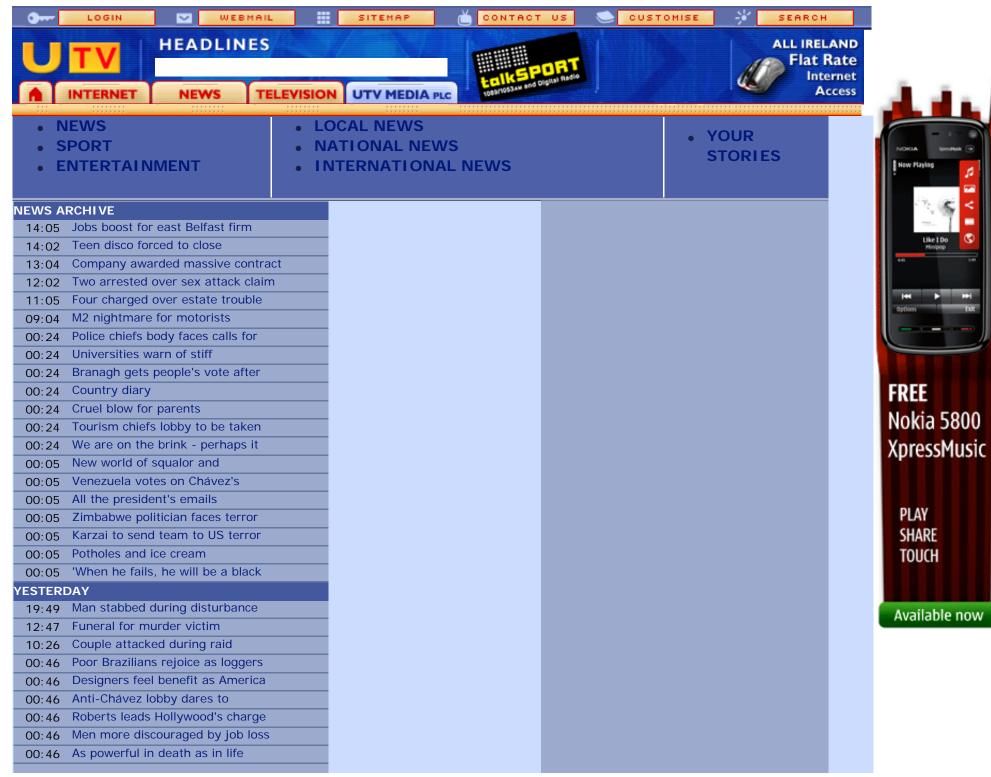
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LOCAL NEWS



Mark Durkan

Saturday 24 January 2009 23:13

Victims report needs consideration

The SDLP leader Mark Durkan has said politicians should give the Eames-Bradley proposals on dealing with the past "honest and honourable thinking space."

Controversial proposals which would see families of those killed in the troubles receive a £12,000 compensation payment, were high on the agenda at the SDLP conference in Armagh on Saturday.

The party leader said he welcomed the fact that the Eames-Bradley report will rule out an amnesty.

"We cannot promise to applaud the report, and I`m not sure if the group want that.

"We do promise to give (the report) complete and balanced consideration.

"We encourage all other parties to give it honest and honorable thinking space and stop reacting to reaction.

"We cannot pass over the past nor can we pour over it endlessly," Mr Durkan said.

Paul Quinn murder raised

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The mother of a man beaten to death by republicans broke down during the conference, as she made an appeal for justice.

Brid Quinn's son Paul was murdered by a gang at an isolated shed in County Monaghan in October 2007.

While the authorities have blamed republicans for the killing, they have ruled that IRA leaders did not sanction it. The victim's grieving mother rejected that.

"It was a year ago in October that Paul was murdered by the IRA," she said, fighting back tears.

"They lured Paul to a shed.

"Twelve men with iron bars were there to break every bone in his body."

Mrs Quinn recalled how members of the SDLP had arrived at the hospital to offer comfort.

"But the doctor said Paul was so badly beaten they couldn`t do anything for him," she said.

The SDLP's Alex Attwood said securing justice for the wrongs of the past, as well as recent crimes, were equally as important.

Mrs Quinn was applauded by the conference when she called for her right to justice as well as the rights of other victims of violence to be respected.

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