

Top Stories

Armed police arrest two more July 21 bombing suspects in dramatic raids



SPECIALREPORT

Armed police officers from SO19 have raided properties in the Notting Hill and North Kensington areas of London. The raids were in connection with the failed bombings on July 21.

NASA: Discovery appears safe to return to Earth



NASA has said that preliminary investigations show that Discovery is safe to fly home.

Featured story

IRA orders end to armed campaign

The Provisional Irish Republican Army, in a statement released earlier today, has declared that it intends to end its campaign of violence and decommission its weapons.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Astronomers have discovered a large new Kuiper Belt object, tentatively named 2003 EL61. New observations reveal 2003 EL61 about 70% the diameter of Pluto. The object is also orbited by a tiny moon. (New Scientist) In addition, astronomers have discovered a trans-Neptunian object 2003 UB313 larger than Pluto.
- Following a militant attack at Srinagar's city centre at Lal Chowk more than 10 people have been left injured.
- Initial results show that Ugandans have voted for a return to multi-party politics in a national constitutional referendum. The poll was marred by a low turnout.
- Robert Kilroy-Silk resigns as leader from Veritas, the political party he founded.

Wikipedia Current Events

- Hamas, the main Palestinian opposition party in the Palestinian Authority and militant group, have held a mass wedding on the West Bank at which 226 couples performed the Nikah.
- Two more of the failed London bombing suspects are believed to have been arrested as police carried out a number of armed operations in west London.
- The President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, has announced that all foreign students (around 1,400) are to leave the nation's Madrassas and go home.
- Conflict in Iraq: At least 25 New Iraqi Army recruits have been killed following an apparent suicide bomb attack in Rabia, near Mosul, in North West Iraq.
- Indian officials have raised the death toll of those suspected dead in the 2005 Maharashtra floods to more than 800.
- Indian bomb disposal experts have found traces of explosive in the train which exploded on Thursday killing 7 people.
- BBC News has been told, by the activist settler Noam Livnat, that 20,000 Israeli soldiers had signed a petition vowing to block any attempt at removing Israeli settlements from the Gaza Strip.
- In Vietnam, death toll on bird flu rises to 42.

Fourth 21 July bomb suspect held in Rome

According to three news wires, the fourth London bombing suspect — just named as Osman Hussein — has been arrested by Italian police in Rome.

The arrest has been confirmed by the Italian Minister of the Interior. Hussein is a UK citizen who was born in Somalia, and later moved to Britain and naturalized.

It comes as two bombing suspects were

arrested today in West London, and one in Birmingham on 27 July.

Football CL: Third qualifying round draw results

Third qualifying round pairs of the UEFA Champions League were drawn today in Nyon. Winners of the second round are still to be determined Tuesday and Wednesday next week.

Everton have found out their fate in the Champions League. They will not be facing their Merseyside rivals and cup holders, Liverpool F.C, but will play Villarreal of Spain.

Liverpool could be playing Tirana or CSKA Sofia if they first avoid Kaunas while Manchester United will meet the winners of Hajduk Split and Debrecen of Hungary.

Monaco A.F.C would be playing Real Betis, while Rangers face Turkish side Trabzonspor or Anorthosis Famagusta from Cyprus.

Celtic could be facing Sheriff of Moldova or Partizan Belgrade, if they overturn against Artmedia Bratislava.

Armed police arrest two more 21 July bombing suspects in dramatic raids

Armed police officers from SO19 have raided properties in the Notting Hill and North Kensington areas of London and Italian forces have arrested the fourth bombing suspect at a property in Rome, Italy. The raids were in connection with the failed bombings on July 21.

Scotland Yard have announced that a number of arrests have been made, and that three of the suspected July 21 bombers are now in custody. The most recently arrested suspects are reported to be those wanted in connection with the Oval tube and London bus bombing attempts.

Officers in full body armour, helmets and gas masks and armed with shotguns and assault rifles were seen moving in. Small explosions were heard soon after, and CS gas and stun grenades are also believed to have been used. Police are cautioning that CS grenade launchers and explosive entries could be mistaken for shots, and have said that no shots were fired.

Police at one point described the raid as entering a "challenging phase". Eyewitnesses said that the police asked one person in a building that was surrounded to give himself up. They apparently addressed the person as "Muhammad". Muktar Said Ibrahim, one of two suspects named after the failed 21 July bombing attempts, is also known as Muhammad. The other officially-named suspect has already been arrested in Birmingham.

At one point the cordon around the area was expanded, cutting off TV news stations from their broadcast vehicles which were caught inside the sealed-off area.

Two weeks before the failed attacks of July 21, a series of bombs on July 7 killed 56 people, including four suicide bombers.

Two women have also been arrested at Liverpool Street station, but it is not clear if the arrests are in connection with terrorism. Both the surface and underground stations were evacuated and were searched, but have now re-opened.

Controversy over Liverpool fan jailed in Bulgaria

Michael Shields, an 18-year old Liverpool Football Club supporter, has been jailed for the attempted murder of a Bulgarian barman, despite another man from Liverpool admitting full responsibility.

Shields, 18 from Wavertree was charged with the attempted murder of Martin Georgiev, 25, after being accused of throwing a brick at the barman's head in the city of Varna, where he was celebrating Liverpool football club's win over AC Milan in the final of the Champions League in Istanbul in May.

Before being charged, a 20 year old man from Anfield came forward and claimed responsibility for the attack - Graham Sankey, made a statement through his lawyer David Kirwan.

Mr Kirwan said: "Graham believed the case against Michael would either be thrown or adjourned after he came forward to make his confession." Despite the confession, Shields was convicted of attempted murder.

Shields' uncle, Joey Graney, was in court when the sentence was passed and said: "Michael was sobbing. He's an 18-year-old lad, quiet as a mouse, on his own, going back to a Bulgarian jail. What's he going to do? As far as the Bulgarians were concerned, a local lad had been attacked and they wanted their scapegoat. They did not care that Graham Sankey has confessed to carrying out the attack. They just tossed that aside."

The family have said they will do everything in their power to clear Michael's name. Meanwhile, Liverpool Riverside MP Louise Ellman, has backed the family's campaign calling the incident a "travesty of justice".

"Graham Sankey has admitted he was guilty of the crime that Michael Shields is now convicted of, but he did so in a way that was inadmissible to the Bulgarian court," added Mrs Ellman, who is planning to speak to his defence team.

A British Foreign Office spokesman said it could not comment on the verdict but said it would continue offering consular help to Michael Shields.

Bulgarian government officials have since agreed to begin the process of releasing Michael Shields, in exchange for the arrest of Graham Sankey.

The development came after long-time justice campaigner Stephen Jakobi held closed talks with Bulgarian ambassador Lachezar Matev at the Bulgarian Embassy in London.

Mr. Jakobi announced that Michael could be free in the next "few months".

"It's been a good day and we have achieved

an important breakthrough.

"We have got an agreement with the Bulgarian government that they are going to take up our proposed course of action - that is issuing an arrest warrant for Graham Sankey.

"The government is independent of the judiciary in that country but they can hold talks with them to get the ball rolling as soon as possible.

"The arrest warrant will mean the extradition process will begin."

Home Secretary Jack Straw has also agreed to meet with Shield's family to discuss the situation with them.

Twenty injured by tornado in Birmingham, UK

Officials said that at least 20 people were injured as a mini-tornado (more correctly, a whirlwind) swept through Birmingham on Thursday. People made temporarily homeless by the storm sought shelter at a local university.

Some homes could be beyond repair, and may have to be bulldozed.

The British Meteorological Office has estimated that the tornado had either a T3 or a T4 rating (Or F1 on the Fujita Scale), which would mean that wind speeds of between 93 and 130 miles per hour swept through the UK's second-largest city. An area of approximately 1 km2 in Kings Heath was damaged.

A Met Office spokesperson told the BBC: "We have an average of 33 reports of tornadoes in the UK each year but these are especially rare in built-up areas and there has not been one of this strength in many years."

Birmingham City Council set up emergency shelters in Aston University for those whose homes were damaged. According to a spokesperson from the Ambulance Service, 20 patients were removed to Heartlands Hospital, Selly Oak Hospital, and Dudley.

Australian Medical Association backs

ethanol blended fuels

The Australian Medical Association (A.M.A.), an independent organization representing over 27,000 doctors, has written a letter to the Australian Government's Biofuels Taskforce supporting the mandatory use of ethanol blends.

“The A.M.A. is a strong advocate on initiatives related to environmental impacts on human health such as global warming,” wrote Dr Haikerwal, President of the A.M.A. .

“In our opinion, there is incontrovertible evidence that the addition of ethanol to petrol and biodiesel to diesel will reduce the deaths and ill-health associated with the emissions produced by burning those fuels.” The A.M.A. has recommended the use of petrol with 10% ethanol and diesel with 20% biodiesel.

The A.M.A. also indicated its support for the reduction of toxic aromatics (such as benzene), increased use of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or compressed natural gas (CNG), and the use of filters and gas-detoxification systems in vehicle tunnels.

Visa of Brazilian killed in London expired two-years ago

It has emerged that the student visa of Jean Charles de Menezes, 27, had expired two-years ago, according to the British Home Office.

He arrived in the UK on 13 March 2002 and was granted a six-month tourist visa. He later applied for a student visa which was granted, allowing him to stay in the country until 30 June 2003.

It is also suggested in the Home Office statement that the visa had a forged "indefinite leave to remain" stamp on it, saying that the style of the stamp was not in use at the time it was apparently meant to have been issued.

This has led to speculation that this may be a reason why de Menezes — who was mistakenly believed to have terrorist connections — fled after being confronted

by police (not in uniform) at Stockwell tube station. He was shot eight times by the police — seven times in the head and once in the shoulder.

His family had said that they believed that de Menezes' visa had been renewed for an additional five-years.

In the statement made by the Home Office spokeswoman, it was denied that the information released would influence the investigation, saying: "This information is not intended in any way to prejudice or influence the independent investigation into the circumstances of Mr De Menezes' death, or any possible future proceedings."

The killing of de Menezes is being investigated by the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), standard procedure for fatal shootings.

The body of Mr de Menezes was returned to Brazil on 27 July.

He is to be buried today in his home town of Gonzaga in the state of Minas Gerais.

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Today in History

- 1619 - The first representative assembly in the Americas, Virginia's House of Burgesses, convened for the first time.
 - 1825 - Malden Island (now one of Kiribati's Line Islands) was discovered.
 - 1864 - American Civil War: Union forces attempted to break Confederate lines in the Battle of the Crater.
 - 1966 - England won the Football World Cup, beating Germany 4 to 2.
 - 2003 - The last 'old style' VW Beetle rolled off the assembly line in Puebla, Mexico.
- July 30 is Independence Day in Vanuatu

Quote of the Day

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And Faith shines equal, arming me from Fear.
~ Emily Brontë ~

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