

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

War Not Over For Troops Still In Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP) — Lt. Ryan Alexander stands thigh-deep in a dark grove of reeds and palm trees, hunting for rockets. Officially, the U.S. combat role in Iraq is ending this month, but Alexander and his platoon are under orders to keep insurgents from using the south Baghdad field as a hiding place for Katyushas.

"We're going to be doing this as long as they tell us," Alexander said in a near-whisper in the steamy pre-dawn air, his machine gun slung over his shoulder. Behind him, Iraqi Lt. Wassan Fadah Hussein had his handgun out and ready for action.

In the near distance came a gunshot. "Sounded like a little boom," Alexander drawled.

The number of U.S. soldiers in Iraq dipped Tuesday to 49,700, dropping below the 50,000 threshold ahead of the end-of-the-month deadline set by President Barack Obama. But the war is not yet over for the remaining troops, who will continue to put themselves in danger on counterterrorism raids and other high-risk missions that aren't called combat but can be just as deadly.

Until the end of 2011, U.S. troops will mostly focus on training Iraqi soldiers and police to take over the nation's still-shaky security. They will counsel Iraqi officials on how to endear themselves to their citizens, whether through handing out soccer balls to kids or building irrigation systems for farmers.

Police Can Do Little To Stop Drug War

EL PASO, Texas (AP) — The first bullets struck El Paso's city hall at the end of a work day. The next ones hit a university building and closed a major highway. Shootouts in the drug war along the U.S.-Mexico border are sending bullets whizzing across the Rio Grande into one of the nation's safest cities, where authorities worry it's only a matter of time before someone gets hurt or killed.

At least eight bullets have been fired into El Paso in the last few weeks from the rising violence in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, one of the world's most dangerous places. And all American police can do is shrug because they cannot legally intervene in a war in another country. The best they can do is warn people to stay inside.

"There's really not a lot you can do right now," El Paso County Sheriff Richard Wiles said. "Those gun battles are breaking out everywhere, and some are breaking out right along the border."

Police say the rounds were not intentionally fired into the U.S. But wildly aimed gunfire has become common in Juarez, a sprawling city of shanty neighborhoods that once boomed with manufacturing plants. It's ground zero in Mexico's relentless drug war.

More than 6,000 people have been killed there since 2008, when the Sinaloa and Juarez cartels started battling each other and Mexican authorities for control of the city and smuggling routes into the U.S. Nationwide, more than 28,000 people have been killed since President Felipe Calderon launched his offensive against the cartels shortly after taking office in December 2006.

Astronomers Find Star With Up To 7 Planets

GENEVA (AP) — Scientists say they've identified a sun-like star with as many as seven different planets — including one that might be the smallest ever found outside the solar system.

If confirmed, the planetary system around HD 10180, a star more than 100 light years distant, would be the richest ever discovered. One astronomer says it's part of a growing body of evidence that the universe is full of planets — and that a bunch of them could be similar to our own.

"The really nice thing about finding systems like this is that it shows that there are many more out there," said Alan Boss, of the Washington-based Carnegie Institution for Science, who wasn't involved with the find. "Mother Nature really had fun making planets."

Although most of the planets identified are large — about 13 to 25 times the mass of our home — those behind the discovery, announced Tuesday at an international conference in France, say they're nearly certain they've identified one only 1.4 times the size of Earth.

That would be the smallest planet ever spotted outside of those which orbit our own sun.

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YSD

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The new facilities, which are housed on approximately 4.8 acres, carried a total cost of \$3.2 million.

"We asked the district to make that old administration building work for just one more year. Finally, the situation was right and now we are here today," Stevens said.

"Additionally, there are no new taxes for these buildings. We were able to structure our capital outlay expenditures so there will be no new taxes for this facility. That is not just something that happens: It takes planning over a long time to accomplish that. A lot of people may overlook (the fact) that this project's timing was right for the people of Yankton."

Another fact that the district officials stressed was that, because of the state of the economy, the community needed a project like this.

"Fortunately for our community, a lot of local people were able to work on the project," Stevens said. "Glenn Mannes Architecture was our architect; James Steel, Inc., was our general contractor; and many of our subcontractors and suppliers were local providers as well. This facility has been a win/win contraction project for our community. This is a building that when you drive by it you can be proud of it."

Brian Muehlbeire, project manager for James Steel, Inc.,

echoed that sentiment.

"This project didn't just benefit one or two individuals. This contract has 28 separate agreements with subcontractors and suppliers and they each had subcontractors and suppliers under them," Muehlbeire said. "This went very deep as far as how many people were affected by this project. There was a lot of money shared throughout the community which is a huge benefit to all of us."

Carmen Schramm of the Yankton Visitor's Center and Chamber of Commerce (YCC) added that there is even more benefit to the community than the economic impact.

"For the city of Yankton, when you have the facilities you need for education, it just strengthens the overall system," she said. "As everyone knows, a community that has a really good education system has basically set their future as far as your kids and community. A facility like this is just incredible."

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China: Jet Misses Runway, 43 Killed

BY ALEXA OLESEN
Associated Press Writer

BEIJING — A Chinese passenger jet broke apart as it approached a fog-shrouded runway in the country's northeast and burst into flames as it hit the ground Tuesday, killing 43 people and injuring 53 others, state media said.

The Henan Airlines plane with 91 passengers and five crew crashed in a grassy area near the Lindu airport on the outskirts of Yichun, a city of about 1 million people in Heilongjiang province, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Xinhua quoted Hua Jingwei, an Yichun publicity official, as saying that some passengers were thrown from the cabin before the broken plane hit the ground.

The Brazilian-made Embraer E-190 jet had taken off from Heilongjiang's capital of Harbin shortly before 9 p.m. (1300 GMT)

and crashed a little more than an hour later, Xinhua said.

A middle-aged man who survived the crash told China Central Television there was bad turbulence as the plane descended, then several big jolts that caused the luggage to come crashing down from the overhead bins.

"After we stopped, the people in the back were panicking and rushed to the front," the unidentified man, who had no visible injuries, said in an interview from a hospital bed. "We were trying to open the (emergency exits) but they wouldn't open. Then the smoke came in ... within two or three minutes or even a minute, we couldn't breathe. I knew something bad was going to happen."

It was not clear from his account at what point the plane broke apart. The man said he and a few others escaped from a hole in the wall of the cabin near the first row of seats, then ran from the burning wreckage.

CCTV showed firefighters dousing the burning plane with

hoses and later digging through the wreckage of the jet.

Xinhua said 43 bodies were recovered within hours of the disaster and 53 people were hospitalized, most with broken bones. Wang Xuemei, vice mayor of Yichun, told CCTV that three survivors were in critical condition but gave no details.

CCTV earlier said that 91 people were on board, and gave a lower death and injured toll, but the report appears to not have included the five crew on the plane.

Henan Airlines is based in the central Chinese province of the same name and flies smaller regional jets, mainly on routes in north and northeast China. Previously known as Kumpeng Airlines, the carrier was relaunched as Henan Airlines earlier this year.

Henan Airlines and many other regional Chinese airlines flying shorter routes have struggled in the past few years, losing

passengers to high-speed rail-road lines that China has aggressively expanded.

An American company, Phoenix-based Mesa Air Group Inc., was an original investor in Henan's predecessor company, Kumpeng, but divested its stake last year. Mesa operates regional services in the U.S. for Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and other carriers and is undergoing bankruptcy reorganization.

Full-tilt expansion of Chinese air traffic in the 1990s led to a series of crashes that gave China the reputation of being unsafe. The poor record prompted the government to improve safety drastically, from airlines to new air traffic management systems at airports.

The last major passenger jet crash in China was in November 2004, when an China Eastern airplane plunged into a lake in northern China shortly, killing all 53 on board and two on the ground.

Stocks Drop After Fall In July Home Sales

BY STEPHEN BERNARD
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Stocks fell for a fourth day after another disappointing report on housing deepened worries that the economic recovery could be fading. Bond yields fell as investors sought out more stable investments.

The Dow Jones industrial average lost 134 points Tuesday following news that sales of previously occupied homes fell last month to their lowest level in 15 years. The 27 percent drop in home sales from the previous month was the biggest since record-keeping began in 1968.

The Dow dipped briefly below 10,000 for the first time in seven weeks and has now lost 375 points since its four-day slump began. The yield on the two-year Treasury note reached another record low as cautious investors piled back into the bond market.

The National Association of Realtors said sales of previously occupied homes plunged in July to an annual rate of 3.83 million, much worse than the 4.7 million estimate from economists polled by Thomson Reuters.

Home sales have fallen sharply since a homebuyer tax credit expired at the end of

April, despite mortgage rates reaching record lows. A stubbornly high unemployment rate of 9.5 percent has been keeping home sales down, and banks have also been cautious in making new loans.

"Without a boost in job creation, (buyers) just won't have the confidence to step in and buy a new home," David Katz, principal at Weiser Capital Management said.

Other world markets also fell. Japanese stocks led the way lower, falling more than 1 percent as the yen hit a fresh 15-year high against the dollar. Japan's economy relies heavily on exports, so a

stronger yen hurts the profits of major Japanese companies.

Stocks have been sliding in recent days as investors focus on signs that economic growth is slowing. A new wave of corporate dealmaking gave stocks a temporary boost Monday, but those gains quickly faded.

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow fell 133.96, or 1.3 percent, to 10,040.45. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 15.49, or 1.5 percent, to 1,051.87, while the Nasdaq fell 35.87, or 1.7 percent, to 2,123.76.

Three stocks fell for every one that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.2 billion shares.

OBITUARIES

Frances Petersen

Frances "Frankie" Kay (Masterson) Petersen, age 63, of Yankton, SD passed away Wednesday, August 18, 2010 at the home of her daughter in Chalmette, LA.

Mrs. Petersen's body was cremated. Memorial services will be held Wednesday, August 25, 2010, at Riverside Park Shelter # 3 at Yankton, SD at 11:00 a.m.

There will be a visitation with the family starting one hour prior to the service at 10:00 a.m. The Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home & Crematory, Yankton, is in charge of arrangements.

Frances was born November 15, 1946 in Winner, SD to parents Paul (Sr.) and Agnes (Niemann) Masterson. Mrs. Petersen attended elementary school in Oacoma, SD, moving to Yankton, SD with her parents in 1965 and



Petersen

remaining in the Yankton area most of her life. She was a day-care provider. She attended the Yankton Baptist Church, was a lifetime member of the VFW in Yankton, and had been a recovering alcoholic for 28 years.

Mrs. Petersen enjoyed crocheting, playing cards, dice games, camping and quiet drives by the lake. She enjoyed kids and especially her grandson Benjamin — just saying his name would make her smile and light up.

Honorary Pallbearers are Benjamin Trip Nelson of Chalmette, LA, John Masterson, Jr. of Gayville, SD, Robert Masterson, Jr. of Chester, SD,

William Nelson of Sioux Falls, SD, Jennifer Masterson of Gayville, SD, Anjelica Pick of St. Helena, NE, Douglas Kleinschmit, Jr. of Sioux Falls, SD, Lucus Kleinschmit of Sioux Falls, SD, Erik Kleinschmit of Sioux Falls, SD, Kyle Mueller of Sioux Falls, SD.

Those left to cherish her memories are her daughter, Amanda Petersen and her fiancé Michael Breece of Chalmette, LA, grandsons Kaden Joseph Simon of Little Rock, AR and Benjamin Trip Nelson of Chalmette, LA. Brothers and sisters: Sharon Roberts of Crofton, NE, Mary McHenry of Yankton, SD, Cindy & Jerry Hill of Spokane, WA, Angela & Melvin Welch of Sioux Falls, SD, Melissa & George Ridgway of Sioux Falls, SD, James & Linda Masterson of Chester, SD, Paul & Marilyn

Masterson of Post Falls, ID, John Masterson and special friend Maureen Lee of Gayville, SD, Robert & Karen Masterson of Chester, SD, Richard & Barb Masterson of Baltic, SD; and a number of nieces and nephews too numerous to mention. Others who she cherished were Connie Erickson and her son Ronnie Erickson.

She was preceded in death by her parents, and a sister, Paula Masterson.

The family requests memorials preferred.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
August 25, 2010

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