

FOOTBALL



Friday's results:
Italy - Romania (1-1)
Netherlands - France (4-1)

Yesterday's results:
Sweden - Spain (1-2)
Greece - Russia (0-1)

Today's matches:
Switzerland vs. Portugal (9:45pm)
Turkey vs. Czech Rep. (9:45pm)

INTERVIEW

Zade Dirani on music for a 'cause'



Jordanian composer and pianist is keen to use his musical talent to make a difference | 2

JERUSALEM

Hostility from some sections of the Jewish population in Jerusalem towards Palestinians is nothing new | 4

Unholy city for some

TRADE

Exports to GAFTA states rise

Jordan's exports to the 17-member states of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area reach JD556.6 million in first four months of 2008 | 11

WEATHER

It will be fair in hilly areas and relatively hot in other parts of the Kingdom with winds northwesterly moderate to brisk at times. In Aqaba, it will be hot during the day and fair at night with winds northerly moderate to brisk and dusty at times and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.			
Amman	18/32	Jordan Valley	23/38
Aqaba	24/38	Hilly Areas	16/29
Deserts	17/34		

'Nationality certificate' requirement from Iraqis dropped — ambassador

By Hani Hazaimeh

AMMAN — Iraqis entering Jordan no longer need to present the so-called "nationality certificate document", along with their passport, Iraqi ambassador to Jordan Saad Hayani said on Saturday.

The envoy told The Jordan Times that Prime Minister Nader Dahabi agreed to a request made by his Iraqi counterpart Nouri Maliki, who was on a two-day visit to the country.

The nationality certificate,

which proves that the holder is an Iraqi national, was issued to Iraqis before the 2003 US invasion of Iraq.

An Interior Ministry official previously told The Jordan Times that Jordan "has the right to take all procedures to determine who should be allowed to enter the country and who is not".

The Jordanian side did not give further details on the reasons behind the requirement, which Hayani described as "unnecessary", but reports have said that non-

Iraqis took advantage of the chaos that followed the invasion and obtained Iraqi passports.

A senior official acknowledged that the issue was raised during Maliki's talks in Amman on Thursday and Friday, but stopped short of confirming that a decision has been taken in this regard.

Meanwhile, the Jordanian side officially informed their Iraqi peers that the government extended a June deadline, whereby Iraqis holding "S" Series passports were to

be denied entry into the Kingdom.

The new decision allows Iraqis holding this category of passports to enter Jordan until the end of December. The Ministry of Interior made the decision in May. After the December deadline, only Iraqis with G-Series passports will be allowed to apply for a visa to cross to the Kingdom.

The new passport was introduced last year after several Western and European countries refused to accept

the older passports, citing security concerns.

Substandard security features and a lack of control over production and issuance make the "S" series passport extremely vulnerable to alteration, counterfeiting and impostors, according to the US government.

During the talks with the Iraqi delegation, the two sides decided to renew an oil agreement signed in 2006 for three years.

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IRAQ

Female suicide bomber strikes football fans

Security forces prepare for new offensive against Shiite fighters

BAGHDAD (AP) — A female suicide bomber targeted a crowd of football fans celebrating Iraq's win in a World Cup qualifier on Saturday, wounding at least 34 people near a cafe north of Baghdad, police said.

The young woman, who was covered in a traditional black robe, was dropped off by a car shortly before the attack as dozens of cheering young men poured out onto the streets after watching Iraq beat China 2-1 on TV in the cafe in the town of Qara Tappah.

She told suspicious police that she was waiting for her husband but blew herself up after an officer spotted the detonator and began screaming at the crowd to disperse, according to the town's top administrator Serwan Shukir.

Seven police and 27 civilians were among the wounded, Shukir said, but the officer's warning had averted a higher casualty toll by preventing the woman from reaching the bulk of the fans.

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Residents display their national flag as they celebrate in Baghdad, on Saturday, after Iraq's win against China in a FIFA World Cup qualifying match in Tianjin, China

MIDEAST

Rice heads into peace talks criticising Israel

TEL AVIV (AFP) — US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrived in Israel on Saturday for her latest round of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders aimed at boosting the Middle East peace process.

Rice, who headed to Jerusalem for the start of meetings on Sunday, criticised Israel for its ongoing construction in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank, where the Palestinians wish to create their future state.

"This is a time to try to build confidence and this is simply not helpful," the top US diplomat told reporters aboard her plane.

"I intend to have discussions on the roadmap obligations generally and this is obviously a roadmap obligation that is not being met," she said, adding "this is a problem". Israel announced on Friday its second settlement project in occupied East

Jerusalem this month, enraging Palestinians and drawing criticism from the United States.

Both the Israeli and the Palestinian leaders renewed their commitment to the internationally drafted Middle East peace roadmap at the launching of the US-backed peace talks last November.

Under the roadmap, the two sides agreed to end violence and freeze settlement construction, but Israel has insisted on its right to build in East Jerusalem and settlement blocs.

Gaza truce

The Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas sent a delegation to Cairo on Saturday to receive Israel's response to an Egyptian-mediated ceasefire proposal for the Gaza Strip.

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A Palestinian woman gestures during a demonstration against alleged attacks by Jewish settlers on Palestinians in the southern area of Yatta village near the West Bank town of Hebron on Saturday

Al Qaeda claims Algeria blast

DUBAI (Reuters) — Al Qaeda's north Africa wing said it was behind twin bombings that killed a French engineer in Algeria last weekend, and vowed more attacks against "Crusaders", according to an Internet statement on Saturday.

Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb also claimed responsibility for two earlier attacks against the military in Algeria, one of which it said was carried out by two suicide bombers.

"To the Crusaders and their apostate servants [we say] that the battalions of faith [militants] have committed themselves to targeting you," the group said in the statement posted on an Islamist website.

The statement, which carried photographs of two men it said were the suicide bombers, could not be inde-

pendently authenticated.

The June 8 bomb attack on the car of a French engineer east of Algiers on Sunday killed the Frenchman and his driver, the Algerian defence ministry has said. The ministry denied reports that at least 12 people were killed.

The French engineer was the first French citizen killed in political violence in Algeria since the 1990s, when the north African country slumped into a civil conflict that killed up to 200,000 people.

The June 8 bombing was the third deadly attack east of the capital Algiers in five days and followed a period of relative calm since December, when at least 41 people were killed in bombings of United Nations and government buildings in Algiers claimed by Al Qaeda group.

ROAD TRAGEDY

Maan accident victim in critical condition

By Mohammad Ghazal

AMMAN — Two brothers who were airlifted from Maan to Amman on Friday following an accident that killed their parents and two sisters are currently receiving treatment and one is reported in critical condition.

The six-member family, who were driving from Bahrain, had the accident when their car overturned at Bayer-Jafer road in the southern Maan Governorate, resulting in the death of the father, Abdullah Khalil Khleifat, 46, the mother, Mariam Ahmad Mefleh Khleifat, 38, and their two daughters, Shaima, 9, and Samar, 14, and the injury of Samer, 17, and Abdullah, 11, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported on Friday.

Spokesperson for the Public Security Department Major Mohammad Khatib told The Jordan Times Saturday that a committee was investigating the accident, which occurred after midnight Thursday.

Immediately following the accident, His Majesty King Abdullah gave orders to send a plane to transfer the injured from Maan Public Hospital to the King Hussein Medical Centre (KHMC) for treatment.

Samer, who is currently at the KHMC's ICU along with his brother Abdullah, is in critical condition as he suffered fractures in the ribs and thighs, and a brain haemorrhage, among other bruises and bleedings, Major General Tahsin Muhajer, general director assistant of the KHMC affairs, told The Jordan Times on Saturday.

Muhajer said it is expected that Abdullah's situation will improve during the coming days, noting that both siblings were provided with the required medical treatment.

Meanwhile, Bahraini Ambassador in Amman Rashed Ben Nasser Al Kaabi on Saturday offered condolences to the Khleifats.

The family members hold the Bahraini nationality in addition to Jordanian citizenship, according to Petra.

ENTERTAINMENT

Jordan Festival to feature opera, Jazz and Arab pop stars

By Mohammad Ghazal

AMMAN — Big names in the entertainment industry will be featured in the upcoming Jordan Festival for Culture and Arts, slated for July 8th, including world-renowned international opera singers, Plácido Domingo, Monica Yunus and Julia Migenes, in addition to a performance by international Jazz singer Diana Krall and a pop concert by Mika, organisers said Saturday.

The festival, which will run through August 9, will feature concerts by international and Arab singers at three locations in the Kingdom; namely the Citadel-

Amman, Jerash and the Dead Sea, according to Jordan Tourism Board Managing Director Nayef Fayez.

He noted that a media campaign to promote the event has kicked off across Arab Gulf states and other countries, including Lebanon, Syria and Palestine.

Star singers from the Arab world will also be performing at the festival, including Amr Diab, Ragheb Alameh, Elissa, George Wassef, Omar Al Abdallat, Haytham Shomali, Fadl Shaker, Hussein Al Salman, Ziad Saleh, Abdallah Rowaished, Diana Karazon, Assi Al-Hilani, Tony Kattan,

and Mohammad Hamaki, in addition to an Algerian night featuring Faudel, Biyouna and Cheb Khaled.

"For Jordan to be able to present these famous singers from the Arab world and internationally is a great achievement and is something that will help build a strong reputation for the festival and promote tourism in Jordan," Fayez told The Jordan Times on Saturday.

For music expert and columnist Jean-Claude Elias, hosting big names like Domingo and Krall in particular is a big plus.

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Plácido Domingo

Singer, conductor and opera director. He was acclaimed on the cover of Newsweek as "The King of Opera". So far he has sung 126 different roles, more than any other tenor in history and still counting. He has made well over 100 recordings and won nine Grammy Awards plus two in the newly created Latin division.



Monica Yunus

Singer, conductor and opera director. She is an American operatic soprano of Bangladeshi-Russian descent who has performed with many of the world's finest opera companies and music ensembles.



Diana Krall

A Canadian jazz pianist and singer, she is among the top artists in her art in the world. Her career exploded when "When I Look in Your Eyes" won a Grammy in 1999 for best jazz vocal and became the first jazz disc to be nominated for Album of the Year in 25 years.



Julia Migenes

An American soprano opera singer. To this day, Julia Migenes has recorded more than 20 albums. Word of this new star has crossed the Atlantic.



Mika

A Lebanese-born, London-based, Grammy-nominated and BRIT Award-winning singer-songwriter. He rose to fame around the end of 2006 and the start of 2007. He is the first artist ever to win three World Music Awards in just one year.

