

## NEWS

## IN BOXES, WORLD BRIEFS

By Patrick Webster  
staff writer

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- The rumor that a suicide bomber had been spotted within a crowd of Shiite Muslims making a pilgrimage to a holy mosque north of Baghdad created a panic that resulted in the deaths of over 800 Iraqis.

The mass of pilgrims had been journeying toward the mosque only three hours before when they had fallen victim to a mortar attack that had killed seven and wounded 36.

The throng of thousands had reached the middle of the Al-A'imma Bridge when cries rang out that there was a suicide bomber among them. Terror swept the crowd as the entire congregation attempted to evacuate the area at once.

Reports indicate that several dozen people, predominantly women and children, were crushed and killed as the stampeding crowd tried desperately to

escape the perceived threat. Matters only worsened as people packed more and more closely together in their attempt to escape the bridge.

Eventually, the support rails on one side of the bridge collapsed, sending hundreds of Iraqis falling over 90 feet to their deaths in the waters of the Tigris River.

When questioned about the causes of the deadly stampede, senior Iraqi Army officials pointed out several main causes, including the prior deadly mortar attack, which caused a feeling of uneasiness in the crowd. Also noted were the fixed security measures, such as barbed wire and barricades, which made a quick exit from the bridge nearly impossible under the panicked circumstances.

Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari has declared a national three-day period of mourning and is urging his countrymen to think and act in the greater interest of all Iraq.

By Patrick Webster  
staff writer

ROME, Italy -- The UN has issued a disease warning of birds infected with avian flu in Asia that may soon migrate to areas in Europe.

Russian agencies have recently detected several strains of avian flu in the province of Siberia. It is suspected that it arrived there from birds moving from the well-known avian flu outbreaks in southern Asia.

From there, chances are good that it may spread by bird migration to other areas in Europe, across the Black and Caspian Seas. The Food and Agriculture Administration further noted that it could spread south to the Middle East in general, and

Iraq and Azerbaijan specifically, with currently clean countries such as Bangladesh and India now at risk.

While roughly 60 human deaths have been reported due to this strain of avian flu worldwide and is not easily transmitted amongst mammals, international officials maintain that the disease could mutate at any time to a more virulent form. Furthermore, avian flu is deadly to most birds, including the poultry and waterfowl that many countries and people use as a main source of their food supply.

## SGA holds first meeting of the semester

By Patrick Webster  
staff writer

The first meeting of the 2005-2006 Student Government Association (SGA) was held on Wednesday, August 31, 2005 in Room 114 of the Reed Union Building. The meeting was called to order at 5:21 p.m. with Alexander Henderson presiding.

The first order of business for the meeting was introductions. Every member in attendance introduced themselves by name and major before the rest of the meeting was permitted to continue. There were no comments in the student forum and no old business to attend to.

SGA President Alexander Henderson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and reminded those attending that there are four freshmen senators and two interim representative posi-

tions still available that needed to be filled. He also announced that SGA training will be held on September 7.

The President introduced a new program inherited from University Park called FRESH START. This is a new community service program that targets freshmen, transfer students and change-of-assignment students who are new to the campus. The goal of the program is to get new students involved in the community and with each other.

The first meeting regarding this program will be held on September 24.

The Counsel of Commonwealth Student Government meeting, which is an all-branch campus meeting of every SGA across the Penn State system, is being held on September 23-24. Henderson noted that volunteers to attend the meeting are still needed.

SGA Advisor Ken Miller said that he is proud to be associated with the SGA

again and is looking forward to working with the new administration. He also noted that the first Student Activity Fund deadline was September 19. Any organizations that wish to request funding for university-sponsored activities must apply before that date. He also strongly suggests the use of the new Behrend online events calendar for clubs and groups to use.

Motion to adjourn that meeting was passed at 5:42 p.m.

There were few council and club/organization reports made at the meeting this week. The first substantial SGA meeting will be held next week, September 7

at 5:20 p.m.

By Patrick Webster  
staff writer

BEIJING, China -- The government media apparatus in the People's Republic of China recently made highly critical remarks over new United States quota policies limiting the growth of imports from China's booming textile industry into the U.S.

The new regulations, unpopular with China's clothing production industry and large US discount stores alike, were imposed upon the expiration of worldwide quota systems on January 1.

Many of China's arguments stem from its position that the United States is highly selective

with its ideals of Free Trade, and, in this case, the deliberate protection of certain US jobs that cannot compete with the lower cost of Chinese imports.

"Trade protectionism has incurred huge costs for Chinese textile producers," says the editorial section of the government-run China Daily newspaper.

"Protectionism is a lose-lose deal for both sides in international trade while undermining the global effort to build a free and fair trade order."

This trade dispute comes at a time that is of significant political importance to both the United States and China.

China, which is depending on the contin-

ued growth of cheap exports to further fuel the growth of its emerging economy at a blistering rate, needs the cash revenue generated to help further strengthen its economy and national infrastructure.

The US, on the other hand, now has a trade deficit of over \$162 billion with China, the highest trade deficit with any one country in history.

Representatives from each government are still in deliberation, trying to work out a new agreement in the matter.

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## Classifieds

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— Billie Holiday (Eleanor Fagan),  
American singer (1915-1959)

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