

Top Stories

Israeli soldier convicted in killing of British activist in Gaza Strip

An Israeli ex-soldier has been found guilty of the manslaughter of a British student acting as a human shield in Palestine.



BREAKINGNEWS

Marines accused of assaulting Australian freed by US military court

Two U.S. marines were recently cleared of charges in the brutal assault of an Australian youth in a Townsville nightclub



February 2004. The alleged assault occurred within Australian jurisdiction, however permission was given by the victim and Attorney-general Phillip Ruddock for the matter to be transferred to a military court in the US.

OhmyNews citizen reporters meet in Seoul, Korea

More than 300 "citizen reporters" hailing from countries as far apart as Chile and Norway are coming together at the OhmyNews International Citizen



Reporters' Forum from June 23 to June 26, 2005 in Seoul. OhmyNews is one of the most popular South Korean news websites, and it has played an important role in the election of reformist President Roh Moo-hyun.

Russia voids border treaty with Estonia

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told RIA Novosti during a visit to Helsinki that the Russian Federation had decided to revoke its signature from the border agreements it signed with the Estonian government in Moscow on May 18.

The move comes just one week after the Estonian Riigikogu ratified the border document which slightly amends the border that has been used since Estonia regained its

independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

A source inside the Russian Foreign Ministry told Itar-Tass that the preamble to the document as ratified by the Estonian parliament was "unacceptable" because it mentioned the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920, by which the Russian Socialist Federal Republic recognized the independent statehood of Estonia.

Alexander Yakovenko, a spokesperson for the Russian foreign ministry told Gateway 2 Russia, another Russian news wire, that this set up a situation where Estonia could claim land from Russia. Estonia lost 5 percent of its territory to Russia when authorities delineated the Estonian Soviet Federal Republic from the Russian Soviet Federal Republic in 1945.

However, the Estonian Foreign Ministry has reiterated its stance that the border treaty seals the border with Russia, and the preamble makes no claims to Russian territory.

"The Estonian side has repeatedly assured that it has not linked any new issues to the border treaties, and thus, the Russian side's assertion that Estonia has added new aspects to the treaty is ungrounded," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Estonian and Russian officials first agreed upon the border treaty in 1996, and then initialed them in 1999, according to the website of the Estonian Foreign Ministry. The preamble included with the treaty signed in May stated that the agreement would have no impact on other issues concerning Estonian-Russian bilateral relations and Urmas Paet, the Estonian foreign minister said in a statement on June 27 that Estonia has no land claims to Russia.

"Russia does not have the will to normalize relations with Estonia and, I would say, even with the European Union and NATO," explained Marko Mihkelson, the deputy chairman of the Estonian foreign relations

commission in a statement.

"This is because here, indeed, we are talking about Estonian-Russian border, which is not only a border between the two states but also a border between the European Union and Russia," he said.

Estonia is now urging Russia to reconsider its stance, while Lavrov told reporters in Helsinki that the two parties will have to start from scratch.

Actor John Fiedler, voice of Piglet and "Bob Newhart" regular, dead at 80

American actor John Fiedler passed away at the age of 80 on June 25th. Though he worked extensively on stage, film, television, and radio for over forty years, he is perhaps most remembered for two roles: the mild, fearful voice of Piglet in Disney's many Winnie the Pooh productions, and the role of Mr. Peterson, nervous patient on The Bob Newhart Show.

Born in 1925 in Ohio, Fiedler began his career in New York, working on the radio series The Aldrich Family as sidekick Homer Brown, and making his film debut in Twelve Angry Men (1957), as the nervous Juror #2. Most of his subsequent roles were as gentle or nervous types, though occasionally he broke out of the mold, notably in the original Star Trek episode "A Wolf in the Fold," as an official possessed by Jack the Ripper. On Broadway he was in the original casts of A Raisin in the Sun (as housing committee rep Lindner) and The Odd Couple (as poker player Vinnie), reprising both roles for the film versions. Other on-camera work included roles in the films True Grit and The Cannonball Run, plus many TV guest spots from Bewitched to The Twilight Zone, and a recurring part on Kolchak: The Night Stalker as morgue attendant Gordy "The Ghoul" Spangler.

His distinctive voice kept him busiest, however. In addition to playing Piglet in many shorts, four features, several specials, and two TV series, he was heard in the

Disney features The Rescuers, Robin Hood, and The Emperor's New Groove. A cause of death has not yet been reported

Unanimous U.S. Supreme Court rules against file swapping companies

The U.S. Supreme Court today ruled that Internet file sharing networks can be sued for copyright infringement. The decision in the case "Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Inc. et al. v. Grokster, Ltd. et al." had been much awaited by those on both sides of the debate about copyright law and its application to Internet technologies. The court ruled that businesses created with the purpose of letting users commit copyright violations should be held liable for the infringement.

Writing for the court, Justice David Souter wrote: "One who distributes a device with the object of promoting its use to infringe copyright, as shown by clear expression or other affirmative steps taken to foster infringement, going beyond mere distribution with knowledge of third-party action, is liable for the resulting acts of infringement by third parties using the device, regardless of the device's lawful uses."

The strength of the decision was unexpected — this is the first major Internet copyright case to reach the Supreme Court in many years, and the Justices' unanimity sends a strong message about their lack of tolerance for companies designed to violate the law.

The decision affects such companies as Grokster and StreamCast, both of which were plaintiffs in this suit. The court's ruling does not have an immediate effect, however, as the Justices referred the decisions to a lower court to be reconsidered.

Paul Winchell, voice of Tigger, Gargamel, dead at 82

Paul Winchell, the english voice of Gargamel in the animated children's show The Smurfs and Tigger in Disney's Winnie the Pooh died on 23 June at age 82. Winchell also voiced several other characters including Boomer in Disney's The Fox and the Hound and several characters for Hanna-Barbera productions.

Winchell, in addition to being a prolific voice artist, patented more than 30 inventions including an artificial heart, a flameless cigarette lighter, and a disposable razor.

Paul Winchell won a Grammy Award in 1974 in the Best Recording For Children category for his work on "The Most Wonderful Thing about Tiggers" in the animated Disney film Winnie the Pooh and Tigger Too. His first performance as Tigger was in the 1968 Disney film Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day which won an Academy Award.

Israeli soldier convicted in killing of British activist in Gaza Strip

A former Israeli soldier has been convicted by an Israeli court of the manslaughter of a British student who was acting as a human shield in the Gaza Strip in April 2003.

Ex-sergeant Wahid Taysir, serving with the Beduin Unit in Rafah, hit Tom Hurndall with a single shot to the head from an army watchtower, using a sniper rifle with a telescopic sight. Hurndall had been guiding children away from an area of shooting in the Palestinian town of Rafah.

Twenty-two year old Hurndall fell into a coma and died of his injuries nine months later in a London hospital. Taysir's defence lawyers had tried to claim during the trial that Hurndall's death was due to malpractice by British doctors.

The Israeli army had initially declined to carry out an investigation into the shooting. After the British government started their own enquiry and cited Taysir as having fired the fatal shot, the Israeli army made the decision to prosecute Taysir, who is no longer serving in the army.

The verdict took more than an hour to read out in a small courtroom in southern Israel. As well as being found guilty of manslaughter, Taysir was found guilty of obtaining false testimony, submitting false testimony, obstruction of justice, and improper conduct.

Taysir's sentence will be decided next week. Another soldier was also jailed for lying to

protect Taysir.

Hurndall's father Anthony was one of 50 people in the courtroom. Afterwards he welcomed the verdict, but claimed that the Israeli army acted with impunity too often. The Israeli government insist that there is no policy that tolerates shooting civilians.

Marines accused of assaulting Australian freed by US military court

Two U.S. marines were recently cleared of charges in the brutal assault of an Australian youth in a Townsville nightclub February 2004. The alleged assault occurred within Australian jurisdiction, however permission was given by the victim and Attorney-general Phillip Ruddock for the matter to be transferred to a military court in the US.

"I've asked for a full report on the matter," Mr Ruddock said.

Heath Twomey, a student in Townsville, had his throat cut during the assault. He wasn't asked to give evidence in the court, and only found out about the acquittal through the media. His father said that Heath had been forever changed by the incident.

"He was assaulted by being hit with a bottle, he had his throat slashed, it nearly penetrated the jugular vein," he said.

Mr Twomey claimed that his son was pressured by US officials to accept the transfer of jurisdiction. He says that his son was led to believe that the penalty would be more severe.

"It's such a foreign outcome compared to what would normally ensue within the Queensland justice system," he said.

Ruddock is investigating the matter, and has asked for a full report from the US Judge Advocate General, who prosecutes all military cases.

"I want to know whether or not [justice has been done], I want that matter tested," he said.

The US Embassy referred inquiries to the JAG office. They have been approached by The World Today, but are yet to comment.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

1880 - Australian outlaw and folk hero Ned Kelly was captured in Glenrowan, Victoria.

1914 - Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria, was killed by Serb nationalist Gavrilo Princip in the Assassination in Sarajevo, catalysing the outbreak of World War I.

1919 - The Treaty of Versailles was signed, ending World War I.

1978 - The United States Supreme Court, in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke 438 US 265 1978, barred quota systems in college admissions but affirmed the constitutionality of programs giving advantage to minorities.

1990 - Paperback Software, a company founded by Adam Osborne, was found guilty by a U.S. court of copyright violation for copying the appearance and menu system of Lotus 1-2-3 in its competing spreadsheet program.

Quote of the Day

"Now you see, Lone Starr, that evil will always triumph, because good is dumb." ~ "Dark Helmet" in Spaceballs

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. If you would like to write, publish or edit articles, visit en.wikinews.org

All stories on Wikinews are in the public domain. By making our content perpetually available for free redistribution and use, we hope to contribute to a global digital commons. Wikinews also aims to write stories from a neutral point of view.

Audio Wikinews

Audio Wikinews is a public domain, non point-of-view news radio program recorded daily. News Briefs are short, on-the-hours breaking news updates; while Full Reports are a thorough review of the day's news.

http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Audio_Wikinews

About Wikinews Print Edition

For more information about Wikinews Print Edition visit:

http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Wikinews:Print_edition