

PORTUGAL WARNS AGAINST RE-OPENING OF EU TREATY COMPROMISE

June 28. The incoming Portuguese EU presidency has called on member states not to unravel a carefully worked out compromise on a new look treaty for the bloc, amid signs that some capitals have reservations about what they agreed last weekend.

DUTCH MPS RAISE PROSPECT OF NEW EU REFERENDUM

June 28. Just days after EU leaders agreed on a revised version of the European Constitution - rejected in French and Dutch referendums in 2005 – the prospect of a second EU referendum is emerging in the Netherlands.

DISMAY OVER TONY BLAIR'S FIRST STEPS AS MIDDLE EAST QUARTET'S ENVOY

June 29. Shortly after Tony Blair stepped into his new job, he assured Russia and the Europeans that he did not intend to adhere to the US-Israeli boycott of Hamas. Rather, he would establish ties with Hamas representatives in Gaza and Damascus.

According to a DEBKAfile, the British politician conveyed this intention in a telephone conversation with Russian president Vladimir Putin on June 26. This assurance persuaded Moscow to drop its resistance to naming him envoy.

US sources say Blair's sudden turnaround contradicts the understandings he reached with President Bush and Condoleezza Rice on his visit to US earlier this month. German chancellor Angela Merkel is also looking askance at the new Blair strategy.

SYRIA ARMING PALESTINIAN CAMPS'

June 27. Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Saniora said Wednesday that Syria was sending weapons to Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and vowed to bring up the issue before the Arab League. "In recent weeks, ammunition, weapons and fighters have been brought to the camps," Saniora told reporters on a visit to France.

IRAN'S GAS RATIONING SETS OFF VIOLENCE

Jun 27. (AP) -- Iranians smashed shop windows and set fire to a dozen gas stations in the capital Wednesday, angered by the sudden start of a fuel rationing system that threatens to further increase the unpopularity of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

IRAN ESTABLISHES MISSILE DEFENSE SHIELD IN SYRIA

Iran is deploying missiles in Syria in preparation for military action if it is attacked over its nuclear program, U.N. officials in the region said. Under a mutual defense pact signed between Damascus and Tehran in 2005, Syria agreed to the deployment of sophisticated weaponry on its territory. - The Daily Telegraph

IRAN, N KOREA NUKE MISSILE THREAT RISING

Jun 28. (AP) -- A top US missile defense official has warned that the ballistic threat from Iran and North Korea was rapidly growing and defended Washington's plans to base parts of its anti-missile shield program in Central Europe. But NATO called for more evaluation of the potential danger, saying there was "no assessment of the immediacy of that threat to NATO and Europe."

Washington is in talks with Poland on the deployment of 10 interceptor missiles in the country, and with the Czech Republic on a radar base. The U.S. says the two sites are need to

supplement bases in Alaska and California and create a network to defend Europe and North America from a potential attack by Iran or North Korea.

AMA APPROVES IMPLANTED MICRO-CHIPS FOR PATIENTS

June 27. VeriChip Corporation, a provider of RFID systems for healthcare and patient-related needs, announced today the American Medical Association's Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs has adopted a policy stating that implantable radio frequency identification (RFID) devices may help to identify patients, thereby improving the safety and efficiency of patient care, and may be used to enable secure access to patient clinical information. VeriChip has the only FDA-cleared RFID implantable microchip for patient identification and health information purposes.

BOOKS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST BURNED IN INDIA

500 copies of a book called "The Life History of Jesus Christ" were burned on June 18 by Hindu militants in central Karnataka who claimed the books were being used to convert school children to Christianity. When the militants received word that the books were to be distributed in local schools, they went to the Block Education Office in Sirsi, Karnataka to protest. Discovering no books there, they learned that the books were being stored in the office in Siddapur, a city south of Sirsi. They took the books from the Siddapur office, brought them to Sirsi and burned them. - The Voice of the Martyrs / 27 June 07

WEATHER DISASTERS

DYING FROM HEAT WAVE IN EUROPE

At least 46 people have died in a heat wave stretching across GREECE, ITALY, THE BALKANS, TURKEY, and ROMANIA where temperatures reached 45° C (113° F) on Tuesday – 26 June.

HEAVY TOLL IN INDIA'S MONSOON FLOODS

Monsoon rains in western and southern India late last week, which caused flash floods and left 144 people dead.

EXTREME RAIN CONTINUES TO PLAGUE FLOODED TEXAS

Jun 28. -- Rain continues in flood-weary parts of Texas, residents were bracing for even more of the constant downpours that have killed 11 people in recent days. Several towns were flooded. Officials reported calls for dozens of rescues in San Antonio, and hundreds of people were being ordered to leave their homes near the bloated Brazos River in North Texas.

The lakeside community of Marble Falls was drenched by as much as **18 inches of rain** early Wednesday. No one was killed, but there were 32 water rescues and widespread damage. Treacherous winds forced helicopters to abandon efforts to rescue people from rooftops. In Oklahoma, where all 77 counties are under a state of emergency. "I haven't seen so much destruction since I was on the ground right after Hurricane Rita," Acting Governor Lt. Gov. Dewhurst said.

WILDFIRES IN CALIFORNIA DESTROYED 200 HOMES AND OTHER BUILDINGS

HEATWAVE, FOREST FIRES IN GREECE LEAVE 11 DEAD

A heat wave believed to be the longest ever recorded in Greece has left 11 people dead over the past week including two killed in forest fires. Although temperatures began to fall after a blistering nine-day spell in which they reached 46° C (115° F) in some areas, the arrival of northerly winds fanned forest blazes.

A number of people in **TURKEY, BULGARIA,** and **ROMANIA** also died from the blistering heat wave.

ENGLAND & WALES: FLOOD CENTRE SET UP

A national flood support centre has been set up to respond to further outbreaks of severe weather.

The Worcester centre's opening comes after fire chiefs said they struggled to cope with this week's floods. The Met Office has issued a severe weather warning for England and Wales this weekend, with more heavy rain due. Hundreds of people are still out of their homes after this week's floods.

This week's floods have been most severe in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and the Midlands, and have claimed the lives of at least four people. More than 3,000 properties are estimated to have been flooded and fire crews have rescued about 3,500 people.

Parts of Britain, particularly Yorkshire, had more than a month's rainfall in one day.

The Fire Brigades Union has described the rescue effort as the "biggest in peacetime Britain."

In **SWEDEN**, heavier than usual rains caused several dams to burst, flooding homes and industries.

AID PLEAS AFTER PAKISTAN CYCLONE

Some 800,000 people have now been hit by flooding in Pakistan's Balochistan province, with hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed, officials say. Many of them are without electricity or drinking water four days after a cyclone hit coastal districts.



Submerged Mosque

Read full story> http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/6252588.stm

AUSTRALIA: FLOODS IN NSW AND VICTORIA

Over the past two weeks, first NSW, and then Victoria suffered extreme storms which resulted in widespread floods. Rivers burst their banks, and some homes were totally submerged. Tens of thousands of people were without power.

PLAGUES

UN FINDS PROGRESS IN TACKLING BIRD FLU

Jun 27. Countries are making progress in fighting bird flu but concerns remain for some nations - especially Indonesia, Egypt and Nigeria where human contamination is still possible, the United Nations said. Scientists and officials gathering in Rome for a three-day technical meeting on bird flu said that in most cases the virus is rapidly detected and kept under control, as most countries are equipped with improved response systems. However, in nations that combine a high density of population and unsafe poultry management, the situation remains serious.

LOCUST PLAGUES DEVASTATE ORCHARDS OF NORTH SOMALIA

JUNE 26. Somalia. As if war and hunger were not enough, Plagues of locusts have appeared in Somalia, blotting out the sky and destroying orchards. Multiple Millions of the insects appeared three days ago in the semi-autonomous northeastern province of Puntland, stripping bare hundreds of acres of mango, orange and pawpaw farms. - Source: Reuters

VILIFICATION CASE SETTLED IN AUSTRALIA

June 27. The five-year vilification case between Pastors Daniel Nalliah and Daniel Scot of Catch The Fire Ministry and the Islamic Council of Victoria was settled in seven hours of mediation between the two parties in the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) on June 22. Some of the terms of the agreement are confidential but both parties agreed to make a joint statement in which they recognized the right to "robustly debate religion" within the limits of the law, "including the right to criticize the religious belief of another in a free, open and democratic society." The case was the first to be heard by the VCAT under Victoria's 2001 Racial and Religious Tolerance Act. - The Voice of the Martyrs

REVIVAL

It is God revealing Himself to man in awful holiness and irresistible power. It is such a manifest working of God that human personalities are overshadowed, and human programs abandoned. It is man retiring into the background because God has taken the field. It is the Lord making bare His holy arm, and working in extraordinary power on saint and sinner.
- Arthur Wallis