

Top Stories

Last Gaza settlement cleared, West Bank towns prepare to resist



SPECIAL REPORT

Israeli troops are clearing the last of the Gaza settlements, but West Bank residents are preparing to resist evacuation.

Space shuttle Discovery back in Florida



The 109 ton vehicle was flown back from Edwards Airforce Base (AFB) in California on top of a modified Boeing 747 known as the Shuttle Carrier Aircraft.

Featured story

Dance party broken up by police in Utah, USA



About 90 law enforcement officers from multiple agencies broke up what they said was a rave party on public and private property in the Diamond Fork area of Spanish Fork canyon, an hour outside of Salt Lake City, Utah, at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday.

Wikipedia Current Events

- A large explosion wounds several people in Beirut, Lebanon.
- The Piano Man has been identified and sent back home to Bavaria, Germany.
- Conflict in Afghanistan: US Troops claim to have killed more than one hundred suspects following raids in south and East Afghanistan.
- Voting registration begins in the war-torn east of the Democratic Republic of Congo ahead of planned elections.
- Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announces that existing large West Bank Jewish settlements will be expanded.

Wikipedia Current Events

- US Troops claim that they will investigate the circumstances following the death of a cousin of Iraq's envoy to the United Nations. The man died from a bullet wound to the head as he opened his door to US Soldiers in western Iraq.
- Patriarch Theophilus III is unanimously elected 141st Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem by the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem to replace ousted predecessor Irenaios I.
- Israeli forces enter the last remaining Jewish settlement in Gaza Strip to remove the settlers from Netzarim, a religious farming community of about 500, completing the evacuation of all the enclaves after nearly four decades of occupation. Four small militant settlements on the West Bank will also be cleared, with 5,500 troops heading there to begin the clearances on Tuesday.
- In tennis, Maria Sharapova becomes the first Russian woman to reach world number one replacing injured American Lindsay Davenport at the top of the WTA rankings.

Young Quakers disappointed by UK visa denials

Young Quakers who planned to take part in the World Gathering of Young Friends at Lancaster University, England have been unable to attend after having their visas denied. The Quakers who were denied visas were mainly from Africa and India. Recent terrorist attacks on London subways and buses may be responsible for the UK's stricter visa policy this year.

Their absence has been a cause of "hurt" at the meetings. Sara Wolcott of Pacific Yearly Meeting on the Western coast of America wrote in a journal on the WGYF website: "I saw [in a workshop for Friends planning to meet in Kenya] how much the absence of so many Friends was felt; the gathering felt incomplete. We desperately

wanted our brothers and sisters to be with us, I know they wanted to be here too."

"I hope their absence will teach us all how we cannot put our hopes for our world community upon one single gathering, but that we must create some system to enable continual connections."

Despite the missing Friends, the gathering has brought together a mix of different Quaker traditions in a positive atmosphere that has been appreciated by participants. Many Quakers worship in silence (unprogrammed meetings) while others, particularly in America and Africa, have ministers like other churches. Quakers also have differences of opinion over theological issues, including even the existence of God, but the young Friends have not found this to be an obstacle to coming together. Unlike many traditional Christian sects, the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers, encourage each member to explore their own relationship with God.

Chrissy Muhr of Northwest Yearly Meeting (Northwest US) wrote: "I've been really impressed by how the mix of worship styles has been handled. Almost all the programmed Friends I've spoken to have some prior experience of unprogrammed worship. For me, the hardest thing has been not falling asleep during long periods of silence - the long week has begun to take its toll."

'MI6 officers' named on US-based website

Cryptome.org, a US-based website, has published a list of 74 individuals[1] claimed to be members of the British "Secret Intelligence Service", MI6. Many are serving members of the UK Foreign Office, including 18 Ambassadors. The leak of a similar list in 1999 led to the prosecution of a former MI6 agent, Richard Tomlinson. The source for this latest leak is referred to only as "A".

Earlier this year New York Times reporter

Judith Miller was jailed for refusing to name the US-government source who identified a member of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Valerie Plame.

A general statement on the Cryptome.org web site states:

"Cryptome welcomes documents for publication that are prohibited by governments worldwide, in particular material on freedom of expression, privacy, cryptology, dual-use technologies, national security, intelligence, and secret governance — open, secret and classified documents — but not limited to those. Documents are removed from this site only by order served directly by a US court having jurisdiction. No court order has ever been served; any order served will be published here — or elsewhere if gagged by order."

Dance party broken up by police in Utah, USA



SWAT teams shut down the music.

About 90 law enforcement officers from multiple agencies broke up what they said was a rave party on public and private property in the Diamond Fork area of Spanish Fork canyon, an hour outside of Salt Lake City, Utah, at about 11:30 p.m. Saturday (5:30 Sunday UTC).

According to the county, the sheriff's office had been investigating similar parties since the beginning of the season. In a press release from the Sheriff's office in Utah County, the department claims that previous allegations of sexual abuse while attending other raves, as well as various firearm and theft violations, were reason for the investigation. The release continues to state that the proper permit was not obtained before the party started.

Armed with assault rifles and tear gas, the

police used dogs to sweep the crowd for narcotics. At least one helicopter was used in the operation. The scale of the police response was apparently due to the ineffectiveness of a smaller force used in the previous "Sequence Five" rave. Prior to dispersing the partiers, several police informants had reportedly infiltrated the rave and observed widespread illegal activities.



Police clear out the event and question attendees.

The promoter says the party took place on private property, named Child's Ranch, with express permission from the owner. The property owner has apparently had at least one previous run-in with police over a similar event. Utah County requires a permit, bond and county commission approval for all gatherings with more than 250 people present. According to a DJ at the event, "they presold 700 tickets and they expected up to 3,000 people total". He added that by the time police arrived "the crowd was about 1500 people thick".

The police have publicly stated that these permits were not obtained, but the promoters claim otherwise. Officials also claim that the party had spilled over onto public land. Police reported in local press that more than 60 arrests were made for weapons offenses, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, underage drinking, drug possession and distribution, resisting arrest, assault on a police officer and disorderly conduct. Officers claim to have found cocaine, ecstasy, marijuana, mushrooms, alcohol and large amounts of drug paraphernalia. Some of the drugs may include those confiscated from partiers by security guards.

Amateur video from the scene shows a number of SWAT police (estimates are at 90) screaming orders at the DJs to "Shut it down now!" and yelling at others to "get out

now, or I'll kick your ass in jail". Armed police are also seen tackling a number of rave-goers, and it is unclear from the video footage whether these attendees attempted to attack the police. Due to the low resolution, automatic lighting adjustment, and low audio quality, the video appears to have been taken with an amateur device.

A first hand account from a DJ booked to play at the party stated that while police were arresting a man accused of narcotic possession, the suspect was beaten to the ground and continually "kicked in the ribs" by 4 armed "soldiers" dressed in camouflage. According to the account, nobody resisted the policemen but tear gas was still used as partiers were already dispersing quietly. The DJ also states that police were attempting to confiscate video equipment, but an amateur video has still surfaced on the Internet (see sources below).



Police arresting attendees.

Several partygoers felt they should have the right to attend a rave where drugs are being used, so long as they don't personally use them:

"While it may be true that some individuals choose to take drugs at said events like this, myself as well as many others choose to go for the music. Just like anything, you have bad apples, but you shouldn't cut down the tree." "Raves are not the only musical gatherings where drugs are used and distributed."

Other partygoers felt that the use of force in the shutdown was excessive - numerous eyewitness accounts by concertgoers describe people being beaten, tasered, or attacked with dogs. One account from an attendee, identified as "Colby", states:

A SWAT team officer orders the video-taker to shut off their camera.

"I saw at least two people being beaten on the ground while barking, snarling dogs are held just a few feet from them. Weapons were being pointed at unarmed, peaceful civilians. A friend of mine was forced at gunpoint to put his hands on his head and turn around, because he asked if he could get his things from the tent."



An injury allegedly sustained during the raid.

Utah County sheriff's Sergeant Darren Gilbert said a 17-year-old girl was found overdosed on ecstasy, and was treated and released to her parents. Multiple lawsuits are being threatened against the city. According to an advertisement for the event, an attorney was present at the party. The local sheriff is scheduled to appear on Utah TV following a number of complaints being sent to TV stations and the police.

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.

Last Gaza settlement cleared, West Bank towns prepare to resist



Israeli soldiers are clearing the last of the 21 Jewish settlements in the Gaza strip, 38 years after Israel took possession of it. A

total of 8,500 people have been evacuated, and many existing houses have been bulldozed.

Netzarim is one of the oldest settlements in the coastal strip, and has frequently been the target of Palestinian militant attacks. The village has been targeted particularly often as it divides the strip, and is also the most isolated Israeli settlement in Gaza.

600 residents are expected to leave peacefully after negotiating with police. They will depart in a fleet of armored buses and head to the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the holiest shrine in Judaism. Settlers will receive the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of US dollars in compensation.

Three young people were arrested on Sunday after police found them apparently preparing to resist violently, armed with metal spikes and barbed wire. Residents were still working on their buildings until large numbers of troops entered the settlement and began going house-to-house. Although there were tearful scenes, there were none of the protests of earlier in the week.

One resident said the evacuation showed the Arabs that the Jews were "weak and would run away", and others have said it rewards the Palestinian uprising that began in 2000. However, overall, most Israelis support the withdrawals, with many blaming radical Judaism, including such settlements, for inciting conflict with Palestinians. Others merely consider isolated settlements an unnecessary defense burden on the Israeli military.

Four small militant West Bank settlements will also be cleared, with 5,500 troops heading there to begin the clearances on Tuesday. The Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced at the same time that existing large West Bank settlements will be expanded. More than 230,000 Israelis live there, while 3.8 million Palestinians live in the Gaza strip and West Bank.

Sharon has said that he hopes the pull-out from the Gaza strip will help in negotiations for the retention of large West Bank blocs, even though the US opposes continued construction there. Israel feels that it has a much stronger Biblical claim to the West Bank than it did to the Gaza strip and the

Palestinians feel they have the stronger claim to the land. Further small, isolated West Bank settlements may be cleared in the future.

It is said that 2,000 Israeli right-wing extremists are preparing to resist the evacuation in two of the four small West Bank settlements that are to be cleared. Hundreds of extremist youths have headed to the settlements from other nearby towns.

Settlers slashed the tires of Army vehicles over the weekend and set fire to an Army tractor with the driver inside. The Israeli Public Security Minister has said there will be no tolerance for those who oppose the troops. Most weapons have already been collected.

The US-backed "peace road map" calls on the Palestinians to disarm, which may result in more of the West Bank being cleared. However, the road map also calls on Israel to halt its expansion in the West Bank.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas hopes the Israeli pull-outs will signal to Muslim militants that peaceful negotiations can work.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

- 1305 - After a show trial, William Wallace, leader of the Scottish resistance against England, was executed in Smithfield Market in London.
- 1866 - The Austro-Prussian War ended with the Treaty of Prague.
- 1939 - The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, a non-aggression treaty between the Soviet Union and the German Third Reich, was signed in Moscow.
- 1944 - King Michael dismissed the pro-Nazi government of General Ion Antonescu, putting Romania on the side of the Allies for the remainder of World War II.
- 1948 - The World Council of Churches was established.

Quote of the Day

"I could not be a traitor to Edward, for I was never his subject." ~ William Wallace

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