



Lead Stories

Nineteen Spanish airports closed due to ash

Death toll from China rainstorm reaches 65

Boat in DR Congo capsizes, 80 feared dead

New York's Staten Island Ferry crashes, 60 injured

Nineteen Spanish airports closed due to ash

Spanish authorities have closed nineteen airports in the country due to an ash cloud from the Eyjafjallajökull volcano in Iceland.

Nine airports were closed early this morning, and six more were closed at 12:00 local time (10:00 UTC). At 15:30 local time, the remaining four airports were closed, including Spain's second largest airport at Barcelona. According to Eurocontrol, an agency that is responsible for aviation safety in Europe, said additional airports in Portugal and France were expected to be closed as well.

The closures are forecast to affect nearly 40,000 people, and over 400 flights are to be canceled. Limited traffic into the affected airports will be allowed to resume at 02:00 local time (00:00 UTC) Sunday morning. Authorities warned, however, that the cloud had the potential to affect air travel into next week.

The cloud of ash causing the latest closure is 1,200 miles (2,000 kilometers) long, the result of recently intensifying eruptions from

the volcano. Ash is rising up to 30,000 feet into the air, although Eurocontrol said the risk of ash contamination was particularly high up to 20,000 feet.

An official at Eurocontrol said: "We hope that this incident won't be quite as devastating as last time. However, that depends on the spread of the ash cloud because there is a very extensive area over the north Atlantic if the winds change, there will be very significant closures in Europe today."

Death toll from China rainstorm reaches 65

At least 65 people have been killed and 9,900 houses destroyed in southern China after torrential rainstorms hit the area over the past week.

Fourteen people are missing, and 2.55 million people have been affected by the rains; flash floods breached dikes, exacerbating the situation. Among the cities struck were Congqing, Guizhou, Guangdong, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Sichuan.

The inclement weather is expected to continue in Hunan and Jiangxi, according to meteorologists. According to the state news agency, Xinhua, as much as 157 millimetres of rain fell throughout the region from Wednesday evening to Thursday afternoon.

The rains started when a heat wave in the southern part of the country mingled with a cold front from the north, according to reports citing weather forecasters.

Boat in DR Congo capsizes, 80 feared dead

At least eighty people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are feared dead after a boat capsized on the Congo River.

The boat was carrying 125 people when it turned over on Wednesday evening near the city of Kindu, capital of the eastern Maniema province; 45 people have been rescued from the waters, but the rest are missing, and some reports say twenty people were already confirmed dead. Rescue efforts are still ongoing.

"It was yesterday. It is thought that there could be around 80 dead. There were around 120 people on board," said a spokesman for UN peacekeeping mission in DRC, Madnodje Mounoubai.

It wasn't immediately clear why the accident happened; however, boats in the DRC frequently are overcrowded as they are a popular means of transport.

New York's Staten Island Ferry crashes, 60 injured

According to the New York Police Department, New York City's Staten Island Ferry has crashed into a passenger terminal, causing over 60 injuries. The New York Fire Department reports to the press that they are on the scene and are giving emergency treatment.

No life-threatening injuries have been reported, although a few of the passengers were transported by the NYFD to local city hospitals. The accident is still under investigation by the NYPD. In all, 252 passengers were aboard the ship, along with

eighteen various crew members.

According to some of the passengers that were on the ship, the boat sped up right before hitting the dock, when it should have actually been slowing down so that it could let passengers on from the station. An early report of the investigation is that the captain of the ship mistakenly lost engine control.

The Staten Island Ferry is a major form of transportation between the two New York city boroughs of Manhattan and Staten Island. Five different ships carry approximately 60,000 passengers each day across the New York Harbor.

The ship, the *Andrew J. Barberi*, was also involved in another crash in 2003, where it crashed into the same dock and killed eleven people.

Detroit Red Wings beat San Jose Sharks 7-1 in fourth NHL quarter final match

Detroit Red wings beat San Jose Sharks 7–1 in their fourth quarter final match of the 2010 Stanley Cup playoffs on Thursday night, reducing San Jose's series lead to three games to one.

Detroit would go up to a five goal to zero lead in the first period, with Johan Franzén scoring three goals (commonly known as a hat-trick). In the second period, Detroit scored one another goal to take a six goal to zero lead. Dany Heatley of the San Jose Sharks eventually scored to reduce Detroit's lead to six goals to one in the same period, but could not lift the team to score any more.

In the third period, Franzén scored his fourth and final goal of the game. Detroit won seven goals to one.

The next game will be hosted by San Jose on Saturday night. If the San Jose Sharks win Game 5, they will advance to the Conference Finals. Detroit are forced to win three games in a row in order to advance to the Conference Finals. The

winning team in this series (first team to win 4 games) will advance to the Conference Finals of the Western Conference, where they'll either meet the Chicago Blackhawks or the Vancouver Canucks. The Canucks are currently leading that series, 3 games to 1.

The winning team in the Conference Finals of the Western Conference will advance to the Stanley Cup Final, also a best-of-7-games-series, where they meet the winner of the Conference Finals of the Eastern Conference.

Two Egyptian peacekeepers killed in Darfur by gunmen

Two peacekeepers from Egypt, working for the joint United Nations-African Union mission in Darfur, were killed in an ambush yesterday by gunmen, reports say.

Three others were hurt when the incident happened near Edd al-Fursan in South Darfur. Kemal Saiki, a spokesman with the mission, commented on the incident in a statement: "Today, at about 11:30 am [14.30 UTC], a military convoy from UNAMID's Egyptian contingent, with three vehicles and 20 personnel, was ambushed near Katila village, 85 kilometres [53 miles] south of Edd al-Fursan, South Darfur, by a group of unidentified armed men who indiscriminately opened fire, without warning, on the peacekeepers.

"The attackers fled when the convoy returned fire. The attack left two peacekeepers killed in action and three seriously wounded," Saiki added. He condemned the clash as being a "criminal act".

Nobody has, as of yet, claimed responsibility for the attack. Darfur and the surrounding region are prone to violence, caused by a civil war; with these deaths, 24 peacekeepers have been killed since UNAMID was deployed to the area two years ago.

Falkirk relegated from Scottish Premier League

Falkirk were today relegated from the Scottish Premier League (SPL), after they failed to beat Kilmarnock away from home. It was their final game of the season. The teams fought out a 0–0 draw at Rugby Park, a game which did not see many shots on goal with only nine in the whole game. It is the first time Falkirk have been in the second tier of Scottish football since 2005.

Kilmarnock had previously been two points clear of twelfth position, occupied instead by Falkirk. The team in last place would be relegated, and, only needing a draw, Kilmarnock played a slow and defensive game. It is the first time Falkirk have been in the second tier of Scottish football since 2005. With only two shots on target the entire game, much of the credit for the draw went to each team's defensive line, putting in several last-ditch tackles to stifle attacks.

While Falkirk had the upper hand in the first half possession-wise, the contest was more even in the second. On 77 minutes, the Falkirk side had the ball in the net, but the goal was disallowed for a clear foul on the Kilmarnock goalkeeper. Shortly after, Kilmarnock clipped the crossbar with a Craig Bryson effort. Falkirk had a glorious opportunity to win the game on 86 minutes, when the ball landed for Ryan Flynn with the goal empty, but the young midfielder put it over from ten yards.

Kilmarnock manager Jimmy Calderwood, speaking after the game, spoke of his experiences: "It was a long, long day. I wouldn't advise it for anybody to be honest, you know. It's the first time and hopefully the last time.

"They didn't really cause us any problems. We had a chance on the counter attack, we didn't take it, and then I think it was the 92nd or 93rd minute young Flynn missed a dottie of a chance. It could have been over

and out. All credit to Falkirk."

When asked about his future at the club, Calderwood replied: "I'll see what the idea is. I wouldn't want to stay with too many games like this."

The manager of Falkirk, Steven Pressley, also told Radio Scotland his views on the game: "It was a very emotional day, you know, we're bitterly disappointed, but once again I couldn't ask any more from this group of players. The things we talk about, the desire, the effort, the application, they were in abundance today. They gave me their absolute lot. It just wasn't to be."

This was Pressley's first season as a manager, and he was questioned on his experience in the role: "I love it. It's been an emotional day today, but in terms of my three months in charge, it's been a terrific experience. I very much enjoy it here and hopefully we can certainly build for next season."

Falkirk will be replaced in the Scottish Premier League next season by Inverness Caledonian Thistle, who bounced straight back into the top flight after their relegation in 2009.

Commons Picture of the Day



Isophysis tasmanica, Mt. Eliza, Southwest National Park, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Tasmania, Australia.
Image: Noodle snacks

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