



### Top Stories

#### Lebanon faces humanitarian crisis

More than half a million people have been displaced in Lebanon as the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah continues into its second week. Efforts are underway to open a safe corridor to allow aid shipments to be sent to Lebanon.

#### Red Cross ambulances hit by Israeli strike

Six ambulance workers and their patients were wounded when Israeli missiles struck Red Cross ambulances on a rescue mission in south Lebanon. The Lebanese Red Cross demanded that Israel guaranteed their safety through the United Nations or the International Red Cross.

### Featured story

#### Israel accused, "ignored" UN bomb warnings

The Irish foreign ministry said Israel ignored six separate warnings from a key UN liaising officer that the bombardment was endangering the lives of UN staff in South Lebanon before a fatal strike with a "precision-guided weapon" killed 4 UN observers.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- At least nine people have been killed in Israeli air raids in the east of Gaza City, including a three-year old girl, according to medical sources.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- Andrea Yates, a U.S. woman who killed her five children in 2001, is found not guilty of murder by reason of insanity.

- The governments of Chad and Sudan sign an accord officially ending the Chadian-Sudanese conflict. The deal has many provisions similar to that of the Tripoli Accord, which Sudan has violated four times by aiding Janjaweed, UFDC, and anti-Bozize rebels and genocidaires.

- Germany and 11 other nations including Israel sign a protocol to open the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen in the state of Hesse up to international researchers. It contains up to 50 million documents relating to 17.5 million individuals.

- Fragments of a Psalter, a 1200-year-old prayer book, are found in a bog in Ireland.

- United States National Park Service director Fran P. Mainella announces her resignation from office.

- 2006 Kodori Gorge clashes: Georgian forces attack surrounded rebels after ultimatum expires.

- Four United Nations observers are killed in an Israeli air strike on an observation post in south Lebanon. An initial UN report says they contacted Israeli troops 10 times before shelling killed them. (BBC NEWS) (BBC NEWS)

- UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has called for an "immediate

### Wikipedia Current Events

cessation of hostilities" in the Middle East.

- The Battle of Bint Jbail intensifies.

- 9 Israeli soldiers were killed today as IDF forces attempt to gain control of a key hilltop in southern Lebanon.

#### Israel accused, "ignored" UN bomb warnings

An Israeli bombardment killed four United Nations Observers, despite multiple warnings by UN peacekeeper. The peacekeepers at the post said the area within a kilometer of the post was hit with precision munitions, including 17 bombs and 12 artillery shells, four of which directly hit the UN observation post. The fatal strike with a "precision-guided weapon" according to UN military personnel hit the post at about 7.20pm.

The Irish foreign ministry said that Israel ignored repeated warnings from Lieutenant-Colonel John Molloy, a key UN liaising officer, that its bombs were falling close to United Nations observers in southern Lebanon. The warnings came allegedly before an Israeli bomb killed four of the U.N. observers. "On six separate occasions he [Lieutenant-Colonel John Molloy] was in contact with the Israelis to warn them that their bombardment was endangering the lives of UN staff in South Lebanon". "He warned: 'You have to address this problem or lives may be lost'," an Irish foreign

affairs spokesman said.

Suzanne Coogan, a spokeswoman for the Irish Defence Minister Willie O'Dea said "[Lieutenant-Colonel John Molloy] warned the Israelis that they were shelling in very close proximity to the post, and his warnings were very specific, explicit, detailed and stark." She concluded "Obviously those warnings went unheeded."

Irish Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern said "Evidence that we have would suggest that this was either an incredible accident or else was in some way directly targeted".

The United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said "I am shocked and deeply distressed by the apparently deliberate targeting by Israeli Defense Forces of a United Nations observer post in southern Lebanon that has killed two United Nations military observers, with two more feared dead."

Kofi Annan also said "This coordinated artillery and aerial attack on a long established and clearly marked U.N. post at Khiyam occurred despite personal assurances given to me by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that U.N. positions would be spared Israeli fire."

According to an UNIFIL press release there were 14 prior incidents of firing close to this position by aerial bombs and artillery shells before the fatal hit occurred. Also, 9 UNIFIL bases were bombed earlier during this war but with no apparent casualties.

Israeli representatives Prime Minister Israel's prime minister, Ehud Olmert, issued a statement. "It's

inconceivable for the UN to define an error as an 'apparently deliberate' action." He expressed his "deep sorrow" earlier on Wednesday over the deaths. Foreign Ministry spokesman "Israel sincerely regrets the tragic deaths of the UN personnel in south Lebanon," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev. Israeli Ambassadors Dan Ayalon, the Israeli Ambassador to the US, demanded that Annan apologize for the remarks, which he called "baseless." The Israeli Ambassador to the UN, Dan Gillerman, expressed his "deep regret" for the deaths, and denied that the incident was intentional. He said that he was "shocked and deeply distressed by the hasty statement of the secretary-general, insinuating that Israel has deliberately targeted the UN post," calling the comments "premature and erroneous."

Gillerman said "Israel is carrying out a thorough inquiry into this tragic incident and will inform the UN of its results as soon as possible." Israel Defense Forces (IDF) In a statement issued by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), "Following an initial inquiry, it appears that during the operation a UN post was unintentionally hit . . . The IDF is launching a full investigation in close coordination with the UN."

China Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said "China urges the sides concerned, especially Israel, to take tangible measures to ensure the security of UN peacekeepers"

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun told Israeli Ambassador Yehoyada Haim "China strongly condemns the activity to raid the UN peacekeeping post and urges

Israel to carry out a thorough investigation and apologize to China and the victim's families, and coordinate with China to deal with the aftermath"

The Chinese victim, named Du Zhaoyu, was a Lieutenant Colonel of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. He has been in Lebanon as a UN observer since January.

Finland Finnish President Tarja Halonen wanted a full investigation of the attack and also said there was no justification for an attack on the U.N. post.

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja said "It is not the first time that they (U.N. peace keepers) have been attacked, but it is the first time they have been killed." Mr Tuomioja continued "These so called precision attacks seem to be hitting everyone except Hizbollah, there have been hundreds of civilians, international workers and others killed already and it does not seem that by these means a military solution could be achieved."

Canada Prime Minister Stephen Harper says Israel's deadly attack on a UN observation post in Lebanon was a "terrible tragedy". He doubts that the bombing was deliberate. "I certainly doubt that to be the case, given that the government of Israel has been co-operating with us in our evacuation efforts" "We want to find out why this United Nations post was attacked and also why it remained manned during what is now, more or less, a war during obvious danger to these individuals."

Mr Harper said he was waiting for a call from Olmert. "I expect that he will be expressing his deep

regret. But also I'll be asking for his full co-operation in getting to the bottom of this." He also said he would follow the results of the UN and Israeli investigation rather than launching an own.

The Canadian victim is Major Paeta Hess-von Kruedener, a member of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He had completed nine months of his one-year assignment with the UN in Lebanon.

On July 18, Major Paeta Hess-von Kruedener provided CTV.ca with an update of his mission via e-mail. He said that there had been numerous occasions when his post had come under fire. "What I can tell you is this: we have on a daily basis had numerous occasions where our position has come under direct or indirect fire from both artillery and aerial bombing,"

"The closest artillery has landed within two meters of our position and the closest 1000 lb aerial bomb has landed 100 meters from our patrol base."

Austria

A statement from Austria foreign ministry issued by foreign minister Ursula Plassnik said "Such an attack on unarmed UN observers is entirely unacceptable and can in no way be justifiedâ Ursula Plassnik expressed Austria's indignation over the attack and demanded an immediate and thorough investigation into the incident.

### **Buffalo, N.Y. city hall evacuated after alarms sound**

The city hall building in Buffalo, New York was evacuated after fire alarms were activated.

"Smoke detectors went off on the 13th and 27th floors. Among other

things we lost all communications out of the building. Something cut off communications, something set off those alarms and cut power to elevators," said Mike Lombardo, Buffalo's fire commissioner.

Police and fire crews arrived on scene to discover a power surge in the 27th floor knocked out all communications between the police and fire departments in the city for nearly two hours. Fire crews had to use emergency stairways to examine the building for fire and evacuees of the 32-story building had to use emergency stairways to evacuate because elevators in the building were not functioning properly.

According to Lombardo, "it looks like we have no fire whatsoever [in the building]" and that all 2,800 workers were allowed to return to work shortly after 12:00 p.m.

"We've been able to re-set things...we feel very confident that there's no other problems," added Lombardo.

No one was injured during the incident.

### **Preliminary hearing for lawsuit against Buffalo, N.Y. hotel proposal rescheduled**

Buffalo, New York – The preliminary hearing for a lawsuit against the Elmwood Village Hotel proposal has been pushed back to August 10, 2006.

The hotel would require the demolition of at least five properties owned by Hans Mobius, 1109-1121 Elmwood and would cause the closure of several businesses. Already, two businesses, Skunk Tail Glass and Six Nations Native American Gift Shop have relocated, outside the Elmwood Strip. Don apparel,

H.O.D. Tattoo and Mondo Video still remain on Elmwood; however, Mondo Video is planning on moving to a new location. The hotel will be 72 rooms and will cost at least 7 million dollars to build. Savarino Construction Services Corporation would be in charge of building the hotel and Wyndham Hotels would operate it.

Attorney Arthur Giacalone says that the court date was pushed back because "the court apparently felt it did not make sense to proceed with oral argument on 7/27 if Savarino is going to re-start the process." Giacalone also stated that the decision to adjourn until August 10 "was not my idea." On July 13, 2006 Savarino announced that they were withdrawing the proposal to "resubmit" it to "shed the lawsuits" against the proposal.

Savarino was allegedly supposed to resubmit the proposal by the end of last week but so far has not done so. The final meeting of Buffalo's Common Council for the summer occurred today. The Council will not meet again until September.

"If they [Savarino] took no action today, re the hotel, [that is, accepting the new application, or rescinding the prior rezoning resolution], nothing official will happen for the next 6 weeks or so," added Giacalone also saying that if this is the case, "the court may not be willing to hear oral argument on 8/10 since we will still be up in the air about what's going on." Giacalone also states that he is unsure about "what they [the Common Council] did today."

Despite the call for a "do-over" of the proposals process, Giacalone still states that his client's position of the "pending lawsuit will not be

'moot' or 'academic' unless and until the Common Council rescinds its prior vote(s) that approved the rezoning" for the buildings on Elmwood and one property on Forest Avenues.

Sam Savarino, CEO of Savarino Construction has been contacted, but has not replied to any e-mails. Area councilman Joseph Golombeck has also been e-mailed, but also has not replied.

### **Saddam Hussein 'forced' back to trial**

Saddam Hussein, who had been on hunger strike, has said in his trial today that he was taken to court from his hospital bed against his will.

The former leader of Iraq was rushed to hospital last Sunday after refusing to eat for sixteen days. But according to news agencies, he has ended the hunger strike by eating lunch at the court in Baghdad. "Saddam ate beef and rice and cola with bread which he brought from hospital," one source told Reuters news agency. He was fasting with three co-defendants, and they were demanding more security for their defence lawyers, three of whom have been murdered.

While Hussein was being treated by doctors in hospital on Monday, the trial recommenced without him. But today, he appeared in front of the court, looking slightly thinner. "I was brought against my will directly from the hospital... the Americans insisted that I come against will. This is not fair," he claimed. "Three days ago I was taken to hospital and today I was brought here forcibly from the hospital. I was fed intravenously."

He also said later on in the hearing that if he was found guilty and

faced execution, he would prefer to be shot rather than hanged. "I advise you as an Iraqi, if you were in a circumstance in which you have to issue a death penalty, you have to remember that Saddam is a military man and in this case the verdict should be death by shooting not by hanging."

As his defence team has been boycotting the trial, replacement lawyers have been selected by the court. However, Hussein has dismissed the representatives brought in to defend him. "Your honour, I refuse to appear before this tribunal, but this tribunal can do as it wills," he added.

In response, Judge Abdel Rahman said: "Your lawyers were informed of the hearing and they chose not to come, despite the fact they have billions of dollars and sit in a neighbouring country, where they incite violence." Most of Hussein's legal team is based in Amman, the capital of Jordan.

Saddam Hussein and seven co-defendants are on trial charged with crimes against humanity after Hussein allegedly ordered his military forces to kill 148 people from the village of Dujail following an attempted assassination of the former dictator in 1982.

### **Multiple sclerosis more often transmitted by fathers**

Yesterday, a group of scientists from the U.S. and Canada, headed by O.H. Kantarci from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, published an article in the professional journal *Neurology* on the transmission of multiple sclerosis (MS). The result of their studies is that the disease is transmitted to children more often when the father is the one having the disease.

In their studies, 441 children were examined whose fathers or mothers had MS, 45 of which were ill themselves. While only in 27 out of 323 cases, mothers transmitted the disease to their children - which makes 8,36 percent of the cases -, children of fathers with MS inherited it in 18 out of 117 cases - i.e. in 15,38 percent of the cases.

MS is an illness caused by the immune system destroying nerves between the brain and the spinal cord. Later disorders consist of paralysis, speech disorders, impaired visions and problems in motion. Researchers found that MS is not a classical hereditary disease, but is caused by a number of genetic and outer impacts. Also, it is likely that several genes (with complex interactions) have an influence on the development of the disease.

The actual reasons for people to suffer from MS are still unknown. But what is known is that it occurs approximately twice as much in women than in men. And this could be the reason for fathers transmitting the disease to their children more often than mothers. The group thinks that men who are actually ill are carrying more genetic material causing the illness than women with MS which leads to a higher probability for their children to also have MS. This is known as the "Carter effect" in medicine.

### **Power and water return to Liberia**

The Liberian President Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson today flicked a switch to restore electricity to the country's war torn capital, Monrovia, after a gap of over 15 years.

At a ceremony to coincide with the

159th anniversary of the country's independence, Mrs. Sirleaf-Johnson, who was elected at the end of 2005, pulled a switch draped in the Liberian flag illuminating a suburban clinic in the city.

"The switching on today is symbolic. It symbolises our journey from darkness to illumination," President Sirleaf-Johnson said in a speech.

She was joined by the Ghanaian President John Kuffour who said "with the restoration of power to Liberia the period of gloom and darkness engendered by political turmoil must come to an end." Ghana provided equipment and manpower to assemble Monrovia's electricity infrastructure after it was largely looted by soldiers during the decade of turmoil in the country.

Pumped water was also restored to the capital at a ceremony on Tuesday, which the World Health Organisation has declared high quality. These two major milestones demonstrate visible progress to the Liberian people that the country is making progress, and will add optimism during the anniversary celebrations.

"My last daughter does not even know what a street light is. When she saw it she did not want to leave," one 45 year old Monrovia told Reuters.

After becoming Africa's first female head of state, Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson promised to restore power and water to the capital within 150 days, a target she has just reached. But after decades of poor leadership, the country still lacks good roads and a working telephone network.

Liberia spent the entirety of the 1990s fighting one of the most brutal civil wars of modern African history. Around 250,000 people were killed under the rule of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front which took power in 1989. After fleeing in 2003 Taylor has since been arrested and awaits trial in the Hague, Netherlands.

But since the peace was signed in 2003 serious efforts have been made to improve the country's facilities. The country currently holds one of the largest UN peacekeeping forces of 15,000 soldiers.

### **Red Cross ambulances hit by Israeli strike**

Six ambulance workers and their patients were wounded when Israeli missiles struck Red Cross ambulances on a rescue mission in south Lebanon. The attack took place near Qana when an ambulance from Tyre arrived intending to evacuate three patients from the border town of Tibnin. Two ambulances were completely destroyed as their roofs were pierced by missiles. According to one of the drivers, two guided missiles were fired at each ambulance. It is claimed that the ambulance headlights were on, the blue light overhead was flashing, and another light illuminated the Red Cross flag at the time.

The patients, the Fawaz family, all had minor injuries before the missiles struck the ambulance. Now the son is losing his leg and the other is treated for shrapnel wounds.

The Lebanese Red Cross demanded that Israel guarantee their safety through the United Nations or the International Red

Cross or they would cease all rescue missions. The South Lebanon ambulance service is run entirely by volunteers. This means that 100,000 people of the Tyre district, villages below the Litani river, would have no ambulance transport to reach hospital.

Red Cross volunteer Mr Shaalan says although this is the first time ambulances have been hit by Israel in this war, it was only a matter of time. A lorry from the United Arab Emirates carrying medical supplies was hit in eastern Lebanon last week killing its driver and injured six Lebanese Red Cross workers. Yesterday afternoon the Red Cross office in Tyre trembled when two missiles landed in the building across the road.

An Australian correspondent reports from the city of Tyre that at least 10 Lebanese ambulances bearing the International Red Cross emblem have been targeted in Israeli air strikes in the south of Lebanon that have killed more than a dozen civilian passengers on transport to hospitals.

An Israeli army spokesman said, "The incident in which vehicles were hit last night occurred in an area known to be one of the main sources of the launching of hundreds of missiles."

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement said it had set up two southern bases, in the port of Tyre and the town of Marjayoun further east.

### **Toll to cancel Overlander train service**

Toll New Zealand has said that it will cancel the Overlander train service from September 30, 2006. The train runs from Auckland to Wellington, and is the only

passenger train service that does.

The North Island Main Trunk line has been used in New Zealand for passenger services for 97-years, beginning in 1909.

Toll said it had been running the train service at a loss for many years now and was no longer viable to continue running the service. They also say that they approached the New Zealand Government for help so they could continue the Overlander but "after working through with the Government both parties concluded there was not the passenger numbers to justify keeping it running. Significant investment would also have been required to replace the aging carriage fleet," David Jackson, Chief Executive of Toll New Zealand, said.

Only 50,000 people used the train each year compared to the 200,000 people who use the Tranz Alpine in the South Island.

It was cheaper and shorter to catch a plane, between NZ\$100-\$282 for an one-hour flight, compared to \$158-\$170 for a 12-hour journey.

The New Zealand Green Party is disappointed by the news. Co-leader of Greens, Jeanette Fitzsimons, said "I predict that as oil prices continue to rise further we will need The Overlander again."

### Today in History

1214 - Philip II of France decisively won the Battle of Bouvines and took undisputed control of the territories of Anjou, Brittany, Maine, Normandy and the Touraine.

1865 - A group of Welsh settlers arrived at Chubut Valley in Argentina's Patagonia region.

1921 - University of Toronto researchers led by Frederick Banting announced the discovery of the hormone insulin.

1953 - A cease-fire was established in the Korean War.

1996 - Centennial Olympic Park bombing: A pipe bomb exploded during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, killing two and injuring 111.

July 27 is Jose Celso Barbosa Day in Puerto Rico.

### Quote of the Day

juxtapose; v

1. To place side by side, especially for comparison.

### Word of the Day

"In soft deluding lies let fools delight. A shadow marks our days, which end in Night." ~ Hilaire Belloc

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