



Top Stories

Toronto school shooting kills one

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Reports say body of missing US soldier found in Iraq

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Featured story

Exclusive video interview with New Zealand Opposition leader, John Key

John Key, New Zealand's Leader of the Opposition, and leader of the National Party, posted a video response after being sent questions by Wikinews. Key discusses how and why he participates in video blogging, and shares the details of his video blogging activities and future plans to make use of so-called 'new media'.

Wikipedia Current Events

•Lebanon's Defence Minister Elias Murr issues an ultimatum to Fatah al-Islam militants in the Nahr el-Bared refugee camp in Tripoli, Lebanon.

•At least 27 people die as a wall collapses in a bar in Tirupur in the South Indian state of Tamil

Wikipedia Current Events

Nadu.

•Militants in the Gaza Strip fire eight rockets at southern Israeli cities, Sderot and Kibbutz Nir Am, which is close to Ashkelon. No injuries are reported, except shock and death of a horse.

•The IAF makes an air strike on the Gaza Strip, in which they destroy two buildings. The Israeli army said that the buildings were being used to store and manufacture weapons. Hospital officials said that seven Palestinians were wounded in the attack.

•Israeli troops enter into a small village in southern Gaza, detaining seven Palestinians for questioning, according to Israeli army officials. One of those held, claimed that the troops threatened to crush their area if rocket fire continues. All of the detainees were later released.

•The British Government announce a carbon emissions trading scheme, the Carbon Reduction Commitment, that will apply to hotel chains, supermarkets, banks, and other large organisations.

•A Serbian court finds 12 men, including Milorad Ulemek, Zvezdan Jovanović, Dejan Milenković, Aleksandar Simović, Vladimir Milisavljević Budala, Sretko Kalinić, Ninoslav Konstantinović, Milan Jurišić Jura, Dušan Krsmanović, Željko Tojaga, Saša Pejaković and Branislav Bezarević, guilty of the 2003

Wikipedia Current Events

assassination of former Prime Minister of Serbia Zoran Đinđić.

•A Thai gunman opens fire with an AK-47 in a market in Pathum Thani Province, north of Bangkok, killing a villager, a security guard and a police officer and critically injuring another six before he was shot dead by the police.

Toronto school shooting kills one

In Toronto, Canada's largest city, a high school shooting this afternoon at around 2:35 p.m. killed one teenager.

A grade 9 student, Jordan Manners, whose age is disputed, though believed to be 14, was shot in the chest while near the swimming pool of C. W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood of Toronto. He was rushed to Sunnybrook Hospital, but died soon after the incident.

The school quickly went into lockdown mode, though several students came out in stretchers and were taken to Sunnybrook Hospital for hyperventilation. Police searched the building for weapons but found none. Shortly after, an Emergency Task Force (ETF) crew entered the building. An officer was stationed in every room during the lengthy lockdown. The school was taken out of lockdown at approximately 6:15 p.m. and students are being bused on TTC buses to a nearby middle school. "Students have a right to a safe

school environment. It's shocking that such [an event] could take place in our schools," said Bill Blair, Toronto Police Chief.

Mayor David Miller interrupted the city council to make a brief speech to the councilors when he heard the news. "I never thought that we would have to have a moment like this in Toronto when the mayor had to rise and say that a student of a high school in our city was found shot," he said.

This is the first major violent incident to take place at an Ontario high school since 2000, when four students and one staff member were wounded in a knife attack at Cairine Wilson High School in Orléans, Ontario.

60-year old woman gives birth to twins

Frieda Birnbaum, aged 60, gave birth to two sons on May 22, at 12:44 pm at Hackensack University Medical Center in Trenton, New Jersey. Both babies were delivered by Caesarean section, and each weighed 4 pounds, 11 ounces and are doing well.

"The mom is in recovery, and she and the babies are doing really well," said Nancy Radwin a spokeswoman for the medical center.

Doctors believe Birnbaum may be the oldest woman in the United States to give birth to twins. Birnbaum has been married to her husband Ken for 38 years, and underwent in-vitro fertilization last year in Cape Town, South Africa. The couple already had three children, a daughter, 29 and two sons, 6 and 33.

"This is so wonderful, I feel so relaxed. It has been a great

experience. I don't feel like I'm 60. I don't know what 60 is meant to be," said Birnbaum as quoted by Newsday, who quotes FOX News.

Women giving birth this late in age, says Radwin, face high risks when they become pregnant.

"There were no guidelines of what to do and what to look for in a pregnancy at the age to 60. Can the heart or the kidneys withstand the pregnancy? It becomes a little risky to take care of this pregnancy," added Radwin.

One year ago, a now 60 year-old woman also from New Jersey named Lauren Cohen gave birth to twins. Birnbaum and Cohen became friends after Birnbaum contacted Cohen about her giving birth.

Currently, Maria del Carmen Bousada Lara, who lives in Spain, is the oldest woman in the world to give birth to twins. On December 29, 2006, she gave birth to two boys. She was 67 at the time.

Anti-Olympic protesters break into office of British Columbia premier

Three anti-Olympic games protesters, posed as a flower delivery service, quickly ransacked British Columbia, Canada premier Gordon Campbell's downtown Vancouver, British Columbia office yesterday afternoon, breaking windows and throwing pictures, office documents, and various other items.

After the suspects were caught, they said that they were upset over Campbell's support for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, British Columbia. They also claimed to work for "The Anti-Poverty Committee".

They are now facing charges for property damage and uttering threats during or after the incident. Police are only identifying them as a 23-year-old man, a 29-year-old man, and a 17-year old female. The 23-year-old faces a third charge of assault by trespassing.

"The Anti-Poverty Committee", which claims to help the homeless and poor in the city, are opposed to the Olympics and have said they would ransack offices and homes of board members of the 2010 Winter Olympics organizing committee.

Poor citizens are losing their homes due to the money spent and developments near the city on preparation for the long-awaited 2010 Winter Olympics, they say.

Vancouver Mayor Sam Sullivan cited his concerns over the organization saying, "I think it gives the city a black eye. It doesn't make Vancouver look good."

This event follows an incident, last Sunday, during which anti-poverty activist David Cunningham was arrested. A police officer posed as a journalist for news source Vancouver 24 hours conducting what Cunningham believed to be a legitimate interview in downtown Vancouver. Cunningham was later arrested for alleged harassment at a protest last Wednesday, the 2010 Winter Olympic Games organizing committee.

The Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) said they are disappointed with the police officer who posed as a journalist for 24 Hours.... "They've shown a callous disregard for the media's ability to do its job"
—Canadian Association of

Journalists, President Paul Schneidereit

"The police's actions in this case were reprehensible," CAJ President Paul Schneidereit concerned.

"They've shown a callous disregard for the media's ability to do its job, which can only be undermined by these foolish, play-acting escapades by police officers who should know better."

"It is astonishing that police don't seem to think the implications of these things through before they act. Even the police spokesman who explained what happened at a press conference Sunday expressed misgivings about using such a tactic," Schneidereit said.

24 Hours editor-in-chief, Dean Broughton, also expressed disappointment at the polices' actions.

According to information from CanadaNewsWire, British Columbia police, in November 2005, posed as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and made friends with a man from a Kamloops, British Columbia jail, John Bjornstrom, who escaped after being arrested for ransacking cottages for approximately two years, then arresting him after.

Hammerhead sharks can give birth without mating, study shows

According to marine biologists participating in a study between the United States and Ireland, DNA samples taken from a hammerhead shark, born in 2001, located in Omaha Nebraska at the Henry Doorly Zoo, show that the sharks mother performed a "virgin birth," or giving birth without mating.

The mother shark was in a tank

with three other hammerheads, all female, and the baby shark was also born in the same tank. Tests on the DNA from the baby shark show that there was no "chromosomal contribution" of a male shark present in the blood, something that is required in order for mating to have taken place.

"The findings were really surprising because as far as anyone knew, all sharks reproduced only sexually by a male and female mating, requiring the embryo to get DNA from both parents for full development, just like in mammals," said one author of the study from Queen's University located in Belfast, Ireland, Paulo Prodahl.

It was previously thought by researchers that shark had stored sperm to later use as a reproduction procedure, but researchers said that it would have been incredible for the shark to store it for three years. Six months of storage is what researchers would call normal.

"We didn't have a male and had never had a male, and of course, the question was, how did this happen? There were really only two possibilities. One was virgin birth, and the other one was a delayed insemination," said director of the zoo, Lee Simmons.

Researchers say that the study could answer the mystery of why many zoos have said that sharks were giving birth with no males present, but that the event is not necessarily a good thing.

"[This study] may have solved a general mystery about shark reproduction. [The study says sharks can] switch from a sexual to a non-sexual mode of reproduction. [This may not be a

good thing because] reduced genetic diversity, may occur in the sharks," said another author of the study, Mahmood Shivji, who is located in Dania Beach, Florida at the Guy Harvey Research Institute.

Employees who work at the zoo along with Simmons are glad the mystery is solved saying, "one of the good things about good science is that your skeptics have to eat crow."

Iran continues enrichment in defiance of UN according to IAEA report

A report by the IAEA says that Iran continues to defy the United Nations. The report which was prepared as the 60-day deadline in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1747 arrives. Although the report is not yet published, both Reuters and BBC News have obtained copies. Here are some excerpts: "Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activities. Iran has continued with the operation of their pilot fuel enrichment plant."

"Unless Iran addresses long-outstanding verification issues, and implements ... required transparency measures, the Agency will not be able to fully reconstruct the history of Iran's nuclear program and provide assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran or about the exclusively peaceful nature of that program."

In response to the report, the United States says that it will seek further UN sanctions on Iran, calling the report "a laundry list of Iran's continued defiance of the international community and shows that Iran's leaders are only furthering the isolation of the Iranian people," said Gordon

Johndroe, Press Secretary of the National Security Council.

"The government in Iran is not in compliance with the resolutions of the Security Council. What we have done so far is not enough. More needs to be done. The time has come to look at additional pressure... to bring about a change in Iranian calculations," said Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Ambassador to the UN.

Iran has stated that it is not "hindering" the IAEA's continuing inspections, and it will continue their cooperation with the IAEA.

Reports say body of missing US soldier found in Iraq

Reports say that the body of a United States soldier has been found in the Euphrates River in Iraq and that it is the body of one of three U.S. soldiers who were believed to be taken captive by Iraqi insurgents on May 12.

The U.S. military has not confirmed that the body is that of a U.S. soldier, but it does confirm that the body is in the custody of the U.S. military.

"We are in possession of the body. We have not identified the body. We will give the truth to the families first," said U.S. military in Iraq public affairs officer, Maj. Webster Wright who also added that internet connections in the area have been cut off to stop the spreading of rumors about the body.

Iraqi civilians found the body and immediately called Iraqi Police who then called the U.S. military. The body is reported to have two bullet holes in the head, one in the chest, and is dressed in a U.S. military uniform. Reports also say that the body had a tattoo on the

left hand or arm of the unidentified remains.

A patrol boat police officer, who claims to have seen the body, told Reuters that the head showed signs of torture. Also, he deemed that deceased was killed about a week ago.

On Monday May 12, a patrol of U.S. soldiers were attacked and at least 4 were killed along with one Iraqi soldier. Three others were believed to have been kidnapped. The body was found in the town of Musayyib by Iraqi Police about 40 miles south of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.

Iranian Grand Ayatollah Makarem-Shirazi urges compulsory hijab

"The enemies try to defeat Islam by undermining Hijab and thus fostering corruption in Islamic countries," according to Grand Ayatollah Nasser Makarem Shirazi. Makarem-Shirazi was addressing the Hijab Dialogue Group where he also expressed effusive support for the Iranian police force which enforces Islamic morality. He also wants to extend the hijab to all Islamic countries.

In the past Makarem-Shirazi has given reasons for the mandatory hijab. He has blamed improper hijab for "destruction of families and increase in rate of divorce and crime," on a page on his own website. He believes that in order for the government to "not resort to force for this problem," people have to be responsible themselves. He also expressed disappointment at mass media rowdiness.

Like all Islamic fundamentalists, Makarem-Shirazi is a strong proponent of literal or near-literal interpretation of Islamic laws. With respect to the hijab, Islamic

fundamentalists back up all their positions with sharia and Islamic jurisprudence sources.

Imam Jaffer Sadiq has said, "Modesty is the symbol of faith and whoever has no modesty (Hijab), has no religion." There are only a tiny minority of Islamic clerics who don't second compulsory hijab in Iran, like Hojatoleslam Sayyed Hussein Khomeini who has said, "I am personally in favor of the hijab, but not like this. The hijab is a personal issue. If a woman wants, she may [wear it], and if she doesn't [want it], she may [refuse it]." His grandfather, Imam Khomeini fiercely defended the compulsory hijab and wrote, "With the slogans of freedom and equality, they promoted the culture of nakedness and libertinism, in the process making use of the most draconian of despotic measures as seen in Riza Khan's policy of forcing women to remove their Islamic veils (kashf-i hijab)." Reza Pahlavi was a secularist like his contemporary Ataturk.

As a member of Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom, Makarem-Shirazi proposes judges to Iran's Islamic courts.

Exclusive video interview with New Zealand Opposition leader, John Key

Wikinews' Gabriel Pollard sent questions to New Zealand's Leader of the Opposition, and leader of the National Party, John Key. Key answered the questions in the form of a video blog, which you can reach from the links below: A Wikinews Video branded video: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/34/Wikinews_john_key.ogg

The video response on John Key's

website: John answers 9 questions about video blogging

Mr. Key discusses how and why he participates in video blogging, and the details of his video blogging activities, and other related activities such as using Flickr to post images.

Key has video blogs (or 'vlogs') on his website, dating back to 23 March of this year; other videos on the site reach back to 30 January. His most recent blogs have been about climate change policy and the 2007 national budget. Other members of the NZ National Party also 'vlog', bringing the total number of videos for YouTube user NZNats, which the party operates under, to 56. There are 64 subscribers.

US President George W. Bush caught driving without a seatbelt

United States President, George W. Bush was caught by members of the press this past weekend, not wearing his seat belt while "driving slowly" in a truck on his ranch in Crawford, Texas.

After the incident, White House Press Secretary Tony Snow answered questions based on Bush's not wearing one. One question asked was "does he [Bush] wear a seat belt in the limo?"

"I don't know. Let me just back up, I have seen him wear it in the limo. I'm not going to give you a report card because my ventures in the limo are relatively rare. Well, it's always important to wear seat belts, especially when driving slowly on the ranch," said Snow to reporters.

Bush was greeting the Secretary General of NATO Jaap de Hoop

Scheffer and his wife on his ranch and giving them a tour. When he began to drive away, the press got a few pictures of Bush with no seatbelt on.

Snow was also asked if the Secret Service was required to make Bush wear a seatbelt, to which he replied "the Secret Service, I guarantee you, looks after the president and is absolutely determined to ensure his safety in every way possible."

Despite the pictures, in Texas, it is not a violation of any law, as seat belts are not required to be worn on private property.

"On private property, you're not required to wear your seat belt," said Texas Department of Public Safety spokeswoman, Tela Mange who also added that driving on private property with no seat belt is "fairly common."

Student who planned to attend Rev. Jerry Falwell's funeral arrested after homemade bombs found in car

A 19-year-old male student of Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia was arrested after authorities got a tip from a family member that he had packed his car trunk with home made bombs, and was planning to attend funeral services of the late Reverend Jerry Falwell who passed away on Tuesday last week.

The student has been identified as Mark David Uhl. A family member called police at approximately 11:00 p.m. [local time] on Monday evening saying that Uhl "mentioned some explosive devices he had made."

The funeral services for Falwell were held at the Thomas Road Baptist Church, a church Falwell

founded. It was attended by mourners numbering 6,000 in a chapel that exceeded its capacity to host all who came to attend. More room was made for a people who attended the funeral at the university's basketball arena and football stadium.

Police do not believe that Uhl was going to target the funeral directly. Instead they believe he was going to target protesters of Falwell who were going to attend the funeral. The group is known as the Kansas-based Westboro Baptist Church and believed that Falwell befriended homosexuals, despite the fact that Falwell was against homosexuality.

"I do not believe it was their intent to disrupt the funeral service. We do not believe the Falwells were ever in any danger," said Terry Gaddy, the Sheriff for Campbell County, Virginia who also said the bombs looked like "napalm" and were about "the size of soda cans." Gaddy also said there were at least five bombs. Maj. Steve Hutcherson, who is also affiliated with the Campbell County Sheriff said "what appeared to be about six explosive devices" were found and that the "canisters were filled with liquid."

Several others from the high school Uhl attended, who are believed to have helped make the bombs are also being questioned by authorities. They are all believed to have been in the same Reserve Officer Training Corps class.

New Zealand's Head of State approves new medal

New Zealand Defence Force personnel now have a new honour; the New Zealand Distinguished Service Decoration (DSD) has been approved by the Queen

Elizabeth II of New Zealand, Prime Minister Helen Clark has said.

The Distinguished Service Decoration is designed to recognise distinguished military service by regular, territorial and reserve members of the Defence Force, including command, leadership and service in an operational environment, or in support of operations, both at home and abroad, says Clark

Defence Minister Phil Goff said that until 1995 this type of service was recognised by awards of the British Empire Medal (Military Division) and the lower levels of the Military Division of the Order of the British Empire.

"Since the change to a totally New Zealand honours system in 1996, awards at these levels have not been available,"

Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant General Jerry Mateparae, says the award is an important addition to the country's honour system and will be highly regarded like the Queen's Service Medal.

He says more than 700 personnel are on operations or deployment and that "the DSD is an important addition to the New Zealand Honours system", and will enjoy precedence comparable to that of The Queen's Service Medal (QSM) and the recently instituted New Zealand Antarctic Medal (NZAM).

The new medal will be made of Sterling Silver. The obverse design is a representation of eight blades of a Kotiate (lobed club) in a circle with a Royal Crown in the centre. The front four blades are in frosted silver, the rear blades are polished silver. The reverse bears the inscription "For Distinguished Service" in English and Maori. The

ribbon is dark blue and red, the colours of the British Distinguished Service Order ribbon, with two narrow yellow stripes that signify achievement.

The first awards will be announced on June 4th's Queen's Birthday honours list. Recipients will be entitled to use the initials "D.S.D." after their name.

Today in History

- 1626 - Peter Minuit bought Manhattan in exchange for trade goods valued at 60 guilders.
- 1822 - Ecuadorian War of Independence: Troops led by Antonio José de Sucre secured the independence of Quito from Spain in the Battle of Pichincha.
- 1883 - The Brooklyn Bridge, at the time the longest suspension bridge in the world, was opened.
- 1941 - World War II: The German battleship Bismarck sank the British battlecruiser HMS Hood in the Battle of the Denmark Strait.
- 1962 - Project Mercury: American astronaut Scott Carpenter orbited the Earth three times in the Aurora 7 space capsule.
- May 24 is Buddha's Birthday in Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea (2007);
- Independence Day in Eritrea (1993), Saints Cyril and Methodius Day in Bulgaria and Macedonia

Quote of the Day

Word of the Day

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