



McConville probe woman released

A 57-YEAR-OLD woman arrested yesterday in connection with the IRA murder of Belfast mother-of-ten Jean McConville more than 40 years ago was released last night, pending a police report being sent to prosecutors.

The abduction, murder and secret burial of Mrs McConville in 1972 is one of the most notorious incidents of the Northern Troubles. Yesterday's arrest came after a veteran republican - 77-year-old Ivor Bell - was charged last month in connection with the killing. Bell, from Ramoan Gardens in west Belfast, faces counts of aiding and abetting the murder, and of IRA membership. Nobody has been charged with Mrs McConville's murder.

'Maddie' kidnap case in Australia

A THREE-year-old girl has been abducted in Australia in a chilling reminder of the case of Madeleine McCann.



The parents of Chloe Campbell, right, discovered she was missing from the lounge where she had been sleeping in front of the TV with her older sisters at their home at Childers, north of Brisbane.

A family friend said a footprint had been found on the roof of a car, suggesting an intruder had used it to get to a window, which had been left open. Chloe's father Garth Campbell said he believed someone who knew the family was behind the abduction.

Judge says case has 'dragged on'

THE case involving a driver accused of causing the death of eight people has 'dragged on too long' a judge said yesterday.

Shaun Kelly was in court yesterday, as were relatives of the people who died, to hear that a medical report is to be compiled on his fitness to plead.

Dr Mark Mulrooney, a senior clinical neuropsychologist at Beaumont Hospital in Dublin, will assess Mr Kelly, 24, who is charged with the offences outside Clonmany, Co. Donegal in 2010.

Mr Kelly, of Ballymagann, Bunrana, was the driver of the car in which seven of his friends died and the driver of a car coming in the opposite direction was also killed.

Palin won't do Python US gigs

THE Monty Python team have had to shelve plans to take their sell-out show to the US after Michael Palin said he was too busy.



Palin (pictured) will instead tour his solo show after the Pythons' farewell London performances, a ten-night run at the O2 in July. It will be the first time the troupe have performed on stage together since 2009.

Actor and presenter Palin will embark on a 21-date tour to mark the publication of the third volume of his diaries, fellow Python Terry Jones told Reader's Digest magazine.

IRA accused man wins freedom bid

POLITICIAN Clare Daly yesterday hugged a man in court after he had his conviction quashed for IRA membership and walked free from a five-year jail sentence.

The Socialist Party TD was at the appeal court with her political colleague Mick Wallace to support Séan Farrell, who won a bid to overturn his conviction. He will never be re-tried.

The Dubliner, 28, had been arrested during a Special Branch probe into dissident Republican activity and later found guilty of membership of the illegal organisation. Yesterday, Mr Farrell won his appeal having served two years and three months in prison.

Online bug won't hit customers, say banks

Accounts safe despite panic over security failure

By Eamon Donoghue

BANKS last night assured customers that their account details are safe - despite the outbreak of a dangerous computer bug that can allow hackers to access private information.

Less than 24 hours ago, internet users were warned by a number of major technology firms to change all of their computer and phone passwords.

But according to our major banks, their customers are not at any risk. The internet bug, named 'Heartbleed', was first discovered this week and, in the biggest internet security breach to date, hackers can now bypass your computer security settings.

This has meant certain passwords and credit card details are potentially available for anyone to see online on either computer, laptops, tablets and smartphones.

Experts said the bug is a flaw in the system and may have been there for up to two years, but it was not planted there by internet hackers. Also, as any activity does

SO WHAT IS 'HEARTBLEED'?

THE Heartbleed computer bug hits websites that use a certain security system and could allow hackers to bypass that system and access the account details of members of the public, for example their email accounts.

Heartbleed is a flaw in 'OpenSSL', a piece of software used to encrypt communications between the internet server and a user's device.

OpenSSL is one of the most

not leave a trace, it is impossible to know when the bug was first picked up on by hackers.

American multinational Internet corporation Yahoo was one of the websites hit worst by the bug.

They warned their users yesterday via their blogging site Tumblr that the 'little lock icon we all trusted to keep our passwords, personal emails, and credit cards safe, was actually making all that private information accessible.'

Both Facebook and Google have insisted they have patched up

accessed encryption tools used on the internet, with experts claiming approximately 75 per cent of websites deploy it. If you see a padlock symbol in the address bar of your browser - such as Internet Explorer, Firefox or Safari - it's likely you are using OpenSSL.

The bug allows attackers to eavesdrop on communications, impersonate services and users and hence steal data.

their services to protect their users, while Yahoo have since also come out to insist that they have 'made the appropriate corrections across their entire platform'.

Since the alert, there has been confusion over whether or not internet users should change their passwords to protect themselves.

But last night an Irish Banking Federation spokeswoman explained there is no need for any such precautions with online bank accounts.

'Of the members we have had

the opportunity to engage with on this matter this afternoon, we have established that the main retail banks are well aware of the situation... and are satisfied their systems are not vulnerable to this bug,' the spokeswoman said.

Bank of Ireland also told the Irish Daily Mail they 'can confirm that this vulnerability does not exist on the bank's core systems'.

Ulster Bank representatives have confirmed that their customers need not worry about them.

'Our online systems have been

'Their systems are not vulnerable'

built using different technology which is not exposed to the current vulnerability.'

Permanent TSB also said they were facing no security risks, while Allied Irish Bank also told the Mail that their customers do not need to change their passwords.

'AIB is aware of the security vulnerability and we have tested all our banking websites and we do not believe [they] are at risk.'

reporter@daily@mail.ie

House tax hotline firm paid €3.6m by taxman

REVENUE has paid €3.6million to a company to handle phone calls about property tax, Michael Noonan has said.

The taxman paid the sum to Abtran for dealing with public queries over the local property tax and its predecessor, the one-off 2012 household charge of €100.

The Finance Minister said the Cork firm has handled more than one million calls since it began operating the helpline in March last year.

He said: 'A key aspect of the service is the provider's capacity to quickly scale operations up or down in response to call volumes. For

By Gordon Deegan

example, the number of operators required can vary from 40 up to 275 at peak periods.

'The helpline service, which is provided in both the English and Irish languages, normally operates on a 9am-5pm Monday-to-Friday cycle, but during peak filing periods is extended to an 8am-8pm cycle and can include Saturday when required.

'Revenue does not have to pay to keep operators in situ beyond what is needed to handle demand at any particular time and only pays for calls answered.' He also revealed a firm

called Billpost has been paid €288,000 to date for handling 620,000 items of data on the tax.

Mr Noonan said both firms secured the contract after an open competitive tender.

In a Dáil reply to Reform Alliance TD Terence Flanagan, the minister said: 'The outsourcing of these components of the property tax and household charge operation has played a major role in the overall success of the project, which has so far yielded in excess of €530million to the Exchequer.'

'The use of outsourcing in this manner has also minimised the impact on other core Revenue operations.'