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# The Guardian

## Lift-off at last After technical problems space shuttle Discovery is finally launched



Spectators watch the successful launch of the space shuttle Discovery from the shore at Titusville, Florida yesterday, following technical delays that caused the first attempt to be scrapped earlier this month. Report, page 2 Photograph: CJ Gunther/EPA

# 'They are capable of killing again - we must find them'

**Rosie Cowan, Ian Cobain, Audrey Gillan and Sophie Kirkham**

Police fear that four would-be suicide bombers could have re-equipped themselves with explosives from their bomb factory after their attacks ended in failure last week. The men are reported to have been seen near a council tower block in north London, where they had turned a ninth floor flat into a makeshift explosives laboratory after last Thursday's failed bomb missions in London. Forensic experts found traces of explosives at the flat yesterday, and police also seized "large quantities" of bomb-making ingredients at a nearby lock-up garage. Underlining the growing urgency of the manhunt, Sir Ian Blair, the Metropolitan police commissioner, told Channel 4 News last night: "They are capable of killing again. We must find them." He said there were "probably" other cells of bombers waiting to strike.

Explosives experts who have examined the four partially exploded bombs and a fifth found in west London on Saturday say they may have caused even greater carnage than the July 7 attacks, in which 56 people died, had they detonated as intended. One security source said: "We are not talking about the Premier League followed by the Conference here. This was a very serious attempt to kill a large number of people." Ministers, meanwhile, are considering extending the time that terrorism suspects can be questioned without charge from 14 days to 28, but are expected to turn down police requests for an extension to three months. Tony Blair dismissed as "an obscenity" the notion that the invasion of Iraq could be cited as justification for terrorism yesterday, and insisted that the international community should not "give an inch" in the face of suicide attacks. "It's time we stopped saying: 'OK, abhor their methods, but we kind of see something in

their ideas, or maybe they've got a sliver of excuse or justification'. They've got no justification." Yesterday's police search focused on two flats in the New Southgate area of north London and a number of lock-up garages nearby. One of the flats, on the ninth floor of the 13-storey council block Curtis House, was the home of Yasin Hassan Omar, named as the man wanted for the attempted bombing of a Victoria Line tube train at Warren Street. Muktar Said-Ibrahim, who is wanted for the attempted bus bombing, had also been staying there. Police also discovered that a white VW Golf thought to have been used by one of the bombers had been abandoned less than a mile away in Finchley. Officers sealed off the area and evacuated residents. They said that Omar, 24, was a Somali who had lived in the UK since 1992, and Ibrahim, 27, also known as Muktar Mohamed Said, was from Eritrea. Police now believe

### Attack on London

Police seek power to detain suspects for longer **Page 4**

How did the bombers get away? And where are they hiding? **Page 5**

How the war on terror makes a delicate balancing act for President Pervez Musharraf **Page 6**

Ken Livingstone is playing a dangerous game when he embraces Islamists who are at odds with our liberal tradition **Jonathan Freedland, page 21**

**Plus: Andrew Murray, page 21; and Jonathan Glover, page 22**

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guardian.co.uk/attackonlondon

that he was also trying to kill himself after revising the time he got off the No 26 bus in Shoreditch, east London. The Home Office said that both men were legally resident in the UK, having arrived as the children of asylum seekers. Ibrahim applied for naturalisation as a British citizen in November 2003 and was issued with a British passport in September 2004. He is known to have served a jail sentence for non-terror related offences. Neighbour Sarah Scott, 23, said Ibrahim had once told her "he was going to have all these virgins when he got to heaven if he prais Allah". "He gave me this book and told me to read it," she said. "He said it would change my views and if I had any questions I should ask him. He said people were afraid of religion but people shouldn't be afraid. He was religious, and most people who are religious want to convert people. I didn't realise he was a terrorist."

It is understood that the police do not know the identities of the two other failed attackers, who tried to blow themselves up at Oval underground station in south London and Shepherd's Bush in west London. A fifth bomb was found on Saturday in bushes at Little Wormwood Scrubs, west London. Five men are being questioned, three after their arrest in south London last week and over the weekend, and two arrested this week at New Southgate. They do not include any of the bombers. Neighbours in Curtis House described how they had been unable to use the lifts a few weeks ago because Omar, Ibrahim, and two other men had been using it to ferry packages to their flat. When asked what was in the packages, the men are said to have replied that they contained wallpaper stripper. Another man, known as both George and Ishmail, said to be African, also lived in the flat, the neighbours said.

One, Sammy Jones, 33, said: "I haven't seen Muktar and the other one for three weeks, but George was here on Friday, he helped my son tie his shoelace as I was in a real hurry. He didn't seem on edge at all, he seemed absolutely fine, just like normal." She said she recognised two of the men from photographs issued by police, but that they used to have fuller beards. None of them drove a car, and they usually travelled on bicycles. Yesterday detectives began

searching a second flat, on the 10th floor of the block, and police said that forensics experts had taken "material of substantial interest" from the flat for further examination. One neighbour has told police that she may have seen Ibrahim and two other men in the area on the morning of Friday - the day after the four failed suicide bombings. This suggests they may have returned to the flat before making their escape. All three, she said, looked extremely agitated.

## UK's top computer firm lays off staff and closes stores

**Simon Bowers**

There is uncertainty over the future of Britain's largest computer manufacturer, the firm behind the Tiny and Time computer brands, after it abruptly closed all 78 of its retail stores yesterday and began laying off staff at its Burnley factory, the Guardian has learned. Granville Technology Group, which makes 500,000 computers a year, is understood to be close to collapse. All directors except its part-time chairman have resigned. Asked last night if the business had solvency concerns, a spokesman said: "Granville Technology's first responsibility is to its staff and customers and we are not making any further comment at this time." There are more than 2 million Tiny personal computers and laptops in UK homes as well as thousands of Time Education computers in schools, colleges and universities. Time PCs are also sold through Tesco, Asda and Woolworths. Many Granville computers have been sold with warranties, while some contracts with schools and colleges include service contracts.

Granville, formerly known as Time Group, is owned through offshore companies in the British Virgin Islands and Jersey by a 34-year-old British businessman, Tahir Moshan, who resigned as managing director last year. Granville, which employs 1,100 workers, was due to file accounts with Companies House in April but has failed to do so. Granville's main creditors are thought to be its bank, HSBC, and GE Capital, which provided financing for customers. HSBC refused to comment yesterday. The company is believed to have net liabilities of about £50m. At its height, the group had turnover of £250m and more than 150 high street stores, previously branded as Tiny Computer shops. Granville's financial crisis comes three years after the company, then known as Time Group, acquired Tiny Computers out of administration. Tiny went bust in 2002 with debts of more than £35m. Two former directors - unconnected with Time or Granville - were found to have taken "unwarranted risks" with creditors' money

and were banned from holding company directorships. In particular, Tiny was found to have failed to take steps to protect customer warranties in the event of the business going under. There is no suggestion that similar mistakes have been made at Granville. Yesterday a spokesman for Granville said the company was still trading through all divisions except its 78 retail stores, called The Computer Shop, and that the Burnley factory remained in production. "The stores are closed for stock-taking while a credit card transaction issue is being resolved," the spokesman said. "They will be shut until further notice." He said the non-executive chairman, Bill Davies, was "overseeing the development of the management team". But Mr Davies, contacted on Monday night, said he was not involved in the day-to-day running of the business. Asked about the shop closures, he said: "I don't know anything about that." He said he did not believe there was any strain on the group's debt repayments. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

## Illegal music fans 'willing to pay'

**Owen Gibson**  
Media correspondent

Computer-literate music fans who illegally share tracks over the internet also spend four and a half times as much on digital music as those who do not, according to research published today. The survey confirms what many music fans have informally insisted for some time: that downloading tracks illegally has also led them to become more enthusiastic buyers of singles and albums online. Unlikely to be music to the ears of record companies, who have previously argued the opposite, the results will raise a question mark over the companies' recent drive to pursue individual file sharers through the courts. The trade body, the British Phonographic Industry, has so far secured settlements of several thousand pounds from 90 people who have been caught sharing pirated tracks over the internet, several on behalf of their children. One case involved a London jazz singer who was fined £2,500 after her 19-year-old

son shared 1,330 songs using the family computer. Since illegal downloading became a mainstream pursuit in 1999, the music industry has insisted that those who swap pirated tracks over the web are chiefly to blame for the downturn in music sales, which have fallen by 25% in the six years since. Eric Nicoli, chairman of EMI, whose artists include Robbie Williams, Coldplay and Joss Stone, recently told the Guardian that the argument that those who illegally download music would buy more legal tracks if they were cheaper was "bollocks". But the survey of 600 music fans who also own computers and mobile phones, conducted by the music research firm The Leading Question, shows that those who regularly download or share unlicensed music also spend an average of £5.52 a month on legal downloads through sites such as Apple's iTunes Music Store or Napster. Those who were not illegally filesharing spent just £1.27 a month on digital tracks. "The 2005 Speakerbox research shows that music fans who break piracy" **Page 2**

## Agony goes on for asylum family

Their plight became an election issue, but the Kachepa family thought yesterday would be their last in Britain after losing their fight to avoid deportation... until a Home Office blunder meant they missed their flight **Page 3**

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## WEST AFRICA CRISIS APPEAL Niger, Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso

**More than five million people in West Africa face imminent starvation unless they receive urgent aid.**

A potentially fatal combination of drought and a locust plague has destroyed harvests and left millions at risk of severe hunger across Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso - one of the poorest regions in the world. As many as 150,000 malnourished children are close to death in Niger, which has been worst hit by the crisis. It is feared as many as one in 10 children in the worst affected areas in Niger may starve to death without immediate assistance. The Red Cross aims to provide help to those most in need, including the thousands of malnourished children. Many families are roaming the desert desperately seeking help.

**This is an urgent appeal to help save thousands of lives. Please give whatever you can today.**

**Tel: 0870 170 9595**  
**or: www.redcross.org.uk/westafrica**

**No stamp needed. Please send to:**  
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I enclose a cheque, made payable to the British Red Cross

£15  £25  £50  £100  £  Other

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Forename \_\_\_\_\_  
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Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

*giftaid it*  I am a UK taxpayer and I would like the British Red Cross to treat all donations that I have made as well as any future donations as Gift Aid until I notify them otherwise. (Please tick)

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