

# Ever Given, the ship that blocked Suez in March, crosses the canal again

Author:

Sat, 2021-08-21 03:06

ISMAILIA, Egypt: The giant container ship Ever Given, which blocked the Suez Canal for six days in March, crossed the waterway on Friday for the first time since it left Egypt after the incident.

The ship, en route from the UK to China, crossed the canal among a convoy of 26 vessels sailing from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea, the Suez Canal Authority said in a statement.

Another 36 ships crossed the waterway from the south.

A group of SCA senior pilots and two tugboats escorted the Ever Given throughout its journey through the canal, the authority said in a statement.

Live ship tracking showed the vessel successfully negotiating the early stages of the canal on its way toward the Red Sea.

The vessel, one of the world's largest container ships, became jammed across the canal in high winds on March 23.

The operation to free the ship from the canal caused a backlog that delayed the journeys of hundreds of ships, forcing some to take a much longer route around the southern tip of Africa.

Once it was dislodged, the 400-meter vessel left Egypt on July 7, 106 days after becoming wedged across a southern section of the waterway.

Egypt released the Ever Given after protracted negotiations and an undisclosed settlement reached between the SCA and the ship's owners and insurers. It arrived in the Dutch port of Rotterdam on July 29 before heading to Felixstowe, England.

Roughly 15 percent of world shipping traffic transits the Suez Canal, the shortest shipping route between Europe and Asia.

Friday's voyage through the canal was the Ever Given's 22nd in the waterway. Shipping trafficking websites Marinetraffic.com and Vesselfinder.com showed the ship in the Red Sea after crossing the canal.



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## [Lebanon complains to UN over Israeli airspace violations](#)

Sat, 2021-08-21 02:00

BEIRUT: Lebanon has filed an urgent complaint with the UN Security Council over Israel's violations of its airspace. It said the flyovers "violated Lebanese sovereignty, endangered the safety of civil aviation and directly threatened the lives of civilian passengers, both Lebanese and foreigners."

The acting minister of foreign affairs in the caretaker government, Zeina Akar, said that the hostile planes launched missiles from Lebanese airspace in a flagrant violation and targeted sites in Syria from a low altitude. Akar sent a complaint through Lebanon's representative to the UN, ambassador Amal Mudallali, calling on the UN to stop Israel using Lebanese airspace to carry out its attacks against Syrian territory.

Stefano Del Col, head of mission and force commander of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said: "Overflights of Lebanese territory

by Israeli fighter aircraft are violations of UN Res. 1701 and of Lebanon's sovereignty. I again call on the IDF to desist from such actions, which undermine UNIFIL efforts to contain tensions and build confidence among the local population."

Speaking to Lebanon's National News Agency, Del Col called on all parties to refrain from any action or response that would further escalate the situation.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun has asked UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Joanna Wronecka "to take swift action to put an end to such Israeli violations and ensure that they are not repeated."

On Thursday night, the Lebanese Army Command recorded six Israeli air violations over Beirut and its suburbs as well as other areas.

The Israeli warplanes flew at low altitude over Beirut and its southern suburbs on their way to bombard Syrian territory, caused panic among the population, especially as it happened a few hours after Secretary-General of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah warned the US and Israel against attacking an Iranian ship loaded with diesel heading to Lebanon, saying that once it set sail, the ship would be considered to be part of Lebanese territory.

## **SPEEDREAD**

- **The Lebanese population was alarmed by the noise caused by the launch of the missiles, thinking that Israel was attacking Hezbollah posts.**
- **The Israeli violation of Lebanese airspace forced two commercial planes bound for Beirut airport to change their course.**

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The Israeli violation of Lebanese airspace forced two commercial planes bound for Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport to change their course. The director-general of civil aviation, Fadi Al-Hassan, said: "The aviation movement at Beirut airport did not stop, but the control towers in Syria and Cyprus requested two planes coming to Beirut airport from Abu Dhabi and Turkey to change their course due to the bombing, but both planes later landed normally in Beirut."

No official Lebanese position has been expressed yet about Hezbollah bringing an Iranian ship into Lebanese territorial waters to secure diesel for gas stations, hospitals and owners of private generators.

Paul Morcos, head of the human rights organization Justicia, said: "Importing fuel from Iran without obtaining a special exemption from the US Treasury may put Lebanon at risk of US sanctions. This would directly affect the movement of remittances, credits and shipping to and from Lebanon. International financial institutions and international correspondent banks could refrain from cooperating with Lebanon so as not to violate these sanctions."

"The US sanctions on Iran prevent any dealings with this country that would contribute to achieving revenues, especially in the oil industry and the trade of Iranian goods. US sanctions are imposed on individuals and entities alike," he said.

In addition to the severe diesel shortage, many gas stations in Lebanese regions stopped selling gasoline on Friday, as the fuel-importing companies are running out of stock and the Central Bank is yet to approve new credits for importers.

A 20-liter container of gasoline sells for 500,000 Lebanese pounds on the black market, while its official price is 45,000 Lebanese pounds.

Meanwhile, parliament held a plenary session on Friday to discuss a letter sent by Aoun to take action to confront the Central Bank's decision to lift fuel subsidies. Heated discussions took place between Aoun's team, who oppose lifting subsidies, and MPs who support lifting subsidies and liberalizing the market, "because any law using the mandatory reserve is a violation of the constitution and subject to appeal since it affects private property enshrined in the constitution."

The session ended with a unanimous recommendation "to form a new government, speed up the distribution of ration cards and free the market from monopoly."

"No one can vote on a law to steal people's money, that is, people's deposits in the Central Bank," said Future bloc MP Hadi Hobeish.



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# Lebanese politician in Beirut blast investigation under fire over daughter's wedding

Sat, 2021-08-21 00:35

BEIRUT: A Lebanese former minister wanted for questioning over his alleged involvement in the August 2020 Beirut blast has sparked anger for requesting anti-riot police to guard his daughter's wedding.

A leaked Internal Security Forces' (ISF) document showed Youssef Fenianos had asked for the security presence at the church where his daughter gets married on Saturday in case of political demonstrations.

The document, published by VDL (Voice of Lebanon) news website, said the ISF agreed to dispatch two anti-riot units to Fenianos's hometown of Ehden in northern Lebanon.

The request provoked fury in Lebanon because Fenianos is being investigated over the explosion last year that killed more than 200 people. There is also widespread anger at the ruling class, which is seen as corrupt and responsible for the country's economic collapse.

Lebanon is now crippled by widespread power black outs and fuel shortages.

Fenianos was accused on social media of disrespecting the blast victims' families and using his political influence to protect the wedding from protests.

The massive explosion took place when 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate was detonated by a fire at Beirut Port. The chemical had been stored at the site for more than seven years without proper safety precautions.

Fenianos, a former public works and transportation minister, was one of three MPs and former ministers charged by the blast's investigating judge Tarek Bitar.

The charges include "negligence" and "possible intent to murder" because they were aware of the ammonium nitrate "and did not take measures to spare the country the risks of an explosion."

Local media reported that a relative of Fenianos posted on Facebook an alleged death threat addressed to one of the victim's relatives who was expected to protest at the wedding.

The post is believed to have been addressed to William Noon, whose firefighter brother died in the Beirut Blast.

Commenting over the incident, famous Lebanese actress and producer, Carine Rizcallah said when the person in charge becomes afraid of his people and

asks for protection from the people “then he’s finished politically and that’s the case of most Lebanese politicians.”

Popular TV presenter Nabila Awad posted the security document on her twitter and commented “Shameless! Shameless and licentious!”

Fenianos was scheduled for questioning by judge Bitar on Friday but police said they had been unable to reach him at his office or residence due to blocked roads and could not deliver the subpoena due to fuel shortages.

Al Janoubia news said Bitar has rescheduled a session to question Fenianos.

A civil society activist told Arab News that the demonstration at the wedding was discussed within four to five WhatsApp groups used by protesters.

“The aim was to deliver a message to Fenianos that nobody is above the law and he cannot carry on with his life as if nothing has happened ... let him appear before the investigating judge, testify and clear his name,” the activist, who asked not to be named, said.

The ISF said the decision to dispatch anti-riot units to the wedding was taken to prevent “public disorder and unruly behavior.”

“Following a chain of social media posts about some activists’ intent to demonstrate during the celebration, which could eventually lead to acts of public disorder, ISF decided as part of its mission and duty to maintain public order to dispatch anti-riot units,” the statement said.

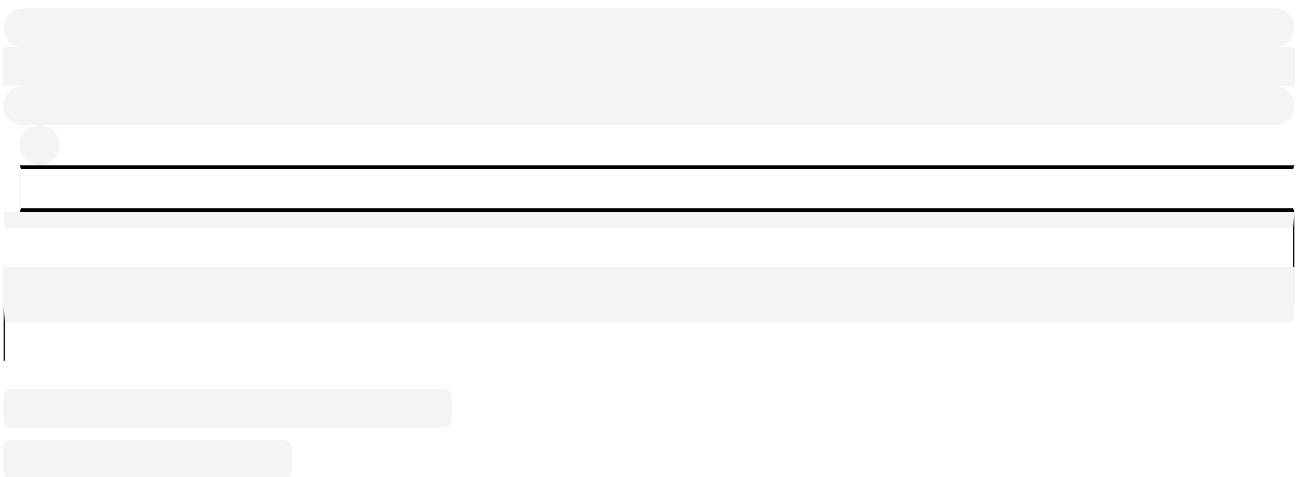
An ISF senior officer, who requested anonymity, confirmed to Arab News that the decision was a “standard procedure that ISF implements in similar situations and incidents and there’s nothing political behind it.”

The incident is the latest in which politicians’ extravagant family wedding plans have sparked public anger as the country continues towards meltdown.

Last month, the luxurious wedding of the daughter of former Hezbollah MP Nawwar Al-Sahili circulated online, stirring dismay as many people have seen the life savings evaporate in the crisis.



[View this post on Instagram](#)



A post shared by thawramap (@thawramap)



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## [\*\*UAE agrees to temporarily host 5,000 Afghans at US request\*\*](#)

Author:

Zaynab Khojji

ID:

1629488564421823100

Fri, 2021-08-20 22:42

DUBAI: The UAE has agreed to host 5,000 Afghan nationals evacuated from Afghanistan on their way to other countries.

Following a request from the US, the UAE will host the evacuees temporarily after which they will travel to other nations, the UAE's Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and International Cooperation said on Friday.

The evacuees will travel to the UAE from Kabul on US aircraft in the coming days, Emirates News Agency (WAM) reported.

The UAE has so far facilitated the evacuation of 8,500 people from Afghanistan on its aircraft and through its airports, WAM added.

The initiative is evidence of the UAE's commitment to strengthening international cooperation, the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for International Development Affairs Sultan Mohammed Al-Shamsi said.

"The UAE is always seeking peaceful, multilateral solutions, and is keen to continue its work alongside its international partners to advance efforts to assist the Afghan people during this time of uncertainty," Al-Shamsi said.



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# Abu Dhabi closes its doors to the unvaccinated as it steps up COVID-19 safety rules

Fri, 2021-08-20 16:48

DUBAI: New COVID-19 safety rules came into force in Abu Dhabi on Friday, limiting the places unvaccinated people can enter.

Citizens, residents and tourists will have to show proof of vaccination, or exemption, to gain entry to a number of venues, including shopping malls, restaurants and cafes.

Other venues closed to the unvaccinated include sporting activities, museums, gyms, schools and universities.

Theme parks are also closed to the unvaccinated.

People will be required to use the Al Hosn testing and vaccination app to prove they are either vaccinated or exempt.

The ban does not apply to those who exempt from vaccination, or to children aged 15 and below.

The unvaccinated are effectively barred from entering any business in the UAE capital except for supermarkets and pharmacies.

The neighboring travel hub of Dubai has previously introduced some vaccination restrictions on mass entertainment and sporting events.

But malls and other businesses remain open to the unvaccinated.

The UAE's Ministry of Health and Prevention (MoHAP) announced that it conducted 311,295 additional COVID-19 tests in the past 24 hours, state news agency WAM reported.

The MoHAP announced 1,070 new coronavirus cases, bringing the total number of recorded cases in the UAE to 707,236 since the start of the pandemic.

The Ministry said the infected individuals were from various nationalities, and were in a stable condition, receiving the necessary care – the report added.

There were two deaths in the past 24 hours due to COVID-19 complications, bringing the total number of deaths in the country to 2,014.

The MoHAP said an additional 1,619 people had fully recovered from COVID-19, bringing the total number of recoveries to 687,644.



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