

Top Stories

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Two-minute silence for London bombings marked across the EU



BREAKINGNEWS

A two-minute silence at noon BST (+1 UTC) has been marked by millions across the United Kingdom and the European Union to remember those who died last Thursday in the London attacks.

Palestinian rocket attack kills Israeli woman



BREAKINGNEWS

A 22-year-old woman was killed in her home by a rocket attack. The rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip. Islamic Jihad and Fatah take responsibility, while IDF accuses Hamas and threatens it is free to act against the organization.

Wikipedia Current Events

- In the morning, a 5th person dies from injuries sustained in Tuesday's Netanya suicide bombing attack.
- People across London observe two minutes of silence in memory of those who died in the 7 July 2005 London bombings.
- 2005 Atlantic hurricane season: Rain from Hurricane Emily caused flooding and mudslides in Grenada, as the hurricane continues to grow to near Category 3 strength.

Wikipedia Current Events

- U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist announced he would not retire from the court. In October of 2004 Reinquest, 80, was diagnosed with Thyroid Cancer and had undergone a tracheotomy.
- One Israeli woman, 22, dies in the moshav of Netiv Ha'asara after Palestinian militant groups Hamas and Fatah's al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades fire a barrage of more than dozen Qassam rockets. (The moshav is located on the Israeli side of the official border with the Gaza Strip, but some Palestinians claim it as part of the Strip.)
- Russia demands that USA extradite Leonid Nevzlin, ex-CEO of Yukos, to face various charges, including organizing a contract killing. Nevzlin addressed the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on Wednesday in Washington.
- In South Korea, two F-4E military jet fighter planes crash into sea in two separate accidents. One of the four pilots survives.
- In New Zealand, Graham Capill, former leader of Christian Heritage Party, is sentenced for nine years for sexual abuse of 3 young girls.

Married couple scheme issues phony driver's licenses in Virginia

A husband and wife team from Stafford County, Virginia were arrested Wednesday on charges they sold authentic driver's licenses to illegal immigrants and others for between \$2,000 and \$3,500.

Francisco J. Martinez, 57, a manager of a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) service center in Springfield, and his wife Miriam Martinez, 56, a former DMV employee, allegedly sold 50 fraudulent licenses, ID's, since January 2004. They face federal charges of conspiring to commit identification fraud, a possible 15 years in prison and a fine up to \$250,000.

The break in the case was made when police arrested Daniel Jose Guardia Lopez, 25, on June 13. Lopez, an Alexandria resident, is an illegal immigrant from Bolivia. He pleaded guilty Monday for his involvement in the fraud, and turned informer after confessing to acting as a gatekeeper that arranged for other illegals to obtain phony ID's through the Martinez couple.

This is the second incident in as many years where the selling of phony ID's was uncovered in Virginia. The need for awareness was raised when it was learned that seven of the nineteen hijackers involved in the 9/11 attacks had Virginia ID's. U.S. Attorney Paul J. McNulty, speaking on the federal crackdown that has ensued, said "A few years ago, one could fraudulently obtain a driver's license for about \$100." Obtained legally, they cost \$20. He called "reprehensible" the alleged actions of the Martinez couple.

Court documents for the case record that Lopez, who worked as a construction worker, would collect the ID fee from other illegal Bolivians, and keep \$500 for himself. He would then steer the person to the service center where Mr. Martinez worked. Martinez, a longtime employee and 4-year supervisor, would often fill out the immigrant's application, and falsely certify that an ID from another state was surrendered.

Lopez became involved with the Martinez's when his own driving privileges had been suspended. He met Miriam, who arranged to have a new ID issued to him, through her husband. A working relationship developed between the two, and Miriam would call Lopez and tell him when to appear at the DMV service center with clients who followed behind him in the scheme. The arrest of Lopez was unknown to Miriam when he made a monitored call to her and said he had 2 cousins from Bolivia. This ultimately led to undercover agents, who posed as the cousins, being issued ID's by Francisco, her husband. During this sting

operation, the 2 agents paid \$6,000 and presented no identification.

Virginia DMV spokeswoman, Pam Goheen, said one of the steps taken to beef up enforcement and auditing efforts at service centers is to have all applications double checked by "document verifiers". Goheen said, "There is a heightened awareness of the importance of a driver's license," and called the arrests "unfortunate and disappointing".

Miriam Martinez was a clerk at a Tysons Corner DMV service center for 2 years ending in 1998, and then again briefly in 2003. The earlier incident of ID fraud stemmed out of that location. Both cities, Tysons Corner and Alexandria, are within commuting distance to Washington, D.C.

Serbian government gives scholarships to students studying abroad

One hundred students from Serbia who decide to start graduate studies abroad will get €15,000 a year scholarships from the Fund for young talents. Students who can apply need to have at least 8.5 GPA on 5 to 10 scale, and have to be younger than 26. Another condition is that they have to work in Serbia for at least 5 years after finishing their graduate studies.

Winners will be decided based on their GPA and prestige of the university they apply to. Also, one thousand university seniors will be awarded €250 a month.

The secretary of the Serbian Student Union, Marko Milovanović, is satisfied with this action, but also notes that it would be better if economic needs of students were taken into account too.

The Fund for young talents will cover about 2.5% of students in Serbia.

Metropolitan Police release photographs of one of the London bombers



The Metropolitan Police released two

photographs at 15:30 today as a result of an intense investigation into London bomb attacks of last week. The photographs show Hassib Hussain who is believed to be bomber of London bus #30. The first photograph is a passport photo of Hasib Hussain and the second shows is a crop of a CCTV image from Luton station at 7:20 on the day of the attack.

The Metropolitan Police claimed in a statement that they believe that the 18 year old traveled from West Yorkshire in the company of three men. He was seen at Luton Station at 07.20 on the morning of the bombings. Police are trying to gain more eyewitness information and have asked the public to call the telephone number: 0800 789321 (+44 800 789321 if outside the UK) if they saw Hussain last Thursday around the Kings Cross area.



The Metropolitan Police made a request for any additional information about Hasib's whereabouts after he left Luton.

"We need to establish his movements between 8.26am at King's Cross and 9.47am on the #30 bus when the explosion occurred. Did you see this man at King's Cross? Was he alone or with others? Do you know the route he took from the station? Did you see him get on to a #30 bus? And if you did, where and when was that."

Israeli Air Force attacks in Gaza



Shortly after midnight (UTC +3) the Israeli Air Force (IAF) attacked several Hamas targets in Gaza. The attack was in reaction to the rocket and mortar attack on Israel today. No injuries or fatalities were reported.

One of the buildings that were attacked is an ammunition warehouse in Khan-Yunus and another one is an office of the Hamas in the Jabalia refugee camp, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) reported.

Six missiles were fired from helicopter gunships, according to Palestinian sources. The missiles at Jebalia were fired on a Hamas religion studies center and the others were fired on a rocket launch site near the Khan-Yunus cemetery. A third firing was at an empty building in the Deir el-Balah area.

Electric power was lost in wide parts of Gaza.

The IDF has decided to divide the Gaza Strip into three parts in order to prevent the passage of weapons and militants between different parts of the strip. This is the first time in months that the IDF takes such step, which is a burden on the Palestinian civil population.

First Active offer 100% mortgages in Ireland



First Active has become the first financial institution to offer 100% mortgages in the Republic of Ireland. The bank previously offered 100% financing to professionals in finance and medicine, but is now to offer this product to anyone who can afford to meet the repayments.

The development is a huge boost for first time home buyers who have been struggling to get on the Irish property market in recent years due to the rapid increase in house prices. A typical first time buyer in Dublin with 92% financing would normally have to put down a deposit of €20,000-€30,000 in cash, but now have the option to produce no deposit.

First Active has said that 100% mortgages will be available across its entire range of mortgage products.

Note however that this is not necessarily an entirely positive development.

The United States and most of Europe have

experienced a housing price bubble in recent years. A bubble occurs when buyers purchase a property not because its price is appropriate for its actual value but because they expect the price to significantly rise in the short term permitting resale with a profit.

In other words, the prices people pay for properties becomes divorced from the real value of the property; the purchase is speculative and depends purely upon the expectation that people will continue to buy properties in this way (e.g. without proper consideration of their real value).

The terrible weakness in this is that when the market corrects itself and prices fall to a level where properties are being priced at their actual realistic value, anyone holding a property loses a great deal of money, since the price they paid does not reflect the actual realistic value of the property.

This kind of juddering shock to the housing market is extremely undesirable. Significant write downs in the value of property often significantly depress the economy as a whole.

Less than 100% mortgages force buyers to invest a significant amount of money in the act of purchasing their house, which tends to discourage purely speculative purchasing, thus helping to mediate house price bubbles.

With 100% financing, anyone who can meet repayments can speculatively purchase a property. This naturally encourages pricing bubbles.

Hillary Clinton demands video-game smut enquiry

Hillary Clinton has joined the controversy over a mod for Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas called "Hot Coffee" which disable the games built-in censorship mode, allowing players to participate in graphic sex mini-games within the game.

The ESRB have continued to state that they are not intending to take any action against Take2 Interactive (the games producers.)

Patricia Vance, the president of the ESRB said that the author of the modification "actually had to change the underlying code

[of the game]. It's not a cheat, It's not an Easter egg... Game developers have been known to deactivate parts of their code without removing them from the finished products. Oftentimes, changes are toward the end of development, and they program workarounds."

Building partially collapses in New York City's Upper West Side

A building being prepared for demolition collapsed this morning in New York's Upper West Side around 9 a.m. EDT. Five people are known to be injured from the accident, as well as one rescue worker who was injured in the aftermath. None of the injuries were life threatening

The building was a supermarket, which was being taken down to make room for a high-rise building, something that residents took issue with. The roof, front wall, and scaffolding all fell to the ground, as stated by Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta.

Soon after the incident at least 100 police and fire department personnel combed the wreckage for more victims, using search and rescue dogs to find people by scent. They quickly accounted for the twenty-five construction workers who were working on the supermarket. Most of the injuries of the victims were broken bones, including one person who broke all four extremities.

Subway lines 1, 2, and 3 have been closed or redirected in response, along with the M104 bus.

Palestinian rocket attack kills Israeli woman

A coordinated Palestinian attack of four Qassam rockets and more than 20 mortar shells took place around 6 p.m. IST (+3 UTC). The weapons were fired at the Israeli collective farms of Netiv Ha'asara and Nahal Oz, as well as other villages and military bases across the Gaza Strip border.

A 22-year-old woman, Dana Galkovitz, was killed when her home suffered a direct hit by one of the rockets. One person was lightly injured and three others were treated for anxiety.

The Islamic Jihad and the Fatah both claimed responsibility for the attack.

However, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claim that the attack was carried out by the Hamas. "The Hamas has revealed its true face, from now on we will act against it freely", an IDF source said.

According to Palestinian militants, the attack avenges the killing of a militant leader by the IDF in Nablus, in the aftermath of Tuesday's suicide attack on the city of Netanya.

This attack is a further blow to the fragile cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), which has been in place since February this year.

During the past 4 years, thousands of mortar shells and rockets were fired on Israeli towns and villages by Palestinian militant organizations.

Hurricane Emily hits Grenada

Hurricane Emily has hit the small eastern Caribbean island of Grenada. The hurricane, which has been upgraded to Category 2 status, hit the island early this morning and has caused widespread damage. It has been reported that many buildings have lost their roofs and there has been much flooding.

The storm affected the northern parishes of St. Patrick's and St. Andrew's the worst and also caused considerable damage to the nearby islands of Carriacou and Petite Martinique. No fatalities have yet been reported. Earlier this year Hurricane Dennis hit Cuba and Haiti, leaving 41 people dead.



The damage after Hurricane Ivan in 2004

Last year Hurricane Ivan devastated the island and resulted in the deaths of 39 people. An Irish priest, who works in Grenada, described to a Wikinews reporter earlier this month the damage that last year's storm caused. His church was badly damaged and all of his parishioners suffered damage to their homes. He said that even last week services such as the power supply were still not back to normal. The priest even told

jokingly of one member of the area who stopped coming to church after the hurricane, only to return several months later to thank God for at least sparing their lives. The priest is currently at home in Ireland but will be returning later this summer.

Emily is the fifth tropical storm to develop this hurricane season. Emily, along with Arlene and Dennis, reached hurricane status. Bret and Cindy remained tropical storms.

The British Royal Navy, which usually deploys two ships to the Caribbean, has placed the destroyer HMS Liverpool and the tanker RFA Wave Knight on standby. During Hurricane Frances and Ivan last year, HMS Richmond and RFA Wave Ruler were actively involved in humanitarian relief. Prime Minister Keith Mitchell of Grenada had effectively run his country for seven hours from Richmond after his home had been destroyed.

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

Australia commits more troops to Afghanistan

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has announced that 150 SAS personnel will be serving in Afghanistan within two months, and a further 200 troops will follow them by early next year. According to Mr Howard the decision is the result of a request from the United States and others.

Opposition leader Kim Beazley has said that Labor supported the plan. Mr Beazley has been critical of the government in recent weeks because of its military focus on Iraq rather than Afghanistan, which he says is the source of the terrorist threat.

Beazley offered that it has been "obvious for some time that the job was only partially completed when the commitment was made earlier."

The commitment comes amid a resurgence of the Taliban and an increase in insurgency activities in Afghanistan.

"The progress that has been made in the establishment of a legitimate government in Afghanistan has come under increasing

attack and pressure from the Taliban ... and some elements of al-Qaeda," Mr Howard said.

The additional troop commitment has been welcomed by the Afghani government. Lutfullah Mashaal, Afghanistan's Interior Ministry spokesman, said that assistance with security or reconstruction and development is always welcome, however he expressed disappointment that the deployment would only be 12 months. Mr Howard has said that he does not like to make open ended commitments, and also stated that extra security would be needed for the APEC summit in 2007.

"At the time of the APEC meeting and in the months leading up to it, the need in this country for a heightened elite security capacity," he said.

Two-minute silence for London bombings marked across the EU

A two-minute silence at noon BST (UTC+1) has been marked by millions across the United Kingdom and the European Union to remember those who died last Thursday in the London attacks.

In London, all buses and cabs came to halt, and all people in their offices stood outside. Trains were not stopped but the two-minute silence was announced and marked through the underground and overground services. Aeroplanes delayed their takeoff to respect the two-minute silence.

At the bombing sites, wreaths were laid in respect, with hundreds gathering at the sites to mark the silence.

At Buckingham Palace, Queen Elizabeth II stood on the forecourt in silence, accompanied by Foot Guards. Prime Minister Tony Blair marked the silence in the garden of 10 Downing Street, and Mayor of London Ken Livingstone paid his respects at Trafalgar Square.

At The Open Championship taking place at St Andrews, golfers also paid their respects. Yesterday, Anfield stadium fell in silence during the Liverpool F.C. vs TNS UEFA Champions League football match.

In Paris, France, President Jacques Chirac stood in silence at the Elysee Palace before

taking part in the Bastille Day parade. The European Parliament marked the silence along with European Commission offices across the EU.

A vigil will be held in Trafalgar Square, London at 18:00 (6 p.m.) BST (+1 UTC).

London bombing suspects are all British nationals

Profiles of the suspects in the July 7, 2005 bombings in London have been released. They are all British nationals.

The four alleged suicide bombers Shahzad Tanweer, 22, attended Leeds Metropolitan University, where he studied sports science. Hasib Hussain, 19, from Leeds. Mohammed Sidique Khan, 30, born in Pakistan, from Dewsbury. Lindsey Germaine: Piccadilly Line train, Jamaican-born resident of Aylesbury.

Shahzad and Hasib were reported missing by their families the previous week.

The suspects were caught on surveillance camera arriving at Kings Cross station at 08:30 BST, each carrying military style backpacks, on the day of the blasts. The suspects were then seen going their separate ways twenty minutes before the explosions. It is suspected that the delayed fourth bombing aboard a double-decker bus was intended for travelers on the Northern Line, which had been suspended earlier that morning.

Alleged accomplices
Magdi Asdi el-Nashar: renter of a house where explosives were found; an Egyptian-born biochemistry lecturer who has disappeared
Ejaz Fiaz (also named as Eliaz Fiaz): possible co-conspirator, in his early thirties, from Beeston, Leeds. Initially thought to have been the suicide bomber on the Piccadilly Line train.
Unnamed co-conspirator: an Al Qaeda operative believed to be the bomb-maker and cell organizer, described as a Pakistani in his 30s, who entered Britain through a port some time in June 2005, and left the country on 6 July.
Mustafa Setmariam Nasar: suspected planner also believed to have organized the 11 March 2004 Madrid bombings.

Wikinews Back Page



Today in History

1410 – The Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania defeated the Teutonic Knights in the Battle of Grunwald.

1685 – James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, was executed for his role in the Monmouth Rebellion.

1799 – French soldiers uncovered the Rosetta Stone in the Egyptian port city of Rashid.

1806 – The Pike expedition, led by Zebulon Pike to explore the Louisiana Territory, began near St. Louis, Missouri.
1974 – Archbishop Makarios, President of Cyprus, was overthrown in a coup d'état.

Quote of the Day

"Eternal vigilance must be maintained to guard against those who seek to stifle ideas, establish a narrow orthodoxy, and divide our nation along arbitrary lines of race, ethnicity, and religious belief or non-belief." ~ Jesse Ventura

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