

News digest



Guerilla group kidnaps Israelis

1 BEIRUT, Lebanon — The militant Islamic group Hezbollah claimed Sunday it had captured an Israeli colonel, prompting a warning from Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak that Israel would “know how to respond” to the kidnapping of one its citizens.

Israel confirmed that an Israeli who served in the army reserves had been kidnapped while in Europe, but did not provide details or confirm that the captive was in Hezbollah’s hands.

The guerrilla group is already holding three Israeli soldiers it snatched from along the Israeli-Lebanese border. The new kidnapping threatened to heighten tensions on the eve of a summit in Egypt called to stop Palestinian-

raeli hostilities.

“Israel will know how to respond, to identify who is behind this and to take care of this later,” Barak said in a statement. He did not indicate what type of action Israel might take.

Barak said the man’s only connection to the military was his service as a reserve army officer, “like tens of thousands of other citizens in the country.” The victim “apparently was enticed to some place in Europe ... and was kidnapped from there.”

The Israeli media said an Israeli man named Elhanan Tannenbaum was recently abducted in Europe. Television networks quoted unidentified officials as saying the victim was a 56-year-old businessman taken while working on a deal

in Europe and flown to Lebanon.

Israeli security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the kidnapping took place in Switzerland. Swiss federal police spokesman Rolf Debrunner said police were investigating.

Marchers protest poverty

2 WASHINGTON — Thousands of chanting women marched on Sunday through downtown past the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in a protest against world poverty and the mistreatment of women.

Marchers, whose circular route began on the grassy Ellipse across from the White House, chanted in a cacophony of languages their support for equal rights for women and their opposition to domestic vio-

lence.

Demonstrators shouted “Shame!” as they passed the side-by-side buildings of the IMF and the World Bank, the main lending institutions for poor countries. Activists in a major new movement against globally based economics contend the institutions’ lending policies unfairly discriminate against the poor.

Some women got into a shouting match with four men protesting the event with anti-gay and anti-lesbian placards in front of the World Bank. “Submit to your husbands, you rebels,” Ruben Israel, 36, of Los Angeles, yelled at the marchers through a bullhorn.

The Washington rally, which brought women from around the world, was a culminating event of the World March of Women 2000, which began in March in Geneva.

Saudi Arabian flight hijacked

3 BAGHDAD, Iraq — They had been in the air only two hours when first class passengers noticed a flight attendant emerge from the cockpit with tears in her eyes. Passengers became more concerned when the “fasten seat belts” warning light failed to go off and the monitor tracking their flight went blank.

London-bound Saudi Arabian Airlines Flight 115 had been hijacked.

But passengers weren’t told this while they were in the air, and the crew remained so calm that some passengers learned of it only after the plane landed in Baghdad late Saturday after a 7 1/2-hour odyssey that began in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

“I first thought we landed at Heathrow in London. But when I

looked through the window I said to myself, ‘This is not London,’” said Iqbal Dawood from Pakistan, one of the 103 passengers and crew on the flight.

Half an hour after landing, the captain announced that the plane had been hijacked and that negotiations were under way.

The two hijacking suspects surrendered without incident in Baghdad. Students accused of selling Net access

Rain gushes through Alps

4 SION, Switzerland — Landslides crushed homes and flood-swollen rivers swept through towns in the Alps on Sunday, killing at least eight people in Italy and Switzerland. More than a dozen others were missing and feared dead.

Heavy rains pounded the Alpine regions, shutting down rail lines and roads and washing away some bridges. Twenty-four inches of rain have fallen in two days.

Helicopters worked throughout the day to ferry out residents of cut-off villages as authorities evacuated at least 3,000 people from Italy’s Valle d’Aosta and Piedmont regions.

In Switzerland, after delays over fears of new landslides, rescue workers resumed their search Sunday for 13 missing after a mudslide destroyed nearly a third of the tiny town of Gondo on Saturday morning. But police said there was little hope for survivors.

“We don’t know whether they were in the village or not at the time of the disaster,” Valais canton (state) police spokesman Markus Rieder said. “But it must be feared that they died.”

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