

Top Stories

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Sir Edward Heath, former British PM, dies at 89



Sir Edward Heath, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1970-1974 and leader of the conservative party from 1965-1975, has died at his home in Salisbury just a

week after his 89th birthday. He was created a Knight of the Garter in 1992.

Afghan warlord convicted of torture by British court

Zardad Faryadi Sarwar, a warlord who controlled several checkpoints at the road between Kabul and Jalalabad in Afghanistan in the early 1990s, was convicted today of torture and hostage-taking by a London court.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Hurricane Emily slams into the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. Tens of thousands of tourists and residents were evacuated from the beach resorts in and around Cancún and Cozumel in the state of Quintana Roo.
- In Taiwan, authorities evacuate hundreds of people when Typhoon Haitang hits the country. The typhoon is heading towards Okinawa.
- In Australia, aboriginal leaders pay tribute to Sir Ronald Wilson, white aboriginal right campaigner, who died last Friday.
- In Malaysia, a group of 30 people attacks the religious commune of Sky Kingdom.
- In Lebanon, the Parliament grants amnesty to the imprisoned Lebanese Forces leader Samir Geagea. Geagea was arrested since 1994.

Hurricane Emily is second strike for Jamaica

The outer bands of the Category 4 storm Hurricane Emily started to effect Jamaica shortly before 8:00am Saturday. Increasing winds and rain swept the island nation throughout the afternoon as the eye of the storm passed 100 miles off the southern coast. Utility poles were downed and storm debris closed the seaside highway to the international airport. Other roads were reported closed as well.

While islanders did not get through the two storms unscathed, and 4 people were left dead, the Land and Environment Minister Dean Peart told reporters, "Mercifully, Jamaica was spared the worst".

Buses were sent by officials to southern coastal areas to evacuate residents from the flood prone region, but most refused to leave and preferred to ride it out beside 8 foot waves that pounded areas of the coast line. Wind gusts of 155 mph doubled over palm trees in the capital city of Kingston.

At a southern penninsula seaside fishing villiage, Port Royal residents boarded up and prepared for the worst again, as surfers gathered nearby to take on the challenge of 15 to 18 foot waves. "If I'm going to die, it's going to be right here," said a local resident Gordon Murphy, 39, with his 2-year-old son. "What's next?" he joked, "[Hurricane] Franklin?"

Many shops and businesses stayed open as long as they could, classifying it as another inconvenience despite its near Category 5 strength. Instead of the possible disaster that many prepared for, by late afternoon, Emily had all but disappeared. Light scattered showers in some areas of the island were the only remnant, as residents went about their lives after the second hurricane scare in as many weeks.

Supplies that many stocked for Dennis and Emily may yet be put to use. Many wonder what storms are yet to come. Authorities say this will be one of the most active hurricane seasons in history. Emily was the strongest and earliest to form this year since records, dating back to 1860, have been kept.

Earlier, Emily stuck Grenada on Thursday with nearly a direct hit. A national disaster was called the day after its winds ravaged hundreds of homes and killed at least one man.

UEFA CL: Second leg of first qualifying round starts tomorrow

Winners of the UEFA Champions League first qualifying round will be known by July 20. Three games will be played tomorrow, and nine the following day.

July 19 games
Last year's Champions League winner, Liverpool, has the clearest chance of advancing to the second round, after beating the Welsh team with 3:0 in the first leg. FBK Kaunas is also expected to come out victorious, after winning 4 - 2 away. Havnar Bóltfelag would need to win with at least 3 goals difference, unless they score more

Wikipedia Current Events

- The President of the United States, George Bush, welcomes Prime Minister Singh of India in Arrival Ceremony.
- Eight former Serbian secret police officers, and supporters of Slobodan Milošević, have been found guilty of the murder of former President Ivan Stambolic and sentenced to between 15 and 40 years in prison.
- The Federal Constitutional Court, the highest Court in Germany, has ordered the release of Mamoun Darkazanli who has been accused by Spain of having funded the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

then 4 goals, when they could get by with 2 goals advantage in the second leg.

July 20 games

Only two clear favorites are Macedonian Rabotnicki, who won 6:0 at home, and Moldovian Sheriff who managed to score four goals away in Malta.

Afghan warlord convicted by British court of torture

Zardad Faryadi Sarwar (also known as Zardad Khan and Commander Zardad), a warlord who controlled several checkpoints at the road between Kabul and Jalalabad in Afghanistan in the early 1990s, was convicted today of torture and hostage-taking. The Court at Old Bailey in London found that Zardad pursued a reign of fear along his checkpoints and ordered summary executions and torture of innocent civilians. The sentence is to be announced on Tuesday.

Zardad denied all charges throughout the trials, and claimed he had been set up by enemies in Afghanistan.

"I have never killed anybody and if anybody in the whole of Afghanistan can produce that evidence against me then I will accept that crime," he said.

The case is considered to be a landmark in international law. British law allows the prosecution of crimes like torture and hostage-taking in the UK even if no british citizen was involved and the incidents occurred overseas. "There are some crimes which are so heinous, such an affront to justice, that they can be tried in any country", Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith said.

Zardad fled to the UK in 1998 after he had fought both the Russians and the Taliban in Afghanistan's long civil war. He settled in a suburban London home and was first confronted by BBC Journalist John Simpson in 2000. Simpson's report sparked a lengthy investigation that would eventually lead to British prosecutors travelling to Afghanistan and questioning Zardad's victims. A first trial began in 2004 but failed because the jury couldn't agree on a verdict.

Utah bill requiring divine design

education withdrawn by Senator Chris Butters

Utah Senator Chris Butters has decided not to introduce a bill requiring the teaching of "divine design" in Utah schools, at least for this year. Butters withdrew after State Board of Education director Patti Harrington assured him that Utah public school curriculum does not teach that man descended from apes.

Butters had hoped his divine design proposal would escape the controversy of creationism or intelligent design. "The only people who will be upset about this are atheists," he stated on June 6 when he announced his intention to run the bill.

Utah is home to the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints also known as the Mormons. On the surface it would seem Utah would be a likely scene of intense religious pressure in public schools over the teaching of evolution. But unlike states with a strong Christian conservative presence, Utah's LDS leaders have avoided some of the more contentious separation state and church battles.

On the topic of divine design, official LDS church spokesmen have been largely silent at least in public. But with more than 90% of the legislature made up of members of the LDS faith, few in Utah would deny the influence of the church on public policy.

Groups on both sides of the issue are gearing up for what many consider an inevitable fight. The ACLU of Utah has posted a paper on divine design on its web site (<http://www.acluutah.org>). The Eagle Forum which wields significant political power in Utah has expressed its support for Butters proposed legislation.

Six people arrested under immigration laws in Leeds, England

Six people were arrested in northern England today under immigration laws. The arrests were made in a suburb of Leeds, where two of the suspected bombers of the London terrorist attacks lived.

However the police say they are not linking the arrests with the London bombings. Early reports had suggested that the men had been arrested under anti-terrorism laws as part of

the London bombing investigation, a statement on the West Yorkshire Police website said they were working closely with the Metropolitan Police as part of their enquiry, but at the current stage they were not linking the arrests with the recent incidents in London.

All six men remain in police custody and West Yorkshire Police have yet to release more details about the arrests.

11-year-old California girl charged for throwing stone in defense

An 11-year-old girl faces serious assault charges after casting a stone at a group of boys who were propelling water balloons at her. In April, Maribel Cuevas was apprehended by Fresno, California police and spent five days in a detention center after throwing the object at the group of boys who bombarded her with water balloons as she walked down the sidewalk. A 9-year-old boy was hit with the stone, and suffered a deep wound to his head requiring medical assistance.

Since then, Cuevas has spent one month under house arrest pending court. Cuevas' lawyer, Richard Beshwate, told the BBC that "They [Fresno police] are treating her like a violent parole offender. It's not a felony, it's an 11-year-old acting like an 11-year-old."

Fresno Police Sergeant Anthony Martinez responded, saying the following: "We responded. We determined a felony assault had taken place and the officers took the actions that were necessary." Cuevas is due back in court next month on felony assault charges.

The girl was placed in juvenile hall during her five-day detention, with only one 30-minute visit from her parents. She was then placed under a 30 day house arrest and required to wear an electronic monitoring bracelet. The house arrest allowed the girl to attend school.

Maribel, who knows very little English, said that the boy initiated the conflict — the boy also admitted as much.

Cooper claims he learned of Plame through Rove

In a TIME magazine article, reporter Matthew Cooper claimed he learned that Plame worked with the CIA through a conversation with Karl Rove. However, he denied that Rove directly named Valerie Plame. He also revealed that he discussed Plame with Lewis Libby, the deputy Chief of Staff for the U.S. Vice-President Dick Cheney.

The revelation corroborates Rove's testimony to the grand jury, leaked to several news sources, that he learned of Plame's name from Robert Novak and another journalist (Rove testified that he cannot remember which one), and that he did tell Cooper in a later discussion that Joseph Wilson's wife worked for the CIA, though he testified he never mentioned Plame by name.

In a Sunday MSNBC Meet the Press broadcast, Cooper said he secured a more specific written waiver from two sources, Rove and Libby, which led him to reverse his earlier refusal to cooperate with the federal grand jury investigation into the CIA disclosure of Plame. This second waiver was signed only hours prior to the contempt of court proceedings that would have put him in jail, the fate of the New York Times reporter Judith Miller who refused to reveal her sources to the same court. He said during the broadcast there were other White House sources as well, but declined during the interview to disclose their names.

The waiver Cooper secured releases him from the secrecy of grand jury proceedings. He wrote a 1st person account of the conversation with Rove that was published Sunday on the TIME Online Edition. In a marketing move made by TIME, they turned the high interest in the story into an online money maker by charging \$1.99 for access to the story. 6 print issues of the magazine come with the purchase.

Yankees win 3 in 4 game series with Red Sox

The win Sunday by the Yankees at Fenway Park gives them 3 in a row in the 4 game series, and inches them closer to the top in baseball's American League East. Behind the pitching of newly-acquired Al Leiter, the 5-3 win over the Red Sox puts them a 1/2 game out of the top spot. A sweep by taking final game of the series will make

them the leader in the tight American League East race.

The injury-laden Yankee pitching staff got a lift from Leiter's performance who went 6 1/3 innings, and allowed one run on three hits. The 39-year-old lefty came by way of trade with the Marlins to return to the pitching staff. Yankee manager Joe Torre said, "The one thing we knew about the start was that he wasn't going to come in here and be rattled or be nervous."

In Saturday's game, Randy Johnson struck out 10 and Alex Rodriguez homered in a 6-run 3rd as the Yankees beat the Red Sox at Fenway Park, 7 - 4. Matt Clement was roughed up early, allowing six runs, five hits, and five walks over 2 and two-thirds innings. Johnny Damon extended his league-leading hitting streak to 28. The Red Sox had a chance to creep closer to the Yankees but a would-be 2 run shot off David Ortiz was caught.

American League East standings:

1. Boston -
2. New York 0.5
3. Baltimore 1.0
4. Toronto 5.5
5. Tampa Bay 20.0

Death toll in Musayyib, Iraq fuel tanker blast rises to 98

The death toll from a suicide bomb attack in Musayyib, Iraq has risen to 98. A suicide bomber attacked a fuel truck arriving at the gas station in the Iraqi town overnight on July 16, running up to the truck and detonating his explosives. The huge blast which followed killed many locals at a crowded vegetable market near the local Shi'ite mosque.

Early reports put the number of dead at between 50-60, but this has risen as the full scale of the carnage has become apparent. Hospital sources said they were treating 75 wounded, including 19 in a serious condition. The attack in Musayyib was the deadliest suicide attack since 125 people were killed in February in nearby Al Hilla.

'This is a black day in the history of the town,' the Musayyib police chief, Yas Khudayr, said.

Musayyib lies south of Baghdad, in the

center of a dangerous area known as the 'triangle of death', where patrolling US forces are subject to constant attack from Iraqi resistance forces.

Angry crowds protested on Sunday against the local authorities, which they blamed for not doing enough to prevent the attack. According to one protester, police had placed a ban on trucks entering the town, but had allowed the fuel tanker through.

During a parliamentary session in Baghdad, the government was blamed by politicians for the dire security situation. Calls were made for local militia to be formed to replace the police and soldiers who had failed to protect Iraqis.

Sir Edward Heath, former British PM, dies at 89



Sir Edward Heath, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1970-1974 and leader of the Conservative Party from 1965-1975, has died at his home in Salisbury just a week after his 89th birthday.

Heath led the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community, initiated a failed power-sharing government in Northern Ireland, and, in order to cope with economic unrest, instituted a three-day work week in the UK.

Today he was tributed by fellow politicians, including Baroness Margaret Thatcher, who succeeded Heath after he was ousted from the Conservative Party leadership in 1975. She said that with Heath's death Britain had lost a 'political giant'. There was also praise, from Heath's former political secretary, Sir Douglas Hurd, for his contribution to the EEC.

'He got us into the European Union,' Sir Hurd said. 'I mean that is a huge step, a very difficult one, which I doubt would have

happened without his particular kind of thoroughness and determination. That was an amazing achievement.[1]

Prime Minister Tony Blair issued a statement describing Sir Heath as 'a man of great integrity and beliefs'.

Heath was offered the post of Ambassador to the United States in 1979, but declined. He continued to represent the constituency of Old Bexley and Sidcup as a backbench MP until his retirement in 2001. He was created a Knight of the Garter in 1992

Tiger Woods wins British Open

Tiger Woods has won the British Open Championship at St Andrews for the second time. Woods had held the lead at the Old Course since the first day of the championship, with opening rounds of 66-67. He then battled tough conditions on the third day for a 71, and hit a closing round of 70; five shots clear of Colin Montgomerie.

The win at St Andrews marks Tiger Woods' 10th major title of his career.

Grand Theft Auto under fire



Senator Hillary Clinton

The Grand Theft Auto (GTA) game series, based on the underworld, pushes social limits on violence and sexual content in the video gaming industry. The newer Grand Theft Auto 3 release sparked controversy when it came to light the plot was based on an unnamed character's mission to destroy and slaughter his way to the top of the local crime scene. Since that release, further games were developed: Grand Theft Auto: Vice City, and Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.

Thursday, according to a report filed by Gamespot, congresswoman Hillary Clinton called on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to "take immediate action to determine the source of graphic

pornographic and violent content appearing on the Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas video game." Clinton also wanted the FTC to determine if an "AO" rating would be more suitable for the game than current "M" rating.



Federal Trade Commission building in Washington D.C.

Clinton said she would work quickly to create a bill for a federal law that would "put some teeth into video game ratings." The federal legislation by Clinton would follow similar state initiatives. California assemblymen Leland Yee introduced a bill in his state, as did Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich. The purpose of the state and federal bills would be to "prohibit the sale of violent and sexually explicit video games to minors." The passage and enactment of the proposed bill by Clinton would make it a federal offence to sell video game content to persons under the age of the games's rating.

Like many Grand Theft Auto gamers, the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) is cautious over Clinton legislative proposal. Patricia Vance, the president of ESRB, issued this statement: "We urge all parties not to rush to judgment until all of the relevant facts, some of which are highly technical and complicated, have been established. Any second guessing at this point would be premature and inappropriate as this investigation continues." Vance said amongst the ESRB's top interests were to protect children, to educate parents, and make sure parents make good decisions on what video games their children be allowed to play.

Jack Thompson, the subject of beefs with Grand Theft Auto in the past, is a Republican attorney from Miami. Thompson sent out an email to major gaming outlets (Gamespot for example). The letter at first stated "I, as a lifelong Republican, am going to thank Senator

Hillary Rodham Clinton," and offered admiration for Clinton's campaign against violence and sexual content in video games. The email then went on to criticize Doug Lowenstein, who helps manage ESRB and is the president of the Entertainment Software Association. Thompson wrote, "Doug Lowenstein could have prevented what is going to happen today, but he preferred to shoot the messengers." Thompson also mentioned the Columbine High School massacre, and claimed it was the fault of the developers of games (specifically id Software, the maker of Doom). He claims the U.S. Constitution first ammendment right to freedom of speech in no way protects the gaming industry from censorship.

Lowenstein issued the following statement regarding the current video game/Hot Coffee issue: "Retailers should not sell Mature games to minors, parents should watch what their kids watch, and parents should and can rely on the ESRB ratings to make the right choices for their families. We hope that... Senator Clinton will abandon the bill and work cooperatively with industry and others to ensure that parents take advantage of the effective tools on the market to regulate the games their kids play."

Although some of the statements mentioned are related to video games in general and not so much GTA, a majority of all of this recently publicity did indeed start with the Hot Coffee mod for Grand Theft Auto. ESRB has never been pressured any harder in the past than they are now, and Rockstar still denies that they put the sex scenes in the game; although it has been recently demonstrated that Action Max-Replay (a cheat/feature-unlocking system for the Sony PlayStation 2) allows the user to play the "mini sex games" - the exact same thing the Hot Coffee mod unlocks for the PC version of GTA San Andreas.



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Today in History

711 – Roderic and the Visigoths in Iberia were defeated in the Battle of Guadalete by Moorish Umayyad invaders led by Tariq ibn-Ziyad.

1553 – Lady Jane Grey was replaced by Mary I of England as Queen of England after holding that title for just nine days.

1848 – The two-day Women's Rights Convention opened in Seneca Falls, New York, United States.

1870 – France declared war on Prussia, starting the Franco-Prussian War.

1979 – Sandinista rebels overthrew the US-backed government of the Somoza family in Nicaragua.

Quote of the Day

"The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall." ~ Nelson Mandela

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