

VOA NEWS

October 11, 2024

I'm VOA's Joe Ramsey with your worldwide news update.

Hurricane Milton plowed into the Atlantic Ocean on Thursday after cutting a destructive path across Florida that spawned more than a dozen tornadoes, destroyed homes and killed at least five people. But the storm did not trigger the catastrophic surge of seawater that was feared. Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener reports.

"Thankfully, this was not the worst case scenario."

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis said that while the storm was not as bad as feared, the damage was still widespread. Milton downed power lines and left more than three million homes and businesses without power.

Some neighborhoods experienced significant flooding. But the Tampa Bay area appeared to have escaped the storm surge that had prompted the most dire warnings.

In St. Petersburg, the roof was torn off Tropicana Field, a staging area for first responders, and a large construction crane collapsed.

Reuters correspondent Jillian Kitchener.

U.S. President Joe Biden is angrily calling out his predecessor for spreading misinformation about the federal hurricane response. AP correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

For days, the White House has admonished Donald Trump and others over false claims, like saying FEMA's assistance is capped at \$750. That's actually an immediate need payment for urgent requirements like food and diapers.

"They got to stop this. It's s- -- I mean, they're being so damn un-American with the way they're talking about this stuff."

Asked if he plans to talk with Trump and urge him to stop, "Are you kidding me?" and then looks straight to the TV cameras.

"Mr. President Trump, former President Trump, get a life, man. Help these people."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

This is VOA News.

A U.N. peacekeeping mission in Lebanon says Israeli forces fired on its positions on Wednesday and Thursday. Reuters correspondent Trevor Koroll reports.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, or UNIFIL, says two of its peacekeepers were injured when an Israeli tank fired at its main headquarters in Naqoura. Israel has been pursuing a widening offensive against Hezbollah in that area. A U.N. source said there were no casualties in two other incidents.

Italy has protested to Israel over the incident. Its defense minister called it illegal and a possible war crime.

Reuters correspondent Trevor Koroll.

When it began its ground invasion into Lebanon, Israel said its goal was to push Hezbollah back from the border to enable more than 60,000 residents to return to their homes in the north. But since moving into the country, its troops have been making some disturbing discoveries. Linda Gradstein reports from Jerusalem.

The Israeli ground troop operation that began last week in southern Lebanon discovered and destroyed a Hezbollah tunnel that crossed into Israel.

The Israel Defense Forces says Hezbollah was planning an attack, like Hamas's incursion from Gaza, that started the war there a year ago.

Sarit Zehavi is the founder of the Alma Research and Education Center in northern Israel.

"While IDF is now operating inside Lebanon, it has found tons of evidence with tunnels, with vehicles, with equipment."

Zehavi says the four units of IDF ground troops are also searching for and destroying Hezbollah's vast store of short-range missiles. These missiles can be launched from the shoulder of any Hezbollah fighter, and Israel's Iron Dome defense system cannot intercept them.

Linda Gradstein, VOA News, Jerusalem.

The World Wildlife Fund's latest living planet report shows wildlife populations globally have dropped nearly 75 percent in the last 50 years, which it called a "catastrophic" decline. Reuters correspondent Christy Kilburn reports.

Researchers at the Zoological Society of London compiled the data. Robin Freeman is its head of indicators and assessments.

"The combination of climate change, habitat loss and biodiversity loss are things that we need to get on top of because there are mixed up problems that need to be dealt with together."

But the report says that while the situation is desperate, we have not reached a point of no return.

It warns that a massive, collective effort will be needed over the next five years to tackle the dual climate and nature crises.

Reuters correspondent Christy Kilburn.

That wraps up this update, but the world and news never stop. For additional updates, visit our website. I'm Joe Ramsey, VOA News.