it's own selection of World Heritage Sites.

The candidates

Originally the Pyramids of Giza had to compete against the others in the election, but after criticism in Egypt, they were removed from the election list and made an honorary candidate. The 20 other candidates are:

- The Acropolis of Athens, Greece.
- The Alhambra in Granada, Spain.
- The temple of Angkor Wat in Cambodia.
- Chichen Itza in Yucatan, Mexico.
- Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- The Colosseum in Rome, Italy.
- The Easter Island Moais on Easter Island, Chile.
- The Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.
- The Great Wall of China.
- The Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey.
- The Kiyomizu Temple in Kyoto, Japan.
- The Kremlin, Red Square, and Saint Basil's Cathedral in Moscow, Russia.
- Machu Picchu in Cuzco, Peru.
- Neuschwanstein Castle in Füssen, Germany.
- Petra in Jordan.
- The Statue of Liberty in New York City, United States.
- Stonehenge in Amesbury, United Kingdom.
- Sydney Opera House in Australia.
- The Taj Mahal in Agra, India.
- Timbuktu, Mali.

Four families left homeless after apartment fire in Buffalo, New York

Buffalo, New York – At least four families have been left homeless after a fire ripped through an apartment in a four apartment building at 630-632 Plymouth Avenue in Buffalo, New York and at least one person had to jump out of a second floor window to get to safety. One firefighter was injured while fighting the blaze.

At approximately 4:30 p.m. (eastern time) firefighters were called to the building after initial calls reported that an oven had caught on fire after grease had spilled in Apt. #4. When firefighters arrived, Apt. #4 was completely engulfed in flames.

"When we (the firefighters) arrived, one person was trapped on the second floor, but jumped out of a window to the neighbors second floor porch. The fire started in a kitchen oven, maybe by grease, but an investigation is being conducted," said Buffalo Fire Department Chief Joe Fahey.

"One firefighter was injured," added Fahey. Catalano, the injured firefighter, and whose first name is not known, received a small cut under his left eye, but did not require hospitalization and was treated at the scene by paramedics.

It is estimated that there is at least "US\$100,000 in damage. US\$60,000 damage to the building and US\$40,000 to the contents," said Fahey. At least three floors and two apartments were severely damaged by the fire.

All of the building's occupants made it out safely, and none were injured. Arson is not believed to be the cause.

Heavy rain causes severe flooding in UK

Heavy rain in England and Wales has caused the death of one man after he was sucked down a man hole in Hull when attempting to clear flood water. A teenage boy was also killed after being swept away by flood water of the River Sheaf, Sheffield. The flooding has inundated large areas of land, many houses and caused travel chaos with many roads and railways flooded or blocked by stranded vehicles, especially in northern England.

75 mm of rain in some areas has caused sever flooding which could get worse as forecasters predict one months worth of rain will fall in the next 24 hours.

A state of emergency has been declared in Hull and over 120 schools have been closed in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The fire service, police and coast guards have attempted many rescues today with helicopters used to remove people from stranded houses to temporary shelters.

Areas also affected are along the River Severn, the River Teme, and the River Aire.

The rain also affected the start of Wimbledon and created more problems for the clear-up at the end of another "mud bath" Glastonbury festival.

Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission to review Pan Am Flight 103 conviction

The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC), an organisation that investigates alleged miscarriages of justice, is to complete a review of the conviction of Libyan Abdel basset Ali Mohamed al-Megrahi for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight

103, a Boeing 747 next week. 243 passengers, 16 crew and eleven people on the ground were killed when the a bomb destroyed the aircraft over Lockerbie, Scotland. There were no survivors. It is expected that the result will be that the SCCRC will refer the case back to the court of appeal.

The Scotsman reported that documents leaked from al-Megrahi's legal team include allegations that evidence used to convict him 'was subject to deliberate destruction and manipulation for political reasons'. They go on to accuse officials in both the United States and the United Kingdom of "a co-ordinated effort to mislead the court" in order to divert attention from other suspects, who had support from Iran, in order to prevent increased diplomatic tensions with Iran at the time of the first Gulf War.

The SCCRC is currently reviewing hundreds of documents and photographs that are alleged to supply evidence that evidence was invented, manipulated or ignored by both the UK police and the CIA. Politician Tam Dalyell, who has campaigned against the conviction for years, has now said that the full report by the SCCRC should be made public, adding "The Crown Office has a moral obligation to hold a public inquiry. If it embarrasses the Scottish judiciary, so be it. We're in danger of becoming the laughing stock of Europe." He also said "I have no doubt that evidence was planted, and I have said so repeatedly in the Commons. Only a full, public and nonadversarial inquiry can finally settle this matter." Meanwhile, al-Megrahi's lawyers said that if he is granted a retrial they will attempt to convince authorities to release him until

they reach their final decision.

Several key items in the prosecution's case come under heavy questioning of credibility in the evidence submitted to the SCCRC, with rescue workers describing multiple items supposedly in or near the bomb as intact at the time of discovery, while they were presented to the court in a fragmentary form. The evidence of Maltese shopkeeper Tony Gauci is also heavily scrutinised. Although he supposedly testified that al-Megrahi bought clothes from him later found to have been in the suitcase containing the bomb, in reality he apparantly gave multiple inconsistent and substantialy differant accounts of who bought the clothes, failed to pick out al-Megrahi at an identity parade, at at one point linked the purchase to convicted Egyptian terrorist Mohammed Abu Talb, from the Iran-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. There are also allegations that two early statements by Gauci are missing altogether, and has even denied any knowledge of Megrahi prior to the bombing.

One investigator also claims that evidence was fabricated, whilst there was little investigation into claims by a baggage handler at Heathrow International Airport that the bag containing the bomb was only added to the flight at the last minute.

The SCCRC refused to comment, saying "It is not for Scottish ministers to comment or preempt the outcome of this review. is the strong view of the Scottish Government that due process of law will be followed and seen to be followed in all matters pertaining to this case."

The SCCRC will issue its report on Thursday.

New video released shows BBC journalist Alan Johnston wearing 'explosive belt'

A new video has been released by the kidnapers of BBC News reporter Alan Johnston, who was kidnapped whilst returning from work in Gaza City 105 days ago.

In the video Johnston is shown wearing what the reporter says is an "explosive belt" around his waist. He continues to say "the kidnapers say [the belt] will be detonated if there is any attempt to storm this area. They say they're ready to turn the hideout into what they describe as a death zone if there is an attempt to free me by force."

Both the BBC and Alan's family were "distressed" by the video and both re-iterated their plea for Alan to be released peacefully.

Johnston, 45 and from Scotland, was kidnapped in Gaza by a militant group calling itself "The Army of Islam" over 14 weeks ago whilst nearing the end of a three year contract there and is, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, one of 15 journalists abducted from Gaza since 2004. All the others were released, unharmed, within days of of their capture.

Audio tape released of missing Israeli soldier

A new video has been released by the kidnapers of BBC News reporter Alan Johnston, who was kidnapped whilst returning from work in Gaza City 105 days ago.

In the video Johnston is shown wearing what the reporter says is an "explosive belt" around his waist. He continues to say "the

kidnapers say [the belt] will be detonated if there is any attempt to storm this area. They say they're ready to turn the hideout into what they describe as a death zone if there is an attempt to free me by force."

Both the BBC and Alan's family were "distressed" by the video and both re-iterated their plea for Alan to be released peacefully.

Johnston, 45 and from Scotland, was kidnapped in Gaza by a militant group calling itself "The Army of Islam" over 14 weeks ago whilst nearing the end of a three year contract there and is, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, one of 15 journalists abducted from Gaza since 2004. All the others were released, unharmed, within days of of their capture.

Plane with Korean, Czech tourists aboard crashes in Cambodia

An airliner carrying 22 people crashed into a remote mountainous area of Cambodia today, and the fate of those aboard remained uncertain as search teams were daunted by darkness and rugged terrain.

Radar contact with the PMTair Antonov An-24 was lost at around 10:40 a.m. local time (0340 GMT). The flight had departed at around 10 a.m. from Angkor International Airport in Siem Reap, near the popular Angkor Wat temple complex, and was heading to Sihanoukville International Airport at Sihanoukville, a beach resort town on the Gulf of Thailand.

A report by Kyodo News said local villagers heard a loud explosion, rushed to the crash site, and found no survivors.

Cambodian officials have not confirmed or denied the report, and said they were still searching for the wreckage.

"We don't know how many are dead or how many survived," Him Sarun, chief of cabinet of the Civil Aviation Secretariat was quoted as saying by Agence France-Presse (AFP).

By nightfall, emergency workers said they had not yet located the crash site. "It could have crashed into the side of a hill. It could be anywhere. This is difficult country," an unnamed rescue worker was quoted as saying by Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA).

An unnamed airport official told Reuters that the plane had crashed into a mountain in Kampot Province, about 150 kilometers (93 miles) from the capital, Phnom Penh. "We heard there was something wrong with the plane at Kom Chhay mountain in Kampot," the official was quoted as saying.

Earlier in the day, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces dispatched helicopters to search for the crash site, but visibility was poor because of rain.

Deputy provincial police chief In Chiva told AFP that some conservationists working in the mountainous jungle near Kampot's Bokor Hill Station had seen the plane crash. "The area is heavily forested and the sky is dark [with rain] so it is hard for us to search. We have not found any pieces of the plane yet," he was quoted saying by AFP.

The search is centered in Chhuk district, about 40 kilometers (24 miles) north of the provincial capital, Kampot governor Thach Khorn told DPA. "We are having

serious difficulties reaching the wreck," he was quoted as saying. "We can do no more to get to the site by road tonight. However, we are doing everything we can to reach the area as soon as possible," Khorn added.

The flight had 16 passengers – 13 South Koreans and three Czechs, plus a flight crew of one Russian and five Cambodians.

PMTair is a small Cambodian airline with domestic and international routes, including direct flights from Seoul to Siem Reap, feeding a large influx of tourists from South Korea in the past few years. The airline had begun regularly scheduled Siem Reap-Sihanoukville flights in January, providing a direct link between the two popular tourist towns.

"We cannot find the plane right now, so we cannot say anything," an unnamed PMT official was quoted saying by AFP.

The airline's website lists its current fleet as having two jets, a Boeing 737-200 and a McDonnell Douglas MD-83, and four prop-driven planes: two each of the Russian-made Antonov AN-24s and AN-12s.

The airline has a checkered safety reputation. In 2005, a piece of landing gear snapped off an aging Antonov AN-24 on landing at Banlung, Ratanakiri, with 59 passengers aboard. There were no injuries, but the airline was temporarily grounded after the incident.

North Korea confirms receipt of funds, nuclear shutdown to proceed

North Korea has confirmed that it is in receipt of US\$25 million that was frozen at a Macau bank. The

funds had become a major sticking point in the ongoing nuclear negotiations. The were frozen at the Macau bank after the United States accused North Korea of money laundering and counterfeiting.

KCNA quoted an official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as saying: "As the funds that had been frozen at Macau's Banco Delta Asia have been transferred as we demanded, the troublesome issue of the frozen funds is finally resolved." He continued, "there will be discussions with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) delegates June 26 in Pyongyang on shutting down nuclear facilities and inspections and monitoring."

A team from the IAEA arrived in Beijing, China, on their way to Pyongyang for a five-day visit. This will be the first visit by the IAEA since December 2002 when North Korea ejected inspectors.

The head of the team, Olli Heinonen, said "Now we are going to negotiate how to verify and make sure the reactor will be shut down and sealed, so this is the next step on this long trip." The Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center is at the heart of the North Korean nuclear program.

United States wins CONCACAF Gold Cup

The United States men's soccer team have won the 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup by defeating Mexico 2-1 at Soldier Field in Chicago. Mexico took the lead shortly before halftime with a goal from Jose Andres Guardado. The United States leveled the scores when Landon Donovan converted a penalty in the 62nd minute and took the lead eleven minutes later from a goal by Benny Feilhaber. Feilhaber's goal was his only his

second international goal; Donovan's 34th international goal ties him for first place with Eric Wynalda among all American men. The United States were the defending champions and hosts for the twelve-team biennial event.

America's Cup: Team New Zealand wins over Alinghi in second race

Team New Zealand have defeated Swiss syndicate Alinghi in the second race of the 32nd America's Cup Challenge on Sunday, making the overall score equal with one win for each team.

Team New Zealand, racing with NZL-92, crossed the start line three seconds ahead of Alinghi's yacht, SUI-100. But Alinghi led the race at the first mark by 13 seconds, though near the ending of the race, Team New Zealand managed to overtake Alinghi to lead the final leg of the race by 28 seconds.

Former Alinghi and Team New Zealand skipper, Russell Coutts said that the latest win for Team New Zealand will act as a big boost for them. Ray Davis, Team New Zealand after-guard, said, "It's been huge for the team to get a win on the board in the America's Cup. It has been a long time coming for Emirates Team New Zealand."

Dan Cowie, Team New Zealand trimmer, said, "As we said yesterday there are two very even boats out there. We didn't learn a whole lot more today."

The next race is scheduled for tomorrow, Monday being a race-off day.

The last time Alinghi and Team New Zealand fought for the America's Cup was when Team

New Zealand was defending the trophy in Auckland, New Zealand.

The past three consecutive America's Cup challenges have been all whitewash victories, and five of the last six challenges have also been whitewashes.

Today in History

363 - Roman Emperor Julian the Apostate was killed during the retreat from his campaign against the Sassanid Empire.

1409 - In trying to end the Western Schism, where Gregory XII in Rome and Benedict XIII in Avignon simultaneously claimed to be the true pope, the Council of Pisa instead ended up electing a third one, Alexander V.

1541 - Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro was assassinated in Lima by supporters of his rival Diego de Almagro's son.

1945 - At a conference in San Francisco, delegates from 50 nations signed a charter

establishing the United Nations. 1976 - The CN Tower, the tallest freestanding structure on land, was opened to the public in Toronto.

June 26 is Flag Day in Romania; Sunthorn Phu Day in Thailand.

Quote of the Day

I always disagree ... when people end up saying that we can only combat Communism, Fascism or what not if we develop an equal fanaticism. It appears to me that one defeats the fanatic precisely by not being a fanatic oneself, but on the contrary by using one's intelligence. In the same way, a man can kill a tiger because he is not like a tiger and uses his brain to invent the rifle, which no tiger could ever do. ~ George Orwell

Word of the Day

conjecture; n

1. A statement or idea which is

unproven, but is thought to be true; a guess.

2. A supposition based upon incomplete evidence; a hypothesis.
3. (obsolete) The interpretation of signs and omens.

About Wikinews

We are a group of volunteer journalists whose mission is to create a diverse community where citizens from around the globe (including **you**) can collaborate to report the news on a wide variety of current events. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons.

Got news and no computer? Call the Wikinews Hotline

+1-866-653-4265
(toll-free in the U.S.)
+1-202-742-5918
(outside the U.S.)
+44-871-218-6397
(U.K. / Europe)

License

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution License. Articles published in this Print edition were created by Wikinewsies. Other content released under the GNU Free Documentation License.

To view a copy of the CC-BY license, visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/>

or send a letter to

Creative Commons
543 Howard Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, California, 94105, USA

To view a copy of the GFDL, visit:

<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>

Wikipedia Current Events

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Current_events

Today in History

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Quote of the Day

http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Main_Page

Word of the Day

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/Main_Page

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews

Print Edition visit:

<http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print>