



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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SYRIA FACILITATES ARMS TRANSFERS TO HIZBULLAH

August 2, 2005 Middle East Newsline reported: "Syria continues to facilitate the transfer of Iranian weapons to Hizbullah in Lebanon. U.S. officials said that within days of Syria's military withdrawal from Lebanon in late April an Iranian shipment of munitions, mortars and anti-tank rockets reached Lebanon. The officials said the shipment was flown by air to Damascus International Airport and taken by truck to Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

"Syria continues to be a foremost supporter and weapons supplier of Hizbullah, a terrorist group active in Lebanon, and throughout the world, that has been targeting and killing Americans and many others since the early 1980s," Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, chairman of the House subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, said.

Since May, several additional trucks believed laden with weapons were tracked moving from Syria to the Bekaa Valley. In the Bekaa, the trucks were unloaded by Hizbullah and taken to various bases in eastern and southern Lebanon..."

RUSSIA BEGINS DESTROYING POULTRY FOLLOWING OUTBREAK OF BIRD FLU

August 3, 2005 Voice of America reported: "Russian authorities have begun to slaughter poultry in nearly 20 villages in the Siberian province of Novosibirsk, where a deadly strain of bird-flu virus has just been confirmed. Government health officials say there is no cause for alarm, and that all precautionary measures are being taken.

The agriculture ministry says the avian flu outbreak appears relatively contained to a Siberian region. The bad news is that preliminary tests of the samples taken from affected birds show the flu virus strain is of the deadly H5N1 type that can be transmitted to humans. An outbreak of this flu earlier killed more than 60 people in Southeast Asia.



The Russian government has imposed a ban on the transportation of birds, bird products, and feed for domestic birds out of the affected areas, which include neighboring Omsk and Altai provinces. It has also formed a special commission made up of officials from the interior ministry, the emergency ministry, the veterinary inspectorate, and the sanitary control service.

Special units in Novosibirsk Tuesday began killing some 65,000 chickens, geese, ducks, and turkeys from family farms in the quarantine zone. Victor Maleev is a department head at the Russian Health Ministry's Central Scientific Research Institute of Epidemiology. He tells VOA migratory birds that stop in a lake area in Novosibirsk may be responsible for the outbreak, which has already killed more than 2,000 local birds.

Mr. Maleev says to date, there have been no known cases of human-to-human transmission of bird flu. But he warns people to practice good hygiene when dealing with poultry either on the farm or preparing it in the kitchen. Mr. Maleev says people should wash their hands before and after preparing chicken, turkey or duck meat and make sure the meat is well cooked. For poultry-workers, who may come into contact with infected birds, he advises wearing protective clothing, such as gloves and a face mask. And, he says they should follow disinfection procedures after work.

Birds infected with the virus turn blue before they die. In humans, the virus causes a stomach ache and may lead to respiratory collapse.

In a related development, Kazakh media are reporting a suspected case of bird flu contracted by a poultry farm worker in a region close to the border with Novosibirsk. The government has not confirmed the reports. Experts say it could take several days before test results are known..."

IRAN SAYS SHIHAB CAN REACH NEARLY 2,000 KM

August 4, 2005 Middle East Newsline reported: "Iran has asserted that its enhanced Shihab-3 intermediate-range ballistic missile can strike targets at distances of nearly 2,000 kilometers.

Officials said the Shihab-3 developed and tested in 2004 significantly increased the range of the missile. They said the missile could also deliver a weapons of mass destruction payload.

Iranian Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani outlined the capabilities of the Shihab-3 in interviews and statements over the last week. Shamkhani said the Shihab-3 contained a range of 1,930 kilometers, a major increase from the previous version of the missile, which had a range of 1,300 kilometers.

Shamkhani, who has said he would soon step down from his post, was quoted by Radio Farda as saying that the liquid-fuel Shihab could also be fitted with a nuclear warhead. He said Iran could strike any Israeli or U.S. base in the Middle East..."

CHINA, RUSSIA PLAN FIRST JOINT MILITARY GAMES

August 2, 2005 Voice of America reported: "China and Russia will hold their first joint military exercises later this month. The Chinese Defense Ministry says the exercises, which have been dubbed "Peace Mission 2005," will take place August 18 through the August 25 in the Russian city of Vladivostok and on China's coastal province of Shandong.

More than 10,000 troops from both nations armies, navies, marines and air forces will be involved. The ministry says the goal of the exercises is to "deepen Sino-Russian trust" and improve their capability to fight international terrorism.

The exercises are a symbol of the improving ties between the once-bitter Cold War rivals, who are dealing with Muslim separatists in their respective countries..."

SAUDI DEFENSE MINISTER BECOMES CROWN PRINCE



August 03, 2005 Middle East Newslite reported: "Saudi Arabia's longtime defense minister has become heir to the throne in a move that could bolster his authority in military programs and procurement.

Defense Minister Prince Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz, 77, was appointed crown prince with the death of King Fahd on Monday. A government statement said Fahd was succeeded by Crown Prince Abdullah, who has been the de facto leader of the kingdom since 1995.

Western industry sources said Sultan's appointment would signal the resumption of major Saudi arms purchases, financed by the huge windfall in oil revenues. The sources said that over the last four years the kingdom has largely limited procurement to maintenance and training programs amid the power vacuum left by the illness of Fahd.

"Abdullah was careful to maintain an image of a caretaker rather than a policy-maker," an industry source said. "So, nothing dramatic was approved in the area of military programs. Saudi Arabia has real needs and I expect that decisions will soon be made by both Abdullah and Sultan."..."

REPORT: THIRD CELL PLANNING ATTACKS IN LONDON

August 1, 2005 Voice of America reported: "A British newspaper says a third Islamist terror cell is planning more suicide bomb attacks against London's transit system and other targets.

The Sunday Times says members of the cell are independent of the bombers involved in two attacks this month in London, but that they have "associations" with some of the suspects connected to the July 21 failed bombings.

The newspaper quotes security sources who said "specific intelligence from several sources" warned of a plot by the "third cell" to carry out multiple suicide attacks on Thursday (7/28) - one week after failed bomb attacks on London's transit system, and three weeks after the July 7 suicide bombings that killed scores of subway and bus passengers.

The Sunday Times said word of the new bomb plot prompted a decision to deploy thousands of extra police throughout the capital on Thursday. No specific threat was announced to the public at the time, but British authorities have said the security operation in London was the biggest since the World War II..."

U.S. PRESSES ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW SHEBAA

August 1, 2005 Middle East Newslite reported: "The Bush administration has launched an effort to press Israel to withdraw from a sliver of territory claimed by Lebanon. Lebanese officials said the administration has assured the new government of Prime Minister Fuad Siniora that the United States would press Israel to withdraw from the Shebaa Plateau. The area was captured by Israel in the 1967 war and the United Nations regards the area as Syrian territory.

"Washington sees the Shebaa Plateau as containing the potential of another Middle East crisis and the main excuse for Hizbullah's continued presence," a Lebanese official said. "We have been given the impression that results could be expected over the next year."

Officials said Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice discussed the U.S. demand for an Israeli withdrawal from Shebaa during her trip to Israel earlier this month. After meeting Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on July 22, Ms. Rice made an unscheduled one-day visit to Beirut to meet Siniora and express support for Lebanon in wake of the Syrian military withdrawal.

Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor

UCGIA Oakland, San Jose, Stockton, and Santa Rosa

ljtuc@msn.com