

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:02:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223444964

Documents (100)

1. [*First tape of captive Israeli corporal*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

2. [*India*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

3. [*Israel boosting Fatah position*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

4. [*Deal to free captive Israeli soldier close*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

5. [*'I heard screams of terrified women'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

6. [*Charities plead for Lebanon ceasefire*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

7. [*Under a cloak of fear, life goes on; Journalist who has covered Gaza for more than a decade describes a city under siege*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

8. [*Gazans fleeing to West Bank safety*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

9. [*Palestinian women help free besieged gunmen; International Two women killed after Israeli troops fire on them*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

10. [*Let Palestine Split Into Two*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

11. [Reporter in midst of mayhem](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

12. [AFGHAN CAR BOMB KILLS 15](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

13. [An Insider's Story Of Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

14. [Hopes rise for Palestinian state; Fatah government responds to Israeli peace overture by toning down its manifesto, paving the way for talks](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

15. [Five die in flood of sewage, mud](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

16. [Sewage floods town after wall collapses](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

17. [Israeli forces pull out of northern Gaza town](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

18. [Captured Israeli soldier 'alive and well'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

19. [TOT PUSHED TO BE LIKE BOMBER MOM](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

20. [Headlines: You might have missed this week](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

21. [*'I heard the screams of women and children'*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

22. [*World Digest*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

23. [*World Ticker*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

24. [*U.S. Muslim advocacy group is object of suspicion*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

25. [*16 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in Gaza*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

26. [Back to Palestine](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

27. [Two Palestinian women die as troops fire on 'human shield'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

28. [World datelines](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

29. [Women die shielding militants: Army fires on veiled Palestinians staging bold rescue bid at mosque](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

30. [Palestinians gather by the hundreds at houses targeted for airstrikes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

31. [Comment & Debate: A time for joy and reflection: We cheer the hard-won release of Alan Johnston, who was captured in a chaos imposed from afar](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

32. [Israeli shells kill 18 in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

33. [World Journal](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

34. [Lawsuit Alleges That Yale U. Press Book Links Group to Terrorists](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

35. [Doom & gloom](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

36. [Book Festival Reviews: At the scene of the crime writers' conversation: Val McDermid & Denise Mina / Nick Cohen](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

37. [Leading article: Gaza killings: The blood of innocents](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

38. [Female suicide bomber, 64, attacks Israelis in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

39. [Doom & gloom](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

40. [Israel to keep shelling Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

41. [Tears, family greet prisoners after release 256 Palestinians back in West Bank after Israeli government frees them](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

42. [After a six-day barrage, Israel leaves Gaza town to count dead](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

43. [NEWS IN BRIEF](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

44. [Palestinian newswomen face threat of beheading](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

45. [Gazans stuck at filthy border](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

46. [The suicide sisters Armed to the teeth, these women pledge to blow themselves up defending the Gaza Strip if Israeli troops launch an invasion](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

47. [Human shields prevent Israeli air strikes in Gaza](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

48. [Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

49. [Gaza - Tears of the mothers in a nation the outside world has forgotten Israel has taken their land and killed their children, say the mothers of Gaza. Now, since trading borders with Israel were closed, the economy is on the brink of collapse and Gaza's 1.4 million citizens face humanitarian disaster](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

50. [Israeli arms expert slams Gaza shelling](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

51. [REVENGE VOW AS 22 KILLED IN GAZA](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

52. [*Peace, violence do not go together*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

53. [*Israel Declares End to Gaza Mission, but Firing Continues*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

54. [*Suicide bomber was 64-year-old grandmother*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

55. [*Review: Non-fiction: Top 10 non-fiction paperbacks*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

56. [*International: Palestinians use human shield to halt Israeli air strike on militants homes: Hundreds of neighbours join first successful action: Air force calls off missile attack to protect civilians*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

57. [Women shot in siege of Gaza mosque](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

58. [Katsav forced women into sex, court heard](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

59. [FAST NEWS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

60. [Olmert refuses to trade militants for captured soldier ISRAEL INTERNATIONAL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

61. [Distraught father offers to join hostage son](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

62. [*Israel moves to ease restrictions on Palestinians to bolster Abbas*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

63. [*Newman says he's quit acting*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

64. [*It took this call for a boycott to make Israeli government take notice The Irish Congress of Trade Unions sparked controversy recently by calling for a boycott of Israeli goods. Belfast-based Brendan Mackin - past President of the ICTU - explains the background to the boycott call*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

65. [*We are men of straw*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

66. [*Tour of the Middle East shows the enormity of its problems*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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67. [LIVE ON AIR THE FATHER, THE KIDNAPPERS AND THE RADIO STATION THAT GOT THEM TO TALK](#)
[Ziad Darwish is a presenter making headlines on an innovative station in Middle East . By allowing both sides of the conflict to air their views, he is bringing hope that the dialogue will spread further and the leaders might just be listening. By Donald Macintyre in Jerusalem Talk radio with a difference](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

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68. [Article attacking Israel unfair](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

69. [International briefs](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

70. [Gaza women shielding mosque gunmen are celebrated as heroes: Mother of seven children whose leg was cut off after she was shot doesn't regret answering call](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

71. [ISRAELI MILITARY KILLS 11 MILITANTS IN GAZA STRIP](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

72. [*UN halts Gaza construction as blockade bites*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

73. [*Release 500 prisoners for soldier, Israel told*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

74. [*'Sewage tsunami' kills five Palestinians: Village under pool of foul-smelling effluent after reservoir bursts, causing collapse of septic system*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

75. [*Gaza death toll hits 24 as rival factions start hostage-taking*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

76. [*Palestinians list names of prisoners for swap*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

77. [Sewage Reservoir Floods in Gaza, Killing 5](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

78. [Why Islamist political parties are prospering](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

79. [Nation & world](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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80. [World Ticker](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

81. ['UK must help Gulf states in war on terror'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

82. [*Running Guns to Gaza: A Living in the Desert*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

83. [*TO HELL WITH WORLD PEACE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

84. [*Women human shields killed in Gaza*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

85. [*Gaza children cannot escape as Israel mounts its bloodiest attack in months*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

86. [*A TANGO WITH ISLAM The new Cold War within a conflict of civilizations*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

87. [*Wall is sensible solution to strife*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

88. [News Summary](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

89. [NEWS IN BRIEF](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

90. [WORLD BRIEFS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

91. [Gaza fighting escalates](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

92. [President's legal woes captivate Israelis](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

93. [*The little town that symbolises the suffering of the Middle East LEADING ARTICLE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

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Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

94. [*International briefs*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

95. [*Nations back 'hybrid' force*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

96. [*To aid Abbas, Israel frees prisoners*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to Sep 30, 2007

97. [*Blackmailing Europe*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to
Sep 30, 2007

98. [Yes, we know there's a war on ?; ?and we're trying to stop it](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to
Sep 30, 2007

99. [King of Jordan condemns Israel 's 'attack' on holy sites](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to
Sep 30, 2007

100. [Female suicide bomber, 64, hits Israeli troops](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers; Timeline: Sep 30, 2006 to
Sep 30, 2007

First tape of captive Israeli corporal

The Australian (Australia)

June 26, 2007 Tuesday

All-round First Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 649 words

Byline: Correspondents in Gaza City

Body

AP, Reuters, AFP

HAMAS last night released a recorded message from captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, the first sign of life from the young serviceman since he was abducted a year ago.

Corporal Shalit sends greetings to his family and says his health is deteriorating, in the message posted on the website of **Hamas**'s military wing.

A videotape broadcast on **Hamas**'s al-Aqsa television station showed footage of Corporal Shalit apparently being captured on June 25 last year, being dragged by two fighters dressed in Israeli army uniforms. They are pulling his T-shirt and running next to him.

In the message, which his father, Noam, said appeared coerced, the 20-year-old expresses disappointment in the "lack of interest" of the Israeli Government in his fate.

"Mother and father, my sister and brother, my friends in the Israel Defence Forces: I greet you from prison and miss you all," he says.

"I have spent a full year in prison, and my health is still deteriorating, and I need a prolonged hospitalisation. I regret the lack of interest on the part of the Israeli Government and the Israel Defence Forces in my case and their refusal to meet the demands of the al-Qassam brigades."

Corporal Shalit was captured in a cross-border raid by militants from **Hamas** and two allied groups who tunneled into Israel from the Gaza Strip. Negotiations for his release, mediated by Egypt, have repeatedly broken down and have been complicated since **Hamas** took control of the Gaza Strip two weeks ago.

Corporal Shalit calls on the Israeli Government to meet Palestinian demands for a large-scale prisoner swap.

"Just as I have parents, a mother and father, the thousands of Palestinian prisoners have mothers and fathers to whom their sons must be returned," he says. "I have a great hope from my Government that it show more interest in me and meet the demands of the mujaheddin."

Before last night, Corporal Shalit had not been seen or heard from since he was captured, though a letter was sent to his family. The website did not say when the tape was made. But it appeared to be authentic.

First tape of captive Israeli corporal

Noam Shalit listened to the tape on Channel 2 television, asking the station to play it a second time for the soldier's mother to hear.

He said it appeared that the statement was coerced.

"I imagine that it's the same as the letter they dictated to him and doesn't reflect his real state," he said.

"We want somebody independent to see him, to examine him and the conditions under which he is held, his medical condition, of course, and his mental (state)."

Earlier yesterday, the militants holding Corporal Shalit said he was in good health and being treated well, despite the fact that Red Cross workers had not been allowed to visit the tank corps corporal.

"Shalit is alive and in very good shape," said Abu Mujahid, a spokesman for the Popular Resistance Committees. "His health is good and he's stable. We are treating him according to our religion's instructions on how to deal with war prisoners."

If Israel wanted Corporal Shalit freed, the Government should agree to release Palestinian prisoners who were women, children, elderly, sick, leaders of factions and people serving long sentences, he said.

Israel has agreed to a prisoner swap in principle, but balked at some of the Palestinian demands for the number and type of prisoners to be freed.

Channel 2 earlier reported that Corporal Shalit was being held near Shaboura refugee camp, close to the town of Rafah in the southern part of the coastal territory. The report said he was being cared for by two captors with whom he had formed a "cordial" relationship.

His living quarters were described as a two-room underground store with enough supplies to last two weeks, accessible down a ladder through a 15m shaft lined with explosives.

The captors received supplies and newspaper cuttings every two weeks and had been ordered to take good care of their prisoner.

Load-Date: June 26, 2007

India

The Toronto Star
July 22, 2007 Sunday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A09

Length: 526 words

Body

First woman president elected to symbolic post

Indian lawmakers have selected the nation's first female president in a vote seen as a symbolic victory for women contending with widespread discrimination, election officials said yesterday.

Pratibha Patil, the 72-year-old candidate of the governing Congress party and its political allies, took nearly two-thirds of the vote for the largely ceremonial post.

She defeated incumbent Vice President Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, the candidate for Bharatiya Janata Party, in the vote by several thousand lawmakers and members of state legislatures.

Sudan

Al-Bashir visits Darfur, casts himself as 'unifier'

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, implicated by many in the international community in Darfur's genocide, visited the troubled region yesterday for the first time in the four-year conflict there.

The visit is part of the hardline leader's attempt to recast himself in the role of unifier. He is scheduled to visit Darfur's three provincial capitals in as many days.

An estimated 200,000 people have been killed and around 2.5 million displaced in the Darfur conflict, which began in 2003 when rebels from ethnic African tribes rose up against the Arab-dominated central government.

United States

Bush has polyps removed from colon

U.S. President George W. Bush handed over power to Vice-President Dick Cheney for two hours and five minutes yesterday while the president has five polyps removed from his colon.

The White House said none of the small growths discovered during a routine colonoscopy "appeared worrisome."

The polyps were sent for tests.

Mexico

U.S. tourist falls to death in abandoned mine

India

A 16-year-old U.S. tourist fell to his death down an abandoned mine shaft 305 metres deep.

Rescue workers were yesterday trying to recover the body of Taylor Crane, who fell Friday. His hometown was unknown.

Witnesses told police he tried to jump over the three-metre-wide shaft of the Cinco Senores mine in Guanajuato state and fell in.

Gaza strip

Hamas forms committee to fix judicial system

Hamas announced yesterday the formation of a committee to administer justice in the Gaza Strip, which the Islamist movement took over last month.

"We have formed a judicial committee," to overcome the paralysis in the judicial system since the June 15 takeover, said Islam Shahwan, spokesperson for **Hamas**'s Executive Force militia.

Shahwan said the move was necessary because the head of the Palestinian Supreme Court had ordered prosecutors and judges to halt work in Gaza after the **Hamas** takeover.

Britain

Diplomats criticized in report on sailor crisis

Diplomats trying to secure the release of 15 British troops captured by Iran earlier this year should have tried to speak to Iran's national security chief earlier, a report from lawmakers said today.

It took the Foreign Office a week to get in touch with Dr. Ali Larijani after the 15 sailors and marines were seized March 23 near the Shatt al-Arab waterway that divides Iraq and Iran. The situation exacerbated tricky relations between the two countries before President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announced their release after nearly two weeks, the report said.

From the Star's wire services

Load-Date: July 22, 2007

Israel boosting Fatah position

Windsor Star (Ontario)

July 10, 2007 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B8

Length: 302 words

Byline: Agence France-Presse

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - Israel's former deputy defence minister Ephraim Sneh said on Monday after visiting Marwan Barghuthi in prison that the former West Bank Fatah leader would be more useful outside jail than inside.

"I think he would be more useful outside prison than inside," the Labour parliamentarian told Israeli television.

Barghuthi, regarded as the inspiration behind the Palestinian intifada, was handed five life terms for murder by an Israeli court on June 6, 2004.

The court ruled he was directly responsible for anti-Israeli attacks in which five people were killed.

Last month Environment Minister Gideon Ezra called on the government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to free Barghuthi to boost the authority of Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas.

It was the third time this year that Ezra, a former public security minister and a member of Olmert's Kadima party, has called for Barghuthi's release to boost Abbas's secular Fatah party in its showdown with the Islamists of **Hamas**.

The jailed intifada leader strongly condemned **Hamas**'s armed takeover of the Gaza Strip last month and voiced support for the new emergency government appointed by Abbas in the West Bank.

A popular figure who has never concealed his support for armed struggle against Israel, Barghuthi is widely seen as a possible successor to Abbas.

On Sunday, Israel's cabinet approved the release of 250 Palestinian prisoners allied with Abbas in a move aimed at boosting the moderate leader in his battle for authority with **Hamas**.

No release will be given to those with "blood on their hands," meaning involvement in attacks that have killed Israelis.

Israel currently holds more than 11,000 Palestinian prisoners, just over half of whom have been convicted of an offence, and more than 800 are being held without charge, according to government statistics.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Agence France-Presse, Getty Images, File; AMNESTY: **Female** relatives of Palestinian prisoners hold their images during a recent call for their release from Israeli jails during a rally outside the Red Cross offices in Gaza City. ;

Load-Date: July 10, 2007

End of Document

Deal to free captive Israeli soldier close

The Australian (Australia)

January 2, 2007 Tuesday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 6

Length: 473 words

Byline: Correspondents in Gaza

Body

Reuters, AFP

THERE had been "a breakthrough" in talks on freeing an Israeli soldier held captive by Palestinian militants in Gaza, the armed wing of the governing ***Hamas*** Islamist group said yesterday without giving details.

Spokesman Abu Ubaida said Izz el-Deen al-Qassam and two other factions holding Corporal Gilad Shalit for more than six months were not yet ready to free him, but a deal could be close after what he described as a change in the Israeli position.

"There is a breakthrough in this file and we hope it will be concluded very soon," Mr Ubaida said.

Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhum confirmed that "there is progress" in the negotiations, in which Egypt has sought to broker Corporal Shalit's release in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, particularly ***women*** and children, in Israeli jails.

"The Egyptians are making great efforts, but we can't give details," he said. "Perhaps in the coming days, we'll be able to give some."

An Israeli Government official said progress was steady rather than dramatic. "Nothing's going to happen overnight," the official said.

The armed factions have demanded Israel free more than 1000 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Shalit, abducted in June by gunmen who burrowed into southern Israel from the Gaza Strip.

One of the groups, the Popular Resistance Committees, said Corporal Shalit might be handed to Egypt after Israel freed a first group of prisoners. The Egyptians would keep him until Israel then released another batch. "The swap depends on whether there is an Israeli intention to make it happen. If there is such an intention, it could happen very soon," said PRC spokesman Abu Mujahed. He did not say how many prisoners might be freed.

Mr Mujahed said Corporal Shalit was in good health and being treated according to "Islamic values".

Corporal Shalit's abduction prompted a devastating military offensive into the Gaza Strip, from which Israel had withdrawn troops and settlers in 2005. The offensive was brought to an end by a truce in November last year.

Deal to free captive Israeli soldier close

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said Israel would be prepared to free Palestinians if Corporal Shalit is returned. And a planned visit to Egypt this week has stirred speculation that a deal could be close.

Israel does not talk to **Hamas**, which is formally dedicated to destroying the Jewish state, but has said it could free prisoners to President Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate who seeks an independent Palestine.

On December 23, Mr Olmert agreed to release \$US100 million (\$127 million) in frozen tax revenues to Abbas, bypassing the **Hamas**-led government, and to lift some checkpoints in the occupied West Bank.

Army Radio reported Israel was expected to begin removing some checkpoints in the West Bank today.

Israel holds more than 9000 Palestinian prisoners, according to the independent Israeli human rights group B'Tselem.

Load-Date: January 1, 2007

'I heard screams of terrified women'

The Toronto Star
May 17, 2007 Thursday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A10

Length: 436 words

Byline: Ibrahim Barzak, Associated Press; Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY

Body

Ibrahim Barzak has been covering the Gaza Strip for The Associated Press for more than 10 years. Here is his account of a nerve-racking day in Gaza City during factional fighting.

With gun battles raging outside my building and my windows blown out by bullets, I sat in the dark hallway outside my apartment with my wife and baby. It's dangerous inside and out.

Yesterday, I saw several people shot in front of my building, I heard the screams of terrified women and children in a burning building, and I argued with gunmen who tried to take over my home.

I have seen a lot in my years as a journalist in Gaza, but this is the worst it's been.

Much of the fighting is taking place right here in my neighbourhood.

I went outside a few times to report, just around the house. I saw a building on fire after Hamas gunmen attacked, and I heard the screams of people who could not get out because of the gun battles. I saw Hamas gunmen going in and out of the building, and they were exchanging fire with Fatah forces. And there has been another battle going on all day at a nearby 12-storey building.

My building is across from a Palestinian government complex, and both sides are fighting for control of the area.

Gunmen are taking over rooftops. My apartment is on the top floor of a five-storey building and some Fatah fighters tried to force their way in yesterday morning so they could shoot from my windows, overlooking the government compound. I had an argument with them, and they left.

There have been street battles between Hamas and Fatah before, but there are dangerous new elements this time.

Now they are arresting or even shooting people for the way they look.

If you have a beard, you might be arrested by Fatah security for looking Islamic. If you have a chain around your neck or arm, Hamas gunmen might shoot you because you look secular.

As gunfire and explosions echo across the city, people who consider themselves the elite, the politicians, sit with Egyptian mediators at night and then come out announcing a truce. In the morning, fighting resumes and it's clear to us that these people don't control anything.

'I heard screams of terrified women'

Yesterday, three neighbour couples sat with us on the hall floor. It was dark because the electricity was out.

We chatted, trying to calm ourselves despite the sounds of heavy gunfire and explosions that had not let up since 2 a.m.

Each of us has a baby. My son, Hikmet, is 9 months old.

In the morning he was scared by the noise and he cried and called "mama," which is his first word. Then he fell asleep for three hours. After he woke up, he astonished me by staying calm despite all the shooting.

Load-Date: May 17, 2007

End of Document

Charities plead for Lebanon ceasefire

Daily Mail (London)

May 22, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: ED IRE; Pg. 2

Length: 632 words

Byline: MATTHEW KALMAN

Body

AID agencies pleaded for a ceasefire last night as fierce fighting surrounded a refugee camp in north Lebanon for a second day, leaving scores dead.

Black smoke billowed from the Nahr al-Bared camp, home to 40,000 Palestinians, as Lebanese tanks shelled positions held by fighters of an al-Qaeda inspired group, Fatah al-Islam, who hit back with machine guns and grenades.

The fighting, near Tripoli, has killed more than 70 people, many of them civilians, in Lebanon's worst internal violence since the 1975-90 civil war.

It showed how fragile security remains in Lebanon, racked by political and sectarian tensions since last year's Israeli-Hezbollah war in the south and by a series of unsolved assassinations before and after Syria pulled its troops out in 2005.

The battle was an unprecedented showdown between the Lebanese army and militant groups that have arisen in Lebanon's Palestinian refugee camps.

Lebanese officials said Fatah al-Islam has been planning attacks on European cities and training jihadists to kill troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. A senior member of the group killed in the fighting, Saddam el Hajdib, was wanted in Germany for a failed train bombing in Cologne in July last year.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent have appealed for a truce to allow a humanitarian corridor to be established.

Food and water are running out in the camp.

And tensions mounted further in the region as Israel pounded the Gaza Strip with airstrikes yesterday in response to weeks of rocket attacks from Palestinian fanatics.

Women belonging to the military wing of Palestine's ruling **Hamas** party have vowed to blow themselves up in attacks on Israeli soldiers if the Gaza Strip is invaded.

'If the Israelis try to invade northern Gaza Strip, we will defend our land and our homes,' one of the **women** declared as the group gathered at the Jabalya refugee camp north of Gaza City.

Charities plead for Lebanon ceasefire

'We will turn our bodies into living bombs against the Israeli army,' she added and demanded revenge against Israeli 'crimes' carried out against the Palestinians.

A day earlier rival militants of Islamic Jihad released a video in which dozens of women said they were 'eagerly awaiting' the chance to become suicide bombers.

One said she would like to be the first to commit suicide on behalf of the Palestinian resistance.

Meanwhile at least 12 Palestinian rockets were fired at Israel yesterday, the military and Israeli media said, bringing the total over the last week to more than 150.

In the town of Sderot a woman of 35 was killed when a rocket hit her car yesterday evening. At least 14 other people have been injured by the homemade rockets over the past week, according to medical officials.

Sderot has been particularly hard hit and yesterday's strike came during a meeting in the city between Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana. Thousands of residents have fled the city.

'No nation would tolerate the consistent rocketing of its citizens, and neither will Israel,' said David Baker, an Israeli government spokesman. We will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to bring these attacks to an end and prevent terror from being inflicted upon the residents of Sderot and the western Negev.' Hamas militants went underground, fearing more Israeli reprisals similar to the attack on a house on Sunday which killed eight relatives of a Hamas legislator. They were instructed by their leaders to avoid using mobile phones or travelling by car.

More than 40 Palestinians have been killed since Israel decided last week to start responding to the rocket attacks. There were calls among politicians yesterday to start targeting the political leaders of Hamas.

Travellers to Israel have been warned against going within three miles of the Gaza Strip because of the attacks.

Graphic

SISTERS OF WAR: HAMAS VOLUNTEERS IN A CHILLING CALL TO ARMS

Load-Date: May 22, 2007

Under a cloak of fear, life goes on; Journalist who has covered Gaza for more than a decade describes a city under siege

The Gazette (Montreal)

May 17, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A16

Length: 412 words

Byline: IBRAHIM BARZAK, AP

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

With gun battles raging outside my building and my windows blown out by bullets, I sat in the dark hallway outside my apartment with my wife and baby. It's dangerous inside and out.

Yesterday, I saw several people shot in front of my building, I heard the screams of terrified women and children in a burning building, and I argued with gunmen who tried to take over my home.

I have seen a lot in my years as a journalist in Gaza, but this is the worst it's been.

Much of the fighting is taking place in my neighbourhood. I went outside a few times to report, just around the house. I saw a building on fire after Hamas gunmen attacked, and I heard the screams of people who could not get out because of the gun battles.

My building is across from a Palestinian government complex, and both sides are fighting for control of the area.

Gunmen are taking over rooftops. My apartment is on the top floor of a five-storey building and some Fatah fighters tried to force their way in yesterday morning so they could shoot from my windows, which overlook the government compound. I had an argument with them, and they left.

There have been street battles between Hamas and Fatah before, but there are dangerous new elements this time. Now they are arresting or even shooting people for the way they look. If you have a beard, you might be arrested by Fatah security for looking Islamic. If you have a chain around your neck or on your arm, Hamas gunmen might shoot you because you look secular.

As gunfire and explosions echo across the city, people who consider themselves the elite, the politicians, sit with Egyptian mediators at night and then come out announcing a truce. In the morning, fighting resumes and it's clear to us that these people don't control anything.

Yesterday, three neighbour couples sat with us on the hall floor. It was dark because the electricity was out. We chatted, trying to calm ourselves despite the sounds of heavy gunfire and explosions that had not let up since 2 a.m.

Under a cloak of fear, life goes on; Journalist who has covered Gaza for more than a decade describes a city under siege

Each of us has a baby. My son, Hikmet, is 9 months old. In the morning he was scared by the noise and he cried and called "mama," which is his first word. Then he fell asleep for three hours. After he woke up, he astonished me by staying calm despite all the shooting.

I'm preparing myself for even worse violence. Tuesday was my 30th birthday. I was born on "al-Naqba" day, "the catastrophe," as Palestinians refer to the creation of Israel.

I fear another catastrophe is happening now.

Graphic

Colour Photo: KHALIL HAMRA ; AP; A Palestinian security force officer loyal to Fatah runs for cover during clashes with **Hamas** militants in Gaza City yesterday. ;

Load-Date: May 17, 2007

End of Document

Gazans fleeing to West Bank safety

Irish News

June 20, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: Pg. 23

Length: 364 words

Body

Hundreds of terrified Gazans trying to flee from **Hamas** rule were trapped at a main crossing with Israel yesterday - hoping to gain permission to pass through Israeli territory to sanctuary in the West Bank.

Fearing death or persecution, Gazans began flocking to the Erez passage after **Hamas** militants wrested control of the coastal strip from Fatah security forces late last week.

Israel, which has no interest in letting masses of Gazans pass through its territory and possibly destabilise the quieter West Bank, has refused to let most of them in, saying their lives were not in danger.

By yesterday, about 600 people were holed up in the long, concrete tunnel that leads to the Israeli side of the crossing. About 100 people belonged to Fatah security forces, but the rest were civilians, seeking a better life in the West Bank.

Women, children and young men sat between two high concrete walls about 10 yards apart, looking tired and sweaty.

Suitcases and rubbish were strewn on the ground while some families sat on mats, others on bare concrete.

Gunmen allied to **Hamas** disguised themselves as fleeing civilians and hurled hand grenades at Israeli soldiers and Palestinians at Erez, killing a relative of a killed Fatah warlord and injuring 15 Palestinians.

In a move to maintain order, Israeli tanks and armoured vehicles rolled up to the Palestinian side of Erez chasing away cars parked next to the tunnel, including vehicles belonging to journalists.

Two injured men with blood-soaked bandages were among those sleeping on the bare concrete and one appeared to have bullet wounds.

"We are imprisoned between two walls and they are firing at us from behind," a bearded man in the Erez tunnel said.

"We're calling on all the (Palestinian) authorities to protect these people and children."

Like many travellers, he declined to identify himself, fearing for his safety.

Israel, which has sophisticated weapons screening equipment in place at Erez, said it was only letting the staff of international organisations, people with special permission and humanitarian cases to cross.

Gazans fleeing to West Bank safety

"We don't think that all of them there are threatened," Nir Peres, a military liaison officer, told Israel Radio.

Load-Date: June 20, 2007

End of Document

Palestinian women help free besieged gunmen; International Two women killed after Israeli troops fire on them

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

November 4, 2006 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 448 words

Byline: Yakub Ralwah Associated Press

Body

Hundreds of Palestinian women in robes and head scarves streamed into a Gaza combat zone Friday to help free gunmen besieged by Israeli troops at a mosque. Two women who came under fire were killed and at least 10 wounded, but some gunmen managed to escape.

The women, many with ties to the Islamic militant group Hamas, left their homes after daybreak in response to appeals on the local Hamas radio station or telephone calls from friends and relatives. By nightfall, they were celebrated as heroes, an unusual role in a deeply conservative society that tends to keep women on the sidelines. Until Friday, battling Israeli troops had been men's business in Gaza.

The mosque standoff came on the third day of Israel's fiercest bid in months to halt Palestinian rocket fire on Israeli border communities. The offensive began Wednesday, when Israeli forces took over the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, close to the border with Israel.

In all, 35 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since Wednesday, including 17 on Friday. Among those killed Friday were the two female protesters, a 16-year-old boy, two medics and at least 10 militants. Most of the deaths Friday were a result of a series of Israeli air strikes after sundown. In the deadliest hit, five Palestinians were killed in an Israeli strike in the Jebaliya refugee camp.

The army said the strikes targeted militants trying to plant explosives or launch rockets.

One of the wounded was Tahrir Shahin, a 36-year-old housewife. She said that after hearing the radio appeal, she left her seven children sleeping at home and set out for the mosque, an hour's walk away, with her sister. En route, a bullet hit Shahin's left leg; it had to be amputated above the knee.

Still, she said, she did not regret her choice. "I was so upset about what was happening, so I answered their call," she said from her hospital bed.

Maj. Avital Leibovich said Hamas was exploiting women. "They were using those poor women as human shields," she said. "This is a clear example of use of innocent population for terror."

The army said the gunmen inside the mosque took advantage of the demonstration to escape because there were not enough infantrymen to block the women from approaching the building, and troops did not want to shoot into the crowd.

Palestinian women help free besieged gunmen; International Two women killed after Israeli troops fire on them

The army said troops spotted two militants hiding in the crowd of women and opened fire, hitting the two.

As the women rushed away from the scene, at least two men disguised in women's clothes were seen in the crowd. Jubilant bystanders embraced them, celebrating their escape.

Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas "saluted the women of Palestine "... who led the protest to break the siege of Beit Hanoun."

Load-Date: November 6, 2006

End of Document

Let Palestine Split Into Two

The Forward

June 15, 2007

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Section: Forward Forum; Pg. A9

Length: 822 words

Byline:

Martin van Creveld, a professor of military history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is the author of the forthcoming *The Changing Face of War: Lessons of Combat, From the Marne to Iraq* (Presidio Press).

Body

Many divorces are bitter, and they rarely make for a pretty spectacle. Nevertheless, once the fireworks die down some of them end well. Quite often a divorce enables two people who cannot live together to go their separate ways, if not to achieve reconciliation then at any rate to find new partners and make a fresh start.

The ongoing hostilities in Gaza between Fatah and **Hamas** certainly do not a pretty spectacle make. On both sides, fighters are being shot, mortared and rocketed. Some have been thrown out of the windows of high-rise buildings, others executed as they lay wounded in their hospital beds.

In the war of Palestinian against Palestinian, it seems, no holds are barred and almost every means is acceptable. Even if the leaders of Fatah and **Hamas**, assisted by Egyptian mediators, succeed in bringing about a cease-fire, experience shows that it will not last.

Meanwhile, a growing number of civilians **women** and children included are being caught in the crossfire. Wherever one looks, all one sees are villains and victims. In this entire bloody drama, the only heroes are the hospital workers, both local ones and those working for international agencies, trying to save whomever they can.

But while the pictures coming out of Gaza are grim indeed, out of the prevailing chaos a better future may yet emerge.

Although the West Bank and Gaza are inhabited by a people known as Palestinians, the two pieces of land form distinct entities and differ sharply from one another. The West Bank is less densely populated a lower percentage of the people it contains are refugees and socially and economically more developed. Before the outbreak of the second intifada, its economy was based partly on tourism. And to this day, it remains more open and less committed to religious extremism.

In contrast to the West Bank with its many holy places, Gaza is a godforsaken piece of land that has almost nothing to recommend it. Not only is it the most densely populated area in the world, but it also contains a higher percentage of penniless refugees living in squalid, overcrowded camps.

Socially and economically, Gaza is less developed than the West Bank. As the political and military strength of **Hamas** proves, its inhabitants seek to make up for these problems by embracing a more fundamentalist version of Islam.

Let Palestine Split Into Two

In part, these differences reflect the fact that it was only fairly recently that the two areas came under the same government.

From 1948 until it was occupied by Israel in 1967, the West Bank was an integral part of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Jordan granted citizenship to all West Bank residents, refugees included.

By contrast, Egypt, which ruled for the same 19 years over Gaza, never granted the strip's inhabitants citizenship. Instead, Cairo kept Gazans under military government and did what it could to thwart their development.

Now that Fatah and **Hamas** are fighting one another in Gaza, most people in Israel and the West are hoping for hostilities to cease and for the two areas to be reunited under the authority of a single moderate government that can negotiate with Israel. In the long run, such an outcome is highly unlikely but it is fair to ask whether it is even desirable.

Of all the obstacles to eventual peace in the Holy Land, perhaps the most troublesome one is the long-time Palestinian insistence upon the so-called right of return. The Israelis, who rightly see the realization of this demand as leading to the destruction of their state, cannot grant it. The Palestinian leadership, which claims authority not only over the residents of the West Bank and Gaza but also over that part of the Palestinian people which lives in refugee camps in the neighboring countries, is unable to give it up.

The result is deadlock that, apart from everything else, has bedeviled every attempt to reconcile Israelis and Palestinians and seems destined to go on doing so for a long time to come.

Suppose, however, that the current fighting ends not with the reestablishment of a single moderate government, but with the West Bank and Gaza going their separate ways. In that case, Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah will rule the West Bank, and Ismail Haniya and **Hamas** will govern Gaza.

Neither Fatah nor **Hamas** would be able to speak or even claim to speak

for the Palestinian people as a whole.

Unable to speak for the Palestinian people

as a whole, each of the two will find it

easier, if not to stop insisting on the right

of return, at least to put it aside for the

time being.

The fighting in Gaza is not pretty; divorces

rarely are. In the long run, however,

it is at least conceivable that the war of

Palestinian against Palestinian will lead to

the removal of the single most important

obstacle to Israeli-Palestinian peace. If so,

then perhaps the blood currently flowing is not being shed altogether in vain.

Graphic

Let Palestine Split Into Two

IMAGE; Getty Images

Load-Date: June 14, 2007

End of Document

Reporter in midst of mayhem

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

May 17, 2007 Thursday

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Section: A; Pg. 1

Length: 446 words

Byline: IBRAHIM BARZAK Associated Press Writer

Body

EDITOR'S NOTE - Ibrahim Barzak has been covering the Gaza Strip for The Associated Press for more than 10 years. Here is his account of a nerve-racking day in Gaza City during factional fighting.

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - With gunbattles raging outside my building and my windows blown out by bullets, I sat in the dark hallway outside my apartment with my wife and baby. It's dangerous inside and out.

On Wednesday, I saw several people shot in front of my building, I heard the screams of terrified women and children in a burning building, and I argued with gunmen who tried to take over my home.

I have seen a lot in my years as a journalist in Gaza, but this is the worst it's been.

Much of the fighting is taking place right here in my neighborhood. I went outside a few times to report, just around the house. I saw a building on fire after Hamas gunmen attacked, and I heard the screams of people who could not get out because of the gun battles. I saw Hamas gunmen going in and out of the building, and they were exchanging fire with Fatah forces. And there has been another battle going on all day at a nearby 12-story building.

My building is across from a Palestinian government complex, and both sides are fighting for control of the area.

Gunmen are taking over rooftops. My apartment is on the top floor of a five-story building and Fatah fighters tried to force their way in Wednesday morning so they could shoot from my windows, overlooking the government compound. I had an argument with them, and they left.

There have been street battles between Hamas and Fatah before, but there are dangerous new elements this time. Now they are arresting or even shooting people for the way they look. If you have a beard, you might be arrested by Fatah security for looking Islamic. If you have a chain around your neck or on your arm, Hamas gunmen might shoot you because you look secular.

As gunfire and explosions echo across the city, people who consider themselves the elite, the politicians, sit with Egyptian mediators at night and then come out announcing a truce. In the morning, fighting resumes and it's clear to us that these people don't control anything.

On Wednesday, three neighbor couples sat with us on the hall floor. It was dark because the electricity was out. We chatted, trying to calm ourselves despite the sounds of heavy gunfire and explosions that had not let up since 2 a.m.

Reporter in midst of mayhem

Each of us has a baby. My son, Hikmet, is 9 months old. In the morning, he was scared by the noise and he cried and called "mama," which is his first word. Then he fell asleep for three hours. After he woke up, he astonished me by staying calm despite all the shooting.

Load-Date: July 19, 2007

End of Document

AFGHAN CAR BOMB KILLS 15

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

August 19, 2007 Sunday

TWO STAR EDITION

Copyright 2007 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD; WORLD BRIEFS; Pg. A-4

Length: 579 words

Body

KABUL, Afghanistan -- A suicide car bomb attack killed 13 civilians and two Afghan security guards on the outskirts of Kandahar yesterday, Afghan officials said. The attack was one of the deadliest in southern Afghanistan this year, and two women and a child were among the dead.

In Kabul, armed men walked into a restaurant in an affluent neighborhood and kidnapped a woman who was a German aid worker, Afghan and Western officials said. The woman, who works for a group that helps Afghan orphans, is the latest of several foreigners who have been kidnapped in Afghanistan.

The suicide bombing occurred around 9 a.m. when a man rammed a bomb-laden car into a convoy of vehicles driven by Afghan employees of U.S. Protection & Investigations, a private American security company that guards foreign contractors.

Hamas civil servants fired

JERUSALEM -- In a belated move to erase the last vestiges of his short-lived partnership with the Islamic militant group Hamas, the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, fired dozens of Hamas-affiliated senior civil servants, an official in his office said yesterday.

Those affected were hired last spring under a power-sharing agreement between the rival factions.

At a news conference in Gaza yesterday, Ahmed Bahar, the acting speaker of the Palestinian parliament from Hamas, called the firings "absolutely illegal."

Floods trap 181 miners ...

XINTAI, China -- Rescuers raced yesterday to pump water out of two coal mines flooded by a rain-swollen river in eastern China, where 181 miners were missing and feared dead.

Water levels were rising, work areas were submerged and the miners "had only slim chances of survival," the official Xinhua News Agency reported, citing Wang Ziqi, director of Shandong province's coal mine safety agency.

Crews installed pipes and five high-speed pumps in the mines in this town southeast of Beijing, Xinhua reported. There was no word on whether there were signs of life.

AFGHAN CAR BOMB KILLS 15

The Huayuan Mining Co. mine flooded Friday afternoon when the Wen River burst a dike, sending water pouring into a shaft and trapping 172 miners, according to state media reports.

Nine more miners were trapped when water poured into the nearby Minggong Coal Mine on Friday evening, according to Xinhua. It was not clear whether the second flood was due to the same dike break.

... force Koreas summit delay

SEOUL, South Korea -- North and South Korea agreed yesterday to postpone the second-ever summit between leaders on the divided peninsula to early October due to recent floods that devastated the impoverished communist North.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il had been set to host South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun in Pyongyang for the first summit between the countries in seven years from Aug. 28-30. The event has now been rescheduled for Oct. 2-4, both Koreas said.

The North has said a week of storms destroyed 11 percent of its staple rice and corn fields.

Skyjacking ends peacefully

ANKARA, Turkey -- Two men hijacked a Turkish passenger plane bound for Istanbul yesterday, holding several people hostage for more than four hours before surrendering, officials said.

Six crew members and 136 passengers were on board the Atlasjet flight from Ercan airport in northern Cyprus when the men, claiming to have a bomb, demanded that the plane be diverted to Iran, authorities said.

Pilots managed to land the plane at Antalya airport in southwest Turkey.

Their motives for hijacking the plane were not immediately clear.

Load-Date: August 22, 2007

An Insider's Story Of Gaza

New York Sun (Archive)

August 7, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 991 words

Byline: FIAMMA NIRENSTEIN

Body

Somebody who hasn't seen the face of "The Butcher," cannot really understand what happened in Gaza this July, in the days when **Hamas** defeated Fatah.

He is the sorrow and rage personified, frightening and miserable at the same time. Swollen, managing to look pale even with dark skin, his red eyes look wide open on something awful, looking at the horrifying surprise of that overwhelming **Hamas**. He sits with two generals at a table of the coffee shop Pronto in Ramallah, a secular place where they serve eggs and bacon and beer. But he drinks only coffee. He is one of the top commanders of the Palestinian Authority Force 17 Presidential Guard. He speaks while chain smoking, his hands trembling. He doesn't want to eat, but while he drinks his coffee with a lot of milk, he picks very small pieces of bread from my breakfast, like looking for confidence and familiarity. But he is "The Butcher," and you can guess it's not a matter of chance. His real name is secret. It's forbidden for the officials, the protagonists of the disaster of Fatah, of which he is certainly one, to speak to journalists.

Force 17 has always been the most respected elite unit of the Palestinian Authority, the one that Arafat personally founded and used as his guard. The colonel is 50 years old but looks older. His face is round, his body tough and small. His mouth looks like he never visited the dentist. He wears a black shirt and moves it with his right hand to show me his left shoulder: "Look here, it's still blue and swollen. I've shot, I've shot a lot, I almost defeated them, I gave them a good lesson, but they lied, they betrayed, they behaved like wild beasts. They are not human beings. I was in every war, in Iraq, in Somalia. I have fought always with Abu Ammar, I was with him in Jordan during Black September, in Beirut, in Tunis. I was in Sabra and Shatila. But I never saw a dirty war like the one **Hamas** has fought, with ferocity. If I must say in a word why we lost: we also had RPG; but we didn't want to use them against our **women** and children. And they did against ours."

If this is the reason of the defeat, it's funny, because it's the Western world's problem, asymmetric war. But maybe there are other reasons. In the West Bank there are official inquires about the spectacular loss, whose main responsibility might fall on the PLO official Mahmoud Dahlan.

People who saw "The Butcher" operate in Gaza say that when Fatah was in control of the Palestinian weapons and militias its actions made the man on the street angry. I look at the colonel, and I can imagine him walking in the streets of Gaza City with his Kalashnikov hanging on his shoulder, his men around him, the king of the street, without anybody daring to stop them, their corruption, their violence. But now he is defeated.

"We had already been fighting for six months when the big confrontation came. We had occupied the higher floors of the towers, and they made us descend using a pretended truce mediated by Egypt," he said. "Immediately after

An Insider's Story Of Gaza

we came down they took our places and started shooting at us; they had a plan of division of Gaza in different squares, with the aim of not allowing our people to move where we needed them. They pushed us and closed us with the shoulders to the sea, we were only 35 shooting like crazy against hundreds, I kept trying to call my 185 men but they could not get to us: the strip, the town, Rafah, Khan Yunnis, everything was isolated."

During the clash on the beach, the big betrayal took place: the mosques started calling the families of the soldiers asking them to go and pick them up from the beach, otherwise everybody would have been killed. Sophocles could not have thought a better plot. So the mothers, the families, flocked into the beach with big bags full of civilian clothes: "My men one after the other took off their uniforms, threw them and their weapons into the water, wore the trousers and t-shirts that their mothers brought and went home."

"The Butcher" says he remained there with many dead and wounded all around him. "I kept fighting and made them pay a very high price, shooting until the end with my RPG. I fought for one day and a half without stopping, at two in the morning I left the area with my face covered and civilian clothes. But after a few hours, while I was hiding at the tenth floor of a tower where the Egyptians had an office, they captured me."

The Egyptians were not able to defend him. It was all blood and fire around when the people from **Hamas** took "The Butcher," and while he was descending the stairs, they showed him dead and wounded people around, and also people that were just being executed: "Now we are going to kill you like this, just that way' they kept repeating. I was sure it was my last hour, so that I asked them to kill me right away and to throw me in the dump," he said.

But **Hamas** decided, for reasons that we will probably never know, while killing other officials that were captured, to spare the life of the colonel, put him on a jeep and let them leave with few others after 12 hours of detention, blindfolded and sure they were going to die. The colonel now hates, hates very much. He doesn't know if he hates **Hamas** more than the Israelis.

"Look," he says. "They took the guy that prepared coffee and tea for us, blindfolded him, brought him on top of a tower of 13 floors and threw him down. He was mentally disabled. They shot Samih el Madun, a great leader of the Al Aqsa Martyrs, and passed with a car over his head so many time that at the end he didn't have any head anymore. I've seen many atrocities, I would like to go back there to fight. And they are traitors, because they did everything at Iran's order: the Iranians are there, yes, I have seen two of them personally. And met a lot of people that went abroad for training. The **Hamas** leadership regularly sends them there. They are traitors."

Ms. Nirenstein is an Italian journalist who lives in Israel.

Load-Date: August 8, 2007

Hopes rise for Palestinian state; Fatah government responds to Israeli peace overture by toning down its manifesto, paving the way for talks

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

July 28, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 513 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- Days after Israel revived tentative hopes for the creation of a Palestinian state, the Palestinian government reached back with its own historic olive branch by, for the first time ever, dropping the words "resistance" and "armed struggle" from its platform.

As well as shedding the more inflammatory language of the past, the new manifesto made public Friday by Palestinian Prime Minister Salaam Fayad stated that any peace agreement with Israel must follow the borders as they existed before the 1967 Six-Day War, and that Jerusalem should be the capital of both Israel and the future Palestinian state.

Although the new Palestinian government's revised statement of principles has been in the works for some time, it was released just days after Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said his government was ready, for the first time in seven years, to enter into "serious discussions" with the Palestinians on a future state.

The Palestinian policy shift came as Olmert confidant Haim Ramon, named deputy prime minister earlier this month, declared on Israel Radio that he favours a partial withdrawal of Israeli forces and settlers from the West Bank, which the Jewish state conquered during the Six-Day War.

Abandoning the West Bank was one of the main themes of Olmert's winning campaign early last year, although the plan was dropped soon after the election in the face of rising violence by **Hamas** and like-minded groups such as Islamic Jihad.

While Ramon is prepared to concede less of the West Bank than the 90 per cent envisaged by Olmert, the prospect of any withdrawal is seen as significant. Israeli support for the Gaza pullback of 2005 and something similar in most of the West Bank has waxed and waned in recent years, usually tracing the temperature of overall Israeli-Palestinian relations.

The remarks by Ramon, Olmert and Fayad were just some of the positive signs for peace that have emerged this week alone. Former British prime minister Tony Blair, the international community's new Middle East envoy, was engaged in high-level shuttle diplomacy earlier this week. And, for the first time ever, an Arab League delegation

Hopes rise for Palestinian state; Fatah government responds to Israeli peace overture by toning down its manifesto, paving the way for talks

arrived in Jerusalem Wednesday, offering to resurrect a five-year-old Saudi-backed peace proposal that Israel now says it will consider.

The developments underscore renewed interest in restarting substantive peace talks that stalled in 2000, when the second Palestinian intifadah, or uprising, sparked a series of deadly suicide bombings in Israel.

The catalyst for the recent flurry of diplomatic activity and the new language of compromise was last month's crushing defeat by **Hamas** of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's secular Fatah faction on the battlefield of Gaza. **Hamas**, a radical Islamic movement, seeks Israel's destruction and is regarded as a terrorist organization by many countries, including Canada.

Israel, the west and the Abbas government are trying to isolate **Hamas** and prevent it from also taking over the West Bank, where support for the organization has been increasing, at Fatah's expense, in recent years.

Graphic

Photo: Musa Al-Shaer, Agence France-Presse; Palestinian **women** mourn at the funeral of Jihad al-Shaer, 20, in the West Bank village of Tekoa, near Bethlehem. He died of injuries sustained when Israeli troops struck him during an alleged knife attack. ;

Load-Date: July 28, 2007

Five die in flood of sewage, mud

Kamloops Daily News (British Columbia)

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 294 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: UMM NASER, Gaza Strip

Body

UMM NASER, Gaza Strip (AP) -- An earth embankment around a cesspool collapsed Tuesday, spewing a flash flood of sewage and mud that killed four people and forced residents to flee from this village in the northern Gaza Strip, officials said.

A local official blamed shoddy infrastructure in Umm Naser, a town of 3,000.

Two women in their 70s, two toddlers and a teenage girl died in the sudden flood, and 25 people were injured, said Dr. Muawiya Hassanin of the Palestinian Health Ministry. At least 25 houses were completely submerged.

Fadel Kawash, head of the Palestinian Water Authority, said the level of sewage in the pool had increased over the last few days, creeping up the earth embankments around the pool until one collapsed, "causing the sewage to pour toward the village."

Ziad Abu Farya, head of the village council, described the scene as "our tsunami."

Rescue crews and militiamen from Hamas rushed to the area to search for people feared buried under the slide of sewage and mud.

Most residents fled or were evacuated. Three children were seen leaving the area on a cart pulled by a donkey, heading toward the nearby town of Beit Lahiya.

Angry residents drove reporters out of the area and mobbed government officials who arrived at the scene. When Interior Minister Hani Kawasmeh arrived to survey the damage, his bodyguards fired in the air to disperse the crowd.

"We lost everything. Everything was covered by the flood. It's a disaster," said Amina Afif, 65, whose small shack was destroyed.

Kawash said Gaza's poor infrastructure was to blame for the accident.

Several major sewage treatment projects funded by foreign donors, including one near Umm Naser, were frozen after Hamas won elections last year. The U.S. and EU consider Hamas a terrorist group.

Five die in flood of sewage, mud

Graphic

Photo: Hatem Moussa, AP photo; A Palestinian rescue worker searches for bodies in raw sewage Tuesday after a cesspool embankment collapsed in the village of Umm Naser, in the northern Gaza Strip. ;

Load-Date: March 28, 2007

End of Document

Sewage floods town after wall collapses

The Record (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario)

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: FRONT; Pg. A7

Length: 291 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: UMM NASER, GAZA STRIP

Body

An embankment around a cesspool collapsed yesterday, spewing a flash flood of sewage and mud that killed four people and forced residents to flee the town of Umm Naser in the northern Gaza Strip.

A local official blamed shoddy infrastructure in the town of 3,000.

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Kawash said Gaza's poor infrastructure was to blame for the accident. Several major sewage-treatment projects funded by foreign donors, including one near Umm Naser, were frozen after Hamas won elections last year.

"We had a project to treat sewage in north Gaza, it was worked on for two years," Kawash said. "We built a pressure pipe line and pumping station. But it was stopped after . . . troubles began."

Hamas spokesperson Fawzi Barhoum blamed the sanctions for the condition of Gaza's infrastructure.

Graphic

Photo: ASSOCIATED PRESS , Palestinians run from a sewage flood yesterday in the town of Umm Naser in the northern Gaza Strip. An embankment around a cesspool collapsed, spewing sewage and mud that killed five people. A local official blamed shoddy infrastructure in the town of 3,000 for the disaster.

Load-Date: March 28, 2007

End of Document

Israeli forces pull out of northern Gaza town

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

November 8, 2006 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 342 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip

Body

BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip (AP) -- Israeli forces ended a week-long offensive Tuesday aimed at halting rocket attacks from this northern Gaza town, leaving behind wrecked homes, uprooted trees and sewage-covered streets. But hours after the pullback, the Palestinian rocket fire resumed.

Israel kept up its onslaught from outside Beit Hanoun, killing 10 Palestinians in air strikes, gunfire and tank shelling.

In one barrage Tuesday, five rockets hit the Israeli city of Ashkelon, 11 kilometres from the Gaza border, the farthest the militants' homemade weapons have reached into Israel. No one was hurt, the army said, but Israel hit back with artillery.

Palestinian leaders denounced Israel for continuing its offensive, but internal problems remained unsolved as negotiations dragged on to form a unity government in hopes of ending an international aid boycott.

In one incident Tuesday, two Israeli tank shells hit the house of Jamila Shanti, a **Hamas** legislator who helped organize a demonstration of **women** Friday that allowed dozens of **Hamas** militants to escape an Israeli siege on a mosque.

Shanti was not home at the time of Tuesday's attack, which Palestinian doctors said killed three people. **Hamas** said two of the three were militants who were firing rockets. The army said it was responding to an attack and had not targeted Shanti's home.

After the pre-dawn Israeli pullback, hundreds of Beit Hanoun residents, who spent most of the last week holed up in their homes as troops and militants battled in the streets, milled around inspecting the damage.

Homes in the town of 50,000 were damaged by tanks that rumbled through its narrow streets, ripping up asphalt, toppling trees and destroying cars. The mosque that was the site of last week's standoff was reduced to rubble.

Telephone and electricity wires lay exposed on ruined roads marked with tank tracks. Tanks destroyed the outer wall of the town's cemetery, uprooting several tombstones. Some residents tried to fix the tombstones, while others dug fresh graves for those killed in the fighting.

Israeli forces pull out of northern Gaza town

Load-Date: November 8, 2006

End of Document

Captured Israeli soldier 'alive and well'

Guardian.com

June 25, 2007

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theguardian

Length: 379 words

Highlight: Palestinian militant group uses anniversary of Israeli soldier's capture to reiterate demands and call for more kidnappings.

Body

Palestinian militants who captured an Israeli soldier exactly a year ago today said he was in good health and being treated well.

"A year has passed since we abducted the Zionist soldier [Gilad] Shalit and we are determined and able to keep him in captivity for years to come unless the Zionist enemy complies with our demands," said Abu Mujahid, a spokesman for the Popular Resistance Committees (PRC), one of three Hamas-linked groups.

"[Mr Shalit] is alive and is in good health," he said.

Militants seized Mr Shalit and killed two other soldiers at an army base on June 25, 2006, after tunnelling into Israel from the Gaza Strip.

Negotiations for his release, mediated by Egypt, have repeatedly broken down and run into complications since Hamas took control of Gaza two weeks ago.

Mr Mujahid said Palestinian factions must celebrate the first anniversary of Mr Shalit's abduction by kidnapping additional Israeli soldiers, so they could be exchanged for more than 10,000 Palestinians in jail.

"The soldier Shalit will never be freed before we see our prisoners freed and among us," he said at a rally attended by dozens of families of Palestinians held by Israel.

Negotiations brokered by Egypt have been suspended in recent months amid Palestinian infighting and Israeli-Palestinian violence.

If Israel wanted Mr Shalit freed, it should release Palestinian prisoners who were women, children, elderly, sick, leaders of factions and people serving long sentences, Mr Mujahid said.

Israel has agreed in principle to a prisoner swap, but balked at some of the Palestinian demands for the number and type of prisoners to be freed.

The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem accused the militants holding Mr Shalit of war crimes.

Captured Israeli soldier 'alive and well'

"International humanitarian law absolutely prohibits taking and holding a person by force in order to compel the enemy to meet certain demands, while threatening to harm or kill the person if the demands are not met," the group said. "Furthermore, hostage-taking is considered a war crime."

B'Tselem said **Hamas** was responsible for securing Mr Shalit's release since it effectively controls the security situation in Gaza.

It added that the militants holding the soldier had violated international law further by not allowing Red Cross representatives to visit him.

Load-Date: June 25, 2007

End of Document

TOT PUSHED TO BE LIKE BOMBER MOM

Daily News (New York)

March 25, 2007 Sunday

CITY FINAL EDITION

Copyright 2007 Daily News, L.P.



Section: NEWS; Pg. 15

Length: 462 words

Byline: BY MATTHEW KALMAN in Jerusalem and CORKY SIEMASZKO in New York DAILY NEWS WRITERS

Body

THE NEXT WAVE of Palestinian suicide bombers could include little girls with ribbons in their hair.

Three years after Reem Saleh al-Riyashi blasted into infamy as the first Palestinian mother to launch a suicide bomb attack, her 4-year-old daughter is being primed to follow in her fanatical footsteps.

And in an apparent bid to sell another generation on mad martyrdom, a shocking new music video that depicts little Duha Riyashi serenading her mommy while she suits up for her suicide mission is being aired repeatedly on **Hamas'** Al-Aqsa TV - the official station of the new Palestinian prime minister.

"My love will not be words," the Duha character sings at the end of the video, when she opens a drawer and finds a stick of explosives. "I will follow mommy in her steps."

Duha herself revealed the extent of the brainwashing she has already endured in a March 8 television interview. Sitting beside her fidgety brother and wearing a green ribbon in her hair, she dutifully declared that her mother was in "paradise" and needed only a little encouragement to recite a poem titled "Mama Reem."

"Reem, you are a fire bomb, your children and submachine gun are your motto," the little girl chanted.

Al-Riyashi, a 22-year-old mother of two, killed herself and four Israelis in January 2004 when she smuggled explosives hidden under her robes past soldiers at a Gaza border crossing - and detonated her deadly payload.

"It was always my wish to turn my body into deadly shrapnel against the Zionists and to knock on the doors of heaven with the skulls of Zionists," Al-Riyashi said in her farewell video. "God gave me two children and I loved them so much. Only God knew how much I loved them."

At the time, a high-ranking member of the Al Aqsas Martyrs Brigade told The Daily News his group had helped the militant Muslim group **Hamas** train Al-Riyashi.

In the dramatized music video, an actress playing Duha sings as her mother dons her explosives.

TOT PUSHED TO BE LIKE BOMBER MOM

"Mommy, what are you carrying in your arms instead of me?" she sings. "A toy or a present for me?"

Later, the young girl sees a TV report of the bombing and realizes her mother is dead. She cries for her, begging for her to come back and tuck her - and her brother, Muhammed - into bed.

"Instead of me you carried a bomb in your hands. Only now, I know what was more precious than us. May your steps be blessed," she sings.

Ken Jacobson of the Anti-Defamation League said militant **Hamas** has aired videos glorifying suicide bombers in the past, but this was a new low.

"If ever there was a wakeup call to reject any connection to this terrorist group, it would be viewing this horrific piece," he said.

Nadia Rasheed, a spokeswoman for the Palestinian mission to the United Nations, did not return a call for comment.

csiemaszko@nydailynews.com

Graphic

Palestinian Reem Saleh al-Riyashi, the first **female** suicide bomber, is seen with daughter Duha before killing herself and four Israelis in 2004 terror attack. At right, Duha, now 4, is portrayed in **Hamas** music video as a girl who plans to follow her mom's footsteps.

Load-Date: March 26, 2007

Headlines; You might have missed this week

The Gazette (Montreal)

June 16, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: SATURDAY EXTRA; Pg. B8

Length: 389 words

Byline: The Gazette

Body

Hamas triumphs

The Gaza Strip fell into full-scale violence this week as **Hamas** routed the last forces of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. He fired the **Hamas**-dominated government, declared a state of emergency and said there had been a military coup.

Boost for Immigrants

Quebec immigration minister Yolande James introduced rule changes to make it easier for foreign-trained health-care professionals to get into professional corporations.

Thibault under probe

Former Quebec lieutenant-governor Lise Thibault's troubles deepened this week. The Surete du Quebec and RCMP are investigating reports by both federal and provincial auditors-general that up to \$700,000 spent during her term was questionable.

Lottery Losers

The fallout on the Ontario lottery scandal widened this week. A senior executive was fired and another lost his job title amid allegations of fraud and suspicious insider wins.

Street Gang Targeted

Police in Toronto launched a massive raid on the Driftwood Crips street gang on Wednesday, arresting 95 people and seizing guns, ammunition, drugs and cash in the troubled Jane-Finch area of the city.

Wired City

The wired world may be coming to Montreal in a big way. Two Montreal companies have announced a plan to offer wireless Internet service to 87 per cent of people on the island of Montreal by 2009.

Slower commute

Headlines; You might have missed this week

The commute got a little slower this week for many Montrealers as work continued on the Ville Marie Expressway where cracks were found last week. A McGill University engineering professor said trucks should be banned until repairs are made. Transport Quebec says that's not necessary.

No more flying beagles

After complaints from passengers who heard them yelping in the hold, Air Canada has stopped shipping beagles to Paris for medical and scientific experiments.

rapist cop jailed

Former Montreal police officer Benoit Guay was sentenced to eight years in prison after pleading guilty to 13 charges, including sexual assault. On-duty, Guay worked undercover in a surveillance unit. Off-duty, he would prowl the streets of Laval and St. Jerome looking for young women and girls to sexually assault.

more woes for pluto

Icy Pluto's humiliation goes on. It was demoted to dwarf planet last year. Now, U.S. astronomers say it isn't even the biggest dwarf in the Kuiper Belt. Eris is 27-per-cent bigger.

Load-Date: June 16, 2007

'I heard the screams of women and children'

The Times (London)

May 17, 2007, Thursday

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; Pg. 40

Length: 334 words

Byline: Ibrahim Barzak

Body

With battles raging outside my building and my windows blown out by bullets, I sit in a dark hallway outside my apartment with my wife and baby.

It's dangerous inside and outside. Today I have seen people shot before my eyes, I heard the screams of terrified women and children in a burning building and I argued with gunmen who wanted to take over my home.

I have seen a lot in my years as a journalist in Gaza, but this is the worst it has been.

Much of the fighting is taking place right here in my neighbourhood. I went outside a few times to report, just around the house. I saw a building on fire after Hamas gunmen attacked, and I heard the screams of people who could not get out because of the gun battles.

My building is across from a Palestinian government complex, and both sides are fighting for control of the area. They are taking over rooftops. My apartment is on the top floor of this five-storey building.

This morning some Fatah gunmen tried to force their way into my apartment so they could shoot from my windows. I had an argument with them and they left.

There have been clashes between Hamas and Fatah before, but there are dangerous new elements this time. Now they are arresting or even shooting people for the way they look. If you have a beard you could be arrested by Fatah security for looking Islamic. If you have a chain around your neck or on your arm, Hamas gunmen could shoot you because you look secular.

The random use of weapons and explosives is out of control.

People who consider themselves the elite, the politicians, sit with the Egyptian mediators at night and then come out with statements about a truce, and in the morning we see the opposite has happened. These people are not controlling anything.

Tuesday was my 30th birthday. I was born on "al-Naqba day" - "the catastrophe", as Palestinians refer to the creation of Israel. I'm afraid a catastrophe is happening now.

(Ibrahim Barzak has been covering the Gaza Strip for the Associated Press for more than ten years)

'I heard the screams of women and children'

Load-Date: May 17, 2007

End of Document

World Digest

The Toronto Star
January 11, 2007 Thursday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 522 words

Body

Syria

Hamas sets condition

in new talks with Abbas:

Its PM must stay on

President Mahmoud Abbas and **Hamas** are in fresh talks on a Palestinian government, the Islamist group's exiled leader said yesterday.

But **Hamas**, which leads the Palestinian government now insists Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh must stay on, Khaled Meshaal said in Damascus.

Hamas, which leads the government, and Abbas's Fatah are locked in a deadly power struggle in Gaza.

Indonesia

Part from missing airliner discovered in ocean

A part of the tail of an Indonesian jetliner that went missing 10 days ago with 102 people on board has been found in the sea off Sulawesi island, Eddy Suyanto, commander of the Makassar air base, said today.

Burma

5 activists freed in wake

of pending UN resolution

Htay Kywe said he and four other activists were released from detention today, two days after the United States introduced a United Nations resolution calling on Burma to release all political prisoners.

The five were members of the "88 Generation Students' Group" who had been taken in for questioning in September but were not formally charged with any offence.

Guinea-Bissau

Ex-PM seeks asylum after assassination allegation

World Digest

Former premier Carlos Gomes Jr. sought asylum at the local United Nations office yesterday, three days after he accused President Joao Bernardo Vieira of being behind the murder of an ex-military commander last week.

United States

Connecticut's Dodd to seek presidential nomination

Christopher Dodd, who entered Congress in the post-Watergate class of 1974, will announce his bid for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, party officials said yesterday.

The 62-year-old Connecticut senator will make the formal announcement this morning on the Imus in the Morning radio show.

Trailer-park joys: Residents set to cash in on property

Residents of Briny Breezes, Fla., sitting on beachfront property have voted overwhelmingly to sell their community to a developer for more than \$510 million (U.S.), which could make most of them millionaires. Some residents of the trailer-park town bought their homes for as little as \$35,000.

The contract isn't official - and residents don't get any money - until 2009. If the sale goes through, nearly every owner will get over \$1 million.

Thailand

'Extinct' terrapin turtle found in mangrove canal

Villagers have caught a river terrapin turtle that was thought to be extinct in the country, a leading conservation group said yesterday.

The ***female*** turtle - known for its egg-shaped shell and upturned snout - was found Jan. 3 in a mangrove canal on the country's Andaman coast, said the World Wide Fund for Nature-Thailand. It was the first time the species was found in Thailand in two decades, the WWF said.

Serbia

Three pigs ignite fire, destroying farmer's house

A farmer's home in Temerin was destroyed in a blaze caused by three pigs that broke out of their pen, walked into the living room and knocked over the TV, police said yesterday.

The television tube burst, starting a fire that spread through the house late Monday, local police said. No people were hurt, but the pigs perished.

From the Star's wire services

World

Load-Date: January 11, 2007

World Ticker

The Toronto Star
January 7, 2007 Sunday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 583 words

Body

Sri Lanka

Suspected suicide attack kills at least 15

A bomb on a passenger bus killed at least 15 people and wounded dozens more yesterday, officials said, blaming Tamil Tiger rebels for the country's second bus bombing in as many days.

Officials said the bus wreckage indicated that a suicide bomber might have been behind the attack, which ripped through the bus on the crowded road yesterday afternoon near the coastal town of Meetiyyagoda, which is about 100 kilometres south of Colombo.

"There is a female body inside the bus and, looking at the damage the blast has caused around her, we suspect that she could have been a suicide bomber," said senior police official Upul Ariyaratne.

West Bank

Abbas calls Hamas militia in Gaza illegal

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas yesterday declared Hamas' militia in the Gaza Strip illegal, and the Islamic movement responded by defiantly announcing plans to double the size of the paramilitary unit.

Abbas' standoff with Hamas has intensified in the year since the Islamic group defeated Abbas' Fatah party in parliamentary elections. The dispute has centred in large part on control of the powerful Palestinian security forces.

Hamas accused Abbas, who was elected in a separate presidential vote, of giving a "green light" for attacks against its men. It said it would double the size of its force to 12,000, compared with a force of some 18,000 allied with Fatah.

India

Bloodshed continues in restive northeast

A second day of bloodshed in the restive northeast took at least 21 lives yesterday, including 13 migrant workers shot while they slept and eight government employees killed by a land mine explosion.

On Friday, a series of attacks by suspected separatist rebels killed 35 other migrants and wounded at least 19 in Assam state's tea-growing districts of Tinsukia and Dibrugarh, officials said.

World Ticker

Migrants are frequently attacked by rebels of the United Liberation Front of Asom in an effort to draw national attention to their demands for independence for ethnic Assamese. At least 10,000 people, mostly civilians, have died since the rebellion began in 1979.

United States

Alleged extortion plot against Oprah

An Atlanta man has been charged with trying to extort \$1.5 million (U.S.) from Oprah Winfrey over tapes of telephone calls between him and a Winfrey employee that he said would embarrass the popular U.S. talk show host, according to court documents.

Keifer Bonvillain is charged in federal court with trying to extort money by threatening to injure a person's reputation.

According to the complaint, Bonvillain wrote to Winfrey - identified in the documents as "Individual A" - and said an employee was saying "awful things" about Winfrey.

A representative of Winfrey contacted Bonvillain, who allegedly offered to sell the tapes to the representative.

El Salvador

17 inmates killed in riot between gangs

Rival gang members battled each other with homemade weapons and shovels in a riot that left 17 inmates dead at a maximum-security prison, officials said yesterday.

The riot was sparked late Friday at the prison in Apanteos, 65 kilometres west of the capital, San Salvador, when a jailed gang member got into an argument with a guard, authorities said.

The prisoner grabbed the guard and rival gang members around them began fighting each other and tearing down six of the prison's flimsy interior walls to get at other cell blocks.

The guards then fled as hundreds of prisoners battled, mostly with homemade weapons and shovels.

FROM STAR WIRE SERVICES

Load-Date: January 7, 2007

U.S. Muslim advocacy group is object of suspicion

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

March 14, 2007 Wednesday

Copyright 2007 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 363 words

Byline: Neil MacFarquhar New York Times News Service

Body

With violence across the Middle East fixing Islam smack at the center of the U.S. political debate, an organization partly financed by donors closely identified with wealthy Persian Gulf governments has emerged as the most vocal advocate for American Muslims -- and an object of wide suspicion.

The group, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, defines its mission as spreading the understanding of Islam and protecting civil liberties. Yet a debate rages about the group, commonly known as CAIR, and its financing and motives.

A small band of critics have tried to link it to **Hamas** and Hezbollah, which have been designated terrorist organizations by the State Department, and have gone so far as calling CAIR an American front for the two.

In December, Sen. Barbara Boxer of California issued a Certificate of Appreciation to the CAIR representative in Sacramento, but she quickly revoked it when critics assailed her on the Web with headlines like "Senators for Terror."

"There are things there I don't want to be associated with," Boxer said later. Her decision to revoke the Sacramento commendation provoked an outcry from the American Civil Liberties Union and the California Council of Churches.

Founded in 1994, CAIR had eight chapters at the time of the Sept. 11 attacks, said Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the group, but has grown to some 30 chapters since American Muslims have felt unjustly scrutinized ever since.

CAIR officials say the accusations against it are rooted in its refusal to endorse the U.S. government's blanket condemnations of Hezbollah and **Hamas**, although it has criticized **Hamas** for civilian deaths.

"Traditionally within the government there is only one point of view that is acceptable, which is the pro-Israel line," said Nihad Awad, who helped found CAIR and is its executive director. "Another enlightened perspective on the conflict is not there, and it causes some discomfort."

Some Muslims, particularly the secular, find CAIR overly influenced by Saudi religious interpretations, criticizing it for stating in news releases, for example, that all Muslim **women** are required to veil their hair when the matter is openly debated among Muslims.

Load-Date: March 14, 2007

U.S. Muslim advocacy group is object of suspicion

End of Document

16 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in Gaza

The Irish Times

November 4, 2006 Saturday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 528 words

Byline: Peter Hirschberg in Jerusalem

Body

MIDDLE EAST: At least 16 Palestinians were killed yesterday by Israeli forces in Gaza, including six militants who died in two separate air strikes last night in the northern part of the Strip.

Also among the dead were two women who were part of a crowd of women that headed for a mosque in the northern town of Beit Hanoun earlier in the day to help militants holed up there escape from Israeli troops.

Soldiers pushed into Beit Hanoun on Wednesday as part of Israel's latest bid to stymie rocket fire at towns in southern Israel.

The mosque was besieged on Thursday after the army discovered that dozens of militants, mostly from Hamas, had holed up inside. As troops and gunmen traded fire, an Israeli military bulldozer demolished one of the outer walls of the mosque and soldiers used smoke and stun grenades to try to force the militants to surrender.

With some 200 women flocking to the mosque yesterday morning to act as human shields, the gunmen were able to use the demonstration as cover and slip away. It appeared that a few had disguised themselves as women.

The Israeli military said some of the gunmen had escaped in ambulances belonging to the Red Cross.

Palestinian sources said the two women were killed, and dozens injured, when Israeli troops fired toward the demonstration. The army said that the gunmen were able to escape because troops chose not to shoot into the crowd.

Five militants were killed overnight on Thursday, four in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza City, and another in Beit Hanoun. Palestinians also reported that a four-year-old boy and a 15-year-old youth were killed in Beit Hanoun. Two Palestinians were also killed yesterday in clashes with Israeli troops in the West Bank.

Palestinian officials have reported 30 people killed, most of them armed men, and at least 150 injured since the start of the Israeli operation on Wednesday.

The Israeli military, which has codenamed the operation "Autumn Clouds", has put the number of dead at between 30 and 40, the majority of them gunmen. One Israeli soldier has been killed in the fighting.

Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniyeh said he "saluted the women of Palestine" who had broken the siege on the mosque. He called on UN secretary general Kofi Annan "to come here and see the massacre". The operation has

16 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in Gaza

so far failed to stop the rocket fire into southern Israel, with militants yesterday launching five of the rudimentary missiles, four of which landed in open areas and one in the town of Sderot. There were no injuries.

Close to 300 Palestinians have been killed since Israel launched a series of raids into Gaza after an Israeli soldier was abducted by militants in late June. Cpl Gilad Shalit is still being held captive in the Strip. According to recent reports, **Hamas** is demanding the release of 300-400 Palestinian **women** and minors in Israeli jails prior to the release of Cpl Shalit.

The fighting in Gaza also comes as President Mahmoud Abbas, who heads the more moderate Fatah movement, is trying to forge a national unity government with **Hamas**.

Mr Abbas hinted on Thursday that if an agreement on a unity government is not reached within two weeks, he will precipitate new elections.

Load-Date: November 4, 2006

End of Document

[Back to Palestine](#)

The Times (London)

November 11, 2006, Saturday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 19

Length: 568 words

Body

Ismail Haniya, of the ruling militant group **Hamas**, yesterday offered to step down as Palestinian Prime Minister if the move would persuade the West to lift the economic sanctions that have left the Palestinian Authority unable to pay salaries owed to thousands of government employees. His move comes at a time when the situation in Gaza, overshadowed by US elections and the death sentence on Saddam Hussein, has rarely been so bleak. Not only are the sanctions causing enormous hardship; but the Israeli rocket attacks on Wednesday that killed 18 civilians in Beit Hanoun, mostly **women** and children, have produced widespread fury and led to a sense of despair at the daily tit-for-tat exchanges that have left more than 50 Palestinians dead in the past week.

Israel had expressed "regret" at the "technical error" that meant the artillery fire hit a densely populated area. It needs to do far more than that. The incident is one of several in which innocent civilians have been the victims of military retaliation. But this latest shocking miscalculation threatens severe political consequences. Public opinion in surrounding states has been in uproar, and Israel has faced censure in the United Nations. **Hamas**, which has maintained a ceasefire for almost two years, is under pressure from its supporters to sanction new suicide bombings. Negotiations on a prisoner exchange may have been derailed. And the fallout in Gaza could push fractious groups into fresh internecine clashes, increasing suffering and instability on Israel's border.

It is time for more initiatives. The Israeli Government, however, seems to be paralysed by indecision. The Lebanon conflict has left the political establishment in turmoil, and Ehud Olmert, the Prime Minister, has seen his popularity fall to a record low. Proposals for even limited withdrawal from the West Bank have been postponed indefinitely. Morale is low and the public mood, anxious and defensive, appears willing to rely only on a crushing military response to each new rocket attack from Gaza.

America, however, is well placed now to push for new thinking. The Bush Administration, humbled by its electoral defeats over Iraq, still retains huge influence in the Middle East. And in its new readiness to act more in concert with others, it is well aware of the clamour for a fresh focus on the core Palestinian issue, which the Central Intelligence Agency and others now assert is fuelling the anti-Western mood and driving Islamist militancy.

Two factors make a return to active intervention in the region more promising. The first is the new influence in Washington of James Baker, a steely Secretary of State under the President's father. He well knows the cost of letting things drift, and has a track record of pushing all reluctant parties into holding the Madrid peace conference at the end of the Gulf War.

The second fact is the liberation that a final stint in office brings. George W.

Bush has no need now to fear the electoral consequences of defying powerful lobbies in America: like Bill Clinton, he can afford to pursue a Middle East settlement. There is much to do: a prisoner exchange with both **Hamas** and

[Back to Palestine](#)

Hezbollah is within reach. And a Palestinian government of unity could diminish **Hamas**, stop rocket attacks on Israel and allow the West to lift its embargo. That, in turn, might make a return to a search for a settlement possible. It is overdue.

Load-Date: November 11, 2006

End of Document

Two Palestinian women die as troops fire on 'human shield'

Irish News

November 4, 2006 Saturday

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Section: Pg. 22

Length: 577 words

Body

Militants holed up inside a Gaza mosque besieged by Israeli troops escaped yesterday after hundreds of women who streamed there to serve as human shields provided cover for their flight, the army said. At least two gunmen were disguised as veiled women. Israeli troops fired toward the crowd of women, killing two and wounding at least 10, hospital officials said. Soldiers seized Beit Hanoun on Wednesday in their fiercest bid in months to halt Palestinian rocket fire on nearby Israeli communities. Twenty-three Palestinians, most of them gunmen, have been killed and 155 people have been wounded since the offensive began, the Palestinian health ministry said. More than 60 of the wounded were women.

The mosque became the focus of the fighting in Beit Hanoun after dozens of gunmen sought refuge from troops there on Thursday. Most were thought to belong to the military wing of the ruling Hamas party.

Israeli tanks and armoured personnel carriers quickly surrounded the building and the two sides began exchanging fire that lasted throughout the night. Israeli soldiers trying to pressure the gunmen to surrender also threw stun and smoke grenades and knocked down an outer wall of the mosque with a bulldozer, causing the ceiling to collapse. With sporadic shooting persisting yesterday morning, Hamas radio broadcasted a call to women to go to Beit Hanoun to shield the militants. By mid-morning, some 200 veiled women protesters gathered near the mosque, where troops were positioned in tanks and armoured personnel carriers.

As the women approached, volleys of shots were fired toward them, sending the group rushing toward a nearby wall for cover.

Two women, both aged 40, were shot dead and at least 10 others were wounded, hospital officials said.

The army said the gunmen inside the mosque were able to take advantage of the demonstration to escape because there were not enough infantrymen to block the protesters from approaching the building, and troops did not want to shoot into the crowd.

The army said troops spotted two militants hiding in the crowd of women and opened fire, hitting the two.

As the women rushed away from the scene, at least two men disguised in women's clothes were seen in the crowd. Jubilant bystanders embraced them, celebrating their escape.

Prime minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas "saluted the women of Palestine ... who led the protest to break the siege of Beit Hanoun". Mr Haniyeh urged UN secretary-general Kofi Annan to witness firsthand "the massacres of the Palestinian people" and appealed to the Arab world to "stop the ongoing bloodshed".

Two Palestinian women die as troops fire on 'human shield'

A spokesman for **Hamas** militants said 32 gunmen who had taken cover in the mosque escaped with the help of the **women**.

Dozens of protesters took sanctuary in a UN school in Beit Hanoun, fearing retribution by troops, Imad Okal, an official with the UN Relief and Works Agency who said he was in touch with people at the school, said.

Loudspeakers across Gaza called on people to come to demonstrations after Friday prayers to express solidarity with Beit Hanoun. Tens of thousands representing various Palestinian factions massed in streets throughout the coastal strip.

Elsewhere in Beit Hanoun, Israeli troops lowered their visibility after two days of fierce fighting.

No airstrikes were reported and residents said infantrymen had stopped patrolling the streets.

Tanks and armoured personnel vehicles were in sight, however, and snipers were positioned on about two dozen rooftops.

Load-Date: November 6, 2006

World datelines

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

September 8, 2007 Saturday

Copyright 2007 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 613 words

Byline: Compiled from Deseret Morning News wire services

Body

Gaza Strip: Hamas, Fatah fight

GAZA CITY -- Hamas cracked down on rival Fatah members Friday, making numerous arrests and injuring dozens as its troops enforced a new ban on outdoor prayer rallies that have become a weekly form of protest in the Gaza Strip.

At least 11 people were reported wounded by gunfire as Hamas' Executive Force and armed wing dispersed crowds of Fatah faithful who sought to hold Friday prayers at several outdoor locations around the Gaza Strip.

In Gaza City, Fatah members and several journalists were beaten as club-wielding Hamas men forced worshipers to move indoors. In the West Bank, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah, vainly appealed for calm.

Afghanistan: De-miners nabbed

KABUL -- Police and villagers hunted on Friday for 13 mine-clearing workers kidnapped in a restive part of Afghanistan less than a week after Taliban militants vowed to step up an abduction campaign.

The de-miners, all Afghans working for a U.N.-funded land mine-clearance agency, were kidnapped Thursday in eastern Paktia province on the border with Pakistan, said provincial deputy police chief Ghulam Dastager.

Egypt: Bedouins protest

EL-ARISH -- Thousands of Bedouins burned tires and blocked roads Friday across the Sinai peninsula, protesting mistreatment by Egypt's government, said security and tribal officials.

Some 5,000 Bedouins gathered in the village of el-Massoura near the Israeli border demanding basic services and the release of the members of their community detained in security sweeps following terrorist attacks against tourism sites over the last few years.

Greece: U.S. to help with fires

ATHENS -- The United States offered Friday to help with future firefighting efforts in Greece, where 67 people died in wildfires last month.

World datelines

The U.S. help will include tracking down arsonists, said Tom Harbour, director of Fire and Aviation Management at the U.S. Forest Service. Arson was suspected in many of the blazes that swept Greece last month, destroying hundreds of homes.

India: Truck crash kills 85

NEW DELHI -- A truck carrying religious pilgrims crashed into a gorge in northwestern India on Friday night, killing at least 85 people and injuring 46 more, police said.

The accident occurred when the truck driver lost control while taking a sharp turn near the city of Jaisalmer in rural Rajasthan state, the Press Trust of India news agency said, quoting police superintendent Rupinder Singh. The truck and trailer it was pulling smashed through a protective wall on the highway and hurtled 80 feet into the gorge, Singh said.

Iraq: Death sentence opposed

BAGHDAD -- Seven U.S. soldiers were killed in two separate attacks, the military announced Friday, while Iraq's president said he would vote against carrying out the death sentence of a former defense minister, Gen. Sultan Hashim Ahmed.

Earlier this week, the Iraqi High Tribunal affirmed the death sentences handed down by a lower court against Ahmed, Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as "Chemical Ali" for his role in chemical weapons attacks against the Kurds, and Hussein Rashid Mohammed, the former deputy director of operations for the Iraqi air force.

Pakistan: 2 women beheaded

BANNU -- Suspected Islamic militants beheaded two women in northwest Pakistan after accusing them of being prostitutes, police said Friday.

Villagers spotted the decapitated bodies on the outskirts of Bannu, a city in a region where extremists are waging a violent campaign to impose Taliban-style social rules, a police official said. The two women, 28 and 30, were riding an auto rickshaw when five armed men, wearing masks, overpowered them, bundled them into a car and drove away, he said, quoting witnesses.

Load-Date: September 8, 2007

**Women die shielding militants: Army fires on veiled Palestinians staging
bold rescue bid at mosque**

Ottawa Citizen

November 4, 2006 Saturday

EARLY Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 679 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux and Rushdi abu Alouf, The Los Angeles Times; with files from Agence France-Presse

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza - Nineteen Palestinians were killed yesterday in the deadliest day in the Gaza Strip for months, as Israel stepped up its latest offensive in the territory with multiple air strikes.

Eight Palestinians were killed in after-dark aerial attacks following violence in which 11 other people, including two women, were killed by Israeli fire, bringing the total Palestinian death toll to 35 in just three days.

Faced with the bloodshed, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas renewed calls on the international community to intervene to stop the bloodshed, as both Britain and France moved to express concern over the escalating troubles.

But the United States, while expressing regret over the loss of "innocent life," said Israel was defending itself, and put the blame for the violence on Palestinian rocket attacks that sparked the fighting.

The night raids came just hours after gunmen escaped a besieged mosque in a daring rescue bid mounted by Palestinian women in the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, which Israeli troops have been occupying since Wednesday.

About 200 veiled women broke through an Israeli troop and tank cordon around the Al Nasser mosque to serve as human shields for dozens of armed militants. The militants, some dressed in women's clothes, escaped, but two of the women were killed by Israeli fire, and another 17 listed as wounded.

The women's uprising brought a dramatic end to a 15-hour standoff and served as a surprise setback for Israeli forces that had stormed the Beit Hanoun on Wednesday to root out stockpiles of crude Kassam rockets and the militants who launch them into Israel.

With Israelis occupying most of the town, the militants had taken refuge on Thursday in the Al Nasser mosque and exchanged fire with them throughout the day.

After a frantic night of organizing, co-ordinated by cellphone with the gunmen in the mosque, the women marched yesterday morning from the neighbouring town of Beit Lahiya to take up their mission as shields. They brought extra robes and veils to disguise some of the 73 militants as women during their flight.

Women die shielding militants: Army fires on veiled Palestinians staging bold rescue bid at mosque

"We risked our lives to save our sons," said Jamela Shanti, 45, a member of the Palestinian parliament and an organizer of the rescue operation.

Most of the gunmen belong to the armed wing of Hamas, the Islamist movement that governs the Palestinian territories. Israeli soldiers trying to force their surrender also hurled stun and smoke grenades at the mosque and knocked down an outer wall with a bulldozer late Thursday, weakening the entire structure, residents of the town said.

At that point, Hamas leaders devised the plan that depended on a large number of unarmed female volunteers.

Ms. Shanti, one of two Gaza women in Hamas's parliamentary delegation, said it was hashed out during a 2 a.m. meeting of the party leadership. Two hours later, she began recruiting other women to help. As dawn broke, the Hamas radio station urged women to gather for a midmorning march to Beit Hanoun -- a call repeated over mosque loudspeakers in several towns.

The lead group of women approached the besieged mosque on foot, shouting at the Israelis to leave Gaza. Israeli soldiers turned from the mosque and opened fire.

An Israeli army spokesman said soldiers had spotted two male militants hiding among the women and fired at them. Footage filmed by Reuters and other news organizations showed no men in the crowd at the time.

In the ensuing melee, the crowd retreated, regrouped and advanced again, pushing its way inside the Israeli cordon. The soldiers held their fire, witnesses said, and the women entered the mosque and guided the militants out.

The Israeli spokesman said the militants escaped in plain sight, protected by a crowd of women too numerous for the soldiers to control.

Shortly afterward, the mosque's roof collapsed.

Israeli officials have said they expect the operation in Beit Hanoun to last several more days. It is the first takeover of an entire town since Israeli forces and settlers unilaterally withdrew from the coastal strip 14 months ago after a 38-year occupation.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Suhaib Salem, Reuters; A wounded Palestinian woman lies on the ground as others run for cover after an Israeli tank opened fire at them in the Gaza Strip yesterday. 'I salute the women of Palestine, who led the protest to break the siege of Beit Hanoun,' said Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas.

Load-Date: November 4, 2006

Palestinians gather by the hundreds at houses targeted for airstrikes

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

November 20, 2006 Monday

THIRD EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 350 words

Byline: the Associated Press

Dateline: BEIT LAHIYA, Gaza Strip

Body

Hundreds of Palestinians serving as human shields guarded the homes of two top militants Sunday, a new tactic that forced Israel to call off missile strikes on the buildings and re-evaluate a mainstay of its aerial campaign in Gaza.

In recent months, the Israeli air force has repeatedly struck the homes of militants after warning residents by telephone to clear out. Israeli security officials said they did not know how to respond to the human shield tactic but pressed ahead with other airstrikes Sunday.

In Gaza City, an aircraft fired a missile at a car, killing one man and wounding nine, including two **Hamas** militants. Four of the wounded were children, ages 5 to 16, who suffered shrapnel injuries, hospital officials said.

The military said the target of the strike was a vehicle carrying senior members of the **Hamas** rocket-launching operation.

The standoff over the homes of the militants began late Saturday when Mohammed Baroud, local leader of the Popular Resistance Committees, was informed by the army that his house would be hit. Another militant from **Hamas** also received a warning.

Instead of fleeing, though, the two decided to stay in their homes and called in reinforcements. They were quickly joined by crowds of supporters.

"Death to Israel. Death to America," the crowds chanted. Local mosques and Palestinian TV and radio stations also mobilized supporters.

Baroud, involved in rocket attacks on Israel, said he and his fellow militants had planned the response a few days earlier when another house was destroyed in a missile strike.

The army said it called off the nighttime airstrikes because of the crowds. It condemned what it said was a cynical exploitation "by the terrorists of uninvolved people as human shields."

By Sunday afternoon, about two dozen **women** were on Baroud's roof, shielded from the sun by a green tarp. Below them, about a dozen men were resting on mattresses.

Palestinians gather by the hundreds at houses targeted for airstrikes

Baroud's mother, Umm Wael, said shifts had been organized in preparation for a long standoff. "Where should we go?" she said. "We will stay here or die in the house. Let them bring it down on our heads."

Load-Date: November 20, 2006

End of Document

Comment & Debate: A time for joy and reflection: We cheer the hard-won release of Alan Johnston, who was captured in a chaos imposed from afar

The Guardian - Final Edition

July 5, 2007 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN COMMENT AND DEBATE PAGES ; Pg. 28

Length: 623 words

Byline: Khalid Mish'al

Body

Together with all freedom loving peoples, we in the Islamic Resistance Movement, **Hamas**, shared the moment of sheer joy yesterday when Alan Johnston stepped out of the darkness of captivity into the light of freedom.

We pay tribute to the stoic dignity with which the BBC correspondent in Gaza bore his ordeal. We commend the patience and faith of his parents and all the British, Palestinian and other people around the world who campaigned and prayed for his release. From the outset, we committed ourselves to securing his release. I entered into discussions with British officials, shared information and gave assurances of our concerted efforts to secure Alan's release.

The Palestinian people have been struggling for their freedom for almost a century. In our own land we have been denied basic human rights by an occupier that has enjoyed, under various spurious guises, international support. As Alan Johnston returns home, we hope that the British, and people the world over, reflect on the fact that more than 12,000 Palestinians are languishing in Israeli jails, unjustly denied their freedom. They include ministers of a democratically elected government, parliamentarians, **women** and even children.

Like Alan, they all have loved ones who long to see them again. Many of these hapless captives are their families' breadwinners. But the reality today in occupied Palestine is that there is no bread to win because the international community has imposed comprehensive sanctions on the Palestinians, denying them even the most basic necessities for survival. All of this is done to coerce us into accepting the occupier's terms.

Nowhere can a free people be made to surrender their historical and national rights. Accordingly, Palestinians will continue to make every sacrifice until we gain our freedom. In that endeavour, we are ready to work with all who wish to pursue our people's just aims. We look to Britain's new prime minister, Gordon Brown, to begin a constructive new chapter in our relationship.

Many in the international community warned that the imposition of sanctions would undermine security and bring chaos to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Their warnings were ignored. The kidnap and 114-day-long captivity of Alan Johnston took place within a dysfunctional environment imposed from beyond Palestinian borders.

Is it not absurd that a duly elected and constituted government should be denied the authority, by external and internal forces, to control its security services? Is it not bizarre, is it not scandalous, that a national security force should itself become a mechanism for the spread of disorder? Where else in the world today would an elected prime minister find that persistent assassination attempts were allowed to pass without any security measures

Comment & Debate: A time for joy and reflection: We cheer the hard-won release of Alan Johnston, who was captured in a chaos imposed from afar

taken? Where else would the known would-be assassins be allowed to walk free? Where else would assailants and racketeers be given the licence to attack at will? It is to address such chaos in Gaza that **Hamas** was compelled to take charge.

It is in this context that we condemn the attempted attacks in London and Glasgow - as we have done in the past after attacks in Spain and the US. We could not be clearer: **Hamas** will not accept nor tolerate anyone exploiting the sacred cause of the Palestinian people to commit acts of murder and carnage around the world. Our strategy has always been and remains firmly based on the principle that the resistance should be fought only within Palestine.

We appreciate and commend the support given to our cause by international civic society, and hope that support will continue in the pursuit of justice and freedom for the people of Palestine.

Khalid Mish'al is head of the **Hamas** political bureau khmishal@gmail.com

Load-Date: July 5, 2007

End of Document

Israeli shells kill 18 in Gaza

Guardian.com

November 8, 2006

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theguardian

Length: 918 words

Highlight: At least 18 civilians, including eight children, were killed today when Israeli tank shells struck a residential neighbourhood north of the Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun, according to witnesses and hospital officials.

Body

At least 18 civilians, including eight children, were killed today when Israeli tank shells struck a residential neighbourhood north of the Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun, according to witnesses and hospital officials.

Khaled Radi, a health ministry official, said 13 of the dead were from the same family. He said at least 40 more were wounded, all civilians.

Four hospitals across Gaza were treating the wounded, who hospital officials also said were all civilians. Witnesses at the hospitals said that many of the dead arrived in their sleeping clothes.

Palestinian security officials said five tank shells landed in the area within 15 minutes. Most of the victims were in a row of houses belonging to members of the extended Alathamna family.

The Palestinian prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, said efforts to form a national unity government had been suspended in the wake of the attack, which he described as an "awful massacre".

Mr Haniyeh announced a three-day mourning period throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip and urged the UN security council to discuss the shelling incident.

The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, also strongly condemned the attack.

"This is a horrible, ugly massacre committed by the occupation against our children, our women and elderly in Beit Hanoun," Mr Abbas said in a statement. "We urge and call the security council to convene immediately to stop the massacres committed against our people and to uphold their responsibility to stop these massacres."

A spokesman for the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, said he and the defence minister, Amir Peretz, "voiced regret over the deaths of Palestinian civilians ... and offered emergency humanitarian aid to the Palestinian Authority and medical care for the wounded". Mr Peretz ordered the army to halt artillery attacks in the Gaza Strip while the incident was investigated.

Israeli shells kill 18 in Gaza

The Israeli army said its preliminary investigation indicated it had fired from far away. The army said it was targeting areas where rockets had been fired in recent days at the Israeli cities of Sderot and Ashkelon. Israeli media said an artillery battery had missed its target, a rocket-firing site about half a mile from the town.

In a huge demonstration outside the morgue at the Kamal Adwan hospital in the northern Gaza Strip, thousands called for revenge.

"We are going to fight against the so-called Israel. We are going to launch our rockets; our martyrs are going to sacrifice their lives in the depths of our occupied land," said Nizar Rayan, a **Hamas** leader in northern Gaza. "They will strike in Jaffa, in Haifa, inside Ashdod. The battle will continue. The rifle is not going to be set down. All of us are martyrs in waiting. Revenge is coming."

In a stark change of tactics, the military wing of **Hamas** called on Muslims around the world to attack American targets following the attack.

"America is offering political, financial and logistic cover for the Zionist occupation crimes, and it is responsible for the Beit Hanoun massacre. Therefore, the people and the nation all over the globe are required to teach the American enemy tough lessons," **Hamas** said in a statement sent to the Associated Press.

While critical of the US, **Hamas** has always focused its violent campaign of suicide bombings and rocket attacks on Israeli targets. A spokesman for the political wing of **Hamas**, which leads the Palestinian government, Ghazi Hamad, said the state of Israel should cease to exist but insisted the group had no intention of attacking American targets.

"Our battle is against the occupation on the Palestinian land. We have no interest to transfer the battle," he said. "After this barbaric operation, Israel proved that it's not a humane state. It's a state that believes in killing, and therefore this state should cease to exist."

The **Hamas** political wing, led by Mr Haniyeh, claims it is independent of the military wing. But the two entities both report to the group's secretive leadership, headquartered in Syria, and frequently coordinate with each other.

The Islamic Jihad militant group also called for revenge after the tank attack, seemingly threatening suicide bombings.

"Martyrdom is coming," it said in a statement. "The response will not take long, because the time is ready for punishment, and the time is ready for revenge." Thousands gathered outside hospitals weeping as the bodies arrived. Schoolchildren swept out to the street to protest against the attack as mosques broadcast angry speeches on the street.

Dozens of schoolchildren were trying to storm an empty EU mission building in Gaza City, according to witnesses, throwing stones and bottles. Palestinian security forces tried to prevent them from entering the building.

Rahwi Hamad, 75, said he was awoken by the sound of explosions at about 5.15am (7.15am GMT) and emerged from his home to find body parts and pools of blood in the streets.

"I saw people coming out of the house, bleeding and screaming. I carried a girl covered with blood," he said. "Inside the houses, we evacuated dismembered bodies. We saw legs, hands, parts of heads stuck to the wall. Everything was disgusting. This is the worst, bloody scene I have ever seen."

The deaths come after a more than week-long operation by Israeli forces against Palestinian militants, who are said to be launching rocket attacks over the border from Beit Hanoun.

Last week, two **women** were killed, apparently by Israeli gunfire, as they were making their way to a mosque to aid militants who had taken refuge in the town.

Israeli shells kill 18 in Gaza

End of Document

World Journal

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

June 26, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS;NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 779 words

Body

Health

No-sniff gas could help end abuse

Aboriginals in Labrador are hoping a new fuel that doesn't intoxicate gas sniffers could help solve a persistent problem among young people in their communities. But even though BP has offered the formula free to anyone who promises to produce it, it's still not clear how Opal gas, developed in Australia, could be brought to the Canadian communities that want it. Opal gas was developed as a partial response to the problem of gas-sniffing in aboriginal communities in Australia. The problem is that BP doesn't have a refinery in Canada. BP has said it would be willing to co-operate with another refiner to produce Opal and would even provide the formula free of charge.

Drowning

N.L. man's body found in Alta. lake

FORT MCMURRAY, Alta. - A Newfoundland man's body has been recovered from a northern Alberta lake. Lorne Marshall was found at the bottom of Gregoire Lake, about 30 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray, on Saturday. Police believe he drowned after a canoeing accident June 16, said RCMP Cpl. Tiffany Miller. Marshall's canoe tipped over in the middle of the lake. A female friend who was with him made it to the shore. The 33-year-old Marshall wasn't wearing a life jacket.

Kidnapping

Hamas releases tape of soldier

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Hamas posted an online audio message Monday from an Israeli soldier captured a year ago at an army base near the Gaza Strip, the first sign of life from the young serviceman since he was seized. In the message, posted on the website of the Hamas military wing, Cpl. Gilad Shalit sent greetings to his family and said his health was failing. He also expressed disappointment in the "lack of interest" of the Israeli government in his fate. Shalit's family said they believed the tape to be authentic but that it sounded like their son's statements had been coerced.

Mideast

Israel announces prisoner release

SHARM EL-SHEIK, Egypt - Israel's prime minister promised Monday to free 250 Palestinian prisoners and promised to improve life in the West Bank in an attempt to boost Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas after **Hamas**' takeover in Gaza. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert made the pledges at a summit in this Egyptian Red Sea resort with Abbas and the leaders of Egypt and Jordan. The Arab leaders hope the gathering can lead to a resumption of the long-blocked peace process, rally Palestinian support behind Abbas and isolate **Hamas** after the militant group's victory in Gaza. Olmert did not promise an immediate resumption of peace negotiations, but said the steps he was announcing aimed to prepare the ground for them.

Afghanistan

Forces recapture volatile district

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan - Gunbattles and a bomb attack across Afghanistan killed seven Afghan security forces and 15 suspected insurgents, while NATO- backed Afghan forces recaptured a district that had been taken over by the Taliban in the volatile south, officials said Monday. Afghan forces supported by NATO troops took control of Kandahar province's Ghorak district from Taliban rebels Sunday night after fierce gunbattles. The Defence Ministry said three Afghan soldiers were killed in the operation and 11 wounded. Meanwhile, NATO spokesman Maj. John Thomas said Monday that NATO forces battling Taliban insurgents near the Pakistan border had bombed a building in Pakistan early Saturday, killing around nine civilians.

Drugs

Afghan poppy crop may be record setter

KABUL, Afghanistan - Afghanistan's poppy crop this year could yield even more opium than last year's record harvest because of favourable weather conditions, a United Nations official said Monday. Afghanistan's opium crop grew 59 per cent in 2006 to 165,000 hectares, yielding a record crop of more than 5,500 tonnes, enough to make more than 550 tonnes of heroin - 90 per cent of the world's supply, according to the UN. A significant portion of the profits from the US\$3.1 billion trade is thought to flow to Taliban fighters, who tax and protect poppy farmers and drug runners.

Second World War

Veteran of Iwo Jima dead at 86

RICHFIELD, Minn. - Charles Lindberg, one of the U.S. Marines who raised the first American flag over Iwo Jima in the Second World War, has died. He was 86. Lindberg, who died Sunday, spent decades explaining that it was his patrol, not the one captured in the famous Associated Press photograph by Joe Rosenthal, that raised the first flag as U.S. forces fought to take the Japanese island. Rosenthal's photo of the second flag-raising became one of the most enduring images of the war and the model for the U.S. Marine Corps memorial in Washington. Rosenthal, who died last year, always denied accusations that he staged the photo.

Load-Date: June 26, 2007

Lawsuit Alleges That Yale U. Press Book Links Group to Terrorists

The Chronicle of Philanthropy

May 25, 2007 Friday

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Section: RESEARCH; Pg. 30; Vol. 53; No. 38

Length: 805 words

Byline: JENNIFER HOWARD

Body

CONTESTED CONNECTION: KinderUSA, a nonprofit Muslim-American charitable organization, works with children in Gaza, Lebanon, and other strife-torn areas. Last year a book published by Yale University Press alleged that some of the money it raises winds up in the hands of terrorist groups. Now KinderUSA has slapped both press and author with a libel lawsuit.

The complaint was filed last month in the California Superior Court in Los Angeles and was first reported this month by the New Haven Independent, a Connecticut newspaper.

The complaint alleges that one of the press's authors, Matthew Levitt, defamed KinderUSA by describing it as part of a terrorist-financing network in his book **Hamas**: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad. The Yale press published the book in 2006 and reissued it in paperback this spring.

Mr. Levitt directs a program on intelligence, terrorism, and policy at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, whose members often take a pro-Israel perspective. Both he and the institute are named as defendants in the suit.

According to the complaint, the book "asserts that KinderUSA funds **Hamas**" and "implies that it is connected to the Al Qaeda funding network." The complaint continues: "Statements that indicate that the plaintiff is an organization that funds terrorist or illegal organizations are false and damaging, and constitute libel per se.

Such statements subject the organization to unfair scrutiny or suspicion, damage its ability to raise funds and to recruit and retain volunteers for its charitable mission, and cause irreparable harm to its reputation."

It states that KinderUSA contacted the press and the institute last summer to demand "a public retraction" but was rebuffed. KinderUSA is seeking \$500,000 in compensatory damages and an unspecified amount in punitive damages.

The university press said it was aware of the lawsuit but had not yet seen the complaint.

"We understand that a complaint has been filed by KinderUSA against Yale University Press, Matthew Levitt, and the Washington Institute with regard to the book **Hamas**," Linda B. Klein, the press's intellectual-property and contract director, said in written statement. "The press has not yet been served, but will respond should it be."

Lawsuit Alleges That Yale U. Press Book Links Group to Terrorists

The complaint also says that the press "did not conduct any fact checking in regard to the publication" of Mr. Levitt's book.

In her statement, Ms. Klein said that, "as a matter of course, all Yale University Press books are vetted through a thorough, careful peer-review process."

"We rely on our authors to accurately present material submitted for publication," the statement continued. "The authors of Hamas, Matthew Levitt and the Washington Institute, stand by the material contained in the book and have assured us that they have presented such material accurately."

Alicia Gansz, director of communications for the institute, described the complaint as "meritless" in a written statement sent to The Chronicle on behalf of the institute and Mr. Levitt. "We intend to defend ourselves vigorously and are confident that we will prevail," the statement said. "The book was carefully researched and addresses matters of critical importance to this country."

"We are deeply concerned about the chilling effect lawsuits like this may have on other scholars who are researching similar topics," Ms. Gansz said in the statement, "and we hope that by prevailing in litigation, we will help to create an environment more conducive to an open and honest discussion about topics of current interest."

KinderUSA released a written statement through one of its attorneys, John P. Kilroy, in which Laila Al-Marayati, chairwoman of the organization's Board of Directors, described her group as "a transparent and accountable public charity that works diligently to comply with all applicable state and federal regulations."

"We don't like lawsuits, but we have no choice," Dr. Al-Marayati said. "The language used against us can only be described as malicious."

In an interview last year with The Chronicle of Philanthropy and in a subsequent letter to the editor, Dr. Al-Marayati asserted that KinderUSA had done nothing illegal and had taken steps to ensure that any humanitarian assistance it provided was not illegally diverted.

An obstetrician and gynecologist, Dr. Al-Marayati also serves as spokeswoman for the Muslim Women's League. Last year she and a fellow board member of KinderUSA wrote a commentary for The Washington Post titled "The Crime of Being a Muslim Charity." That essay argued that "the Treasury Department is playing target practice with American Muslim charities."

From 2005 to 2007, Mr. Levitt worked at the Treasury Department as deputy assistant secretary for intelligence and analysis.

An excerpt from Hamas appeared in the May 12, 2006, Chronicle Review.

Load-Date: May 22, 2007

Doom & gloom

MX (Australia)

June 20, 2007 Wednesday

Melbourne Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 12

Length: 236 words

Body

78 DEAD IN MOSQUE BOMBING

A SUSPECTED al-Qaida bomber killed 78 people when he rammed a truck into a Shi'ite mosque in Baghdad today.

He struck just hours after 10,000 US troops began an offensive against the group north of the capital.

A witness said the bomber drove his truck into the Khilani mosque, destroying a wall and part of the interior.

Nine of those killed were women and more than 220 other people were wounded. Rescuers dragged bodies from the mosque while charred remains were visible in burnt-out buses.

MISSILES TARGET TALIBAN BASE

A MISSILE attack, possibly launched by US forces in Afghanistan, killed at least 32 pro-Taliban militants in a Pakistani tribal region near the border today.

The missiles targeted a suspected training base in a village near the mountainous Datta Khel district.

INJURED PALESTINIANS EVACUATED

ISRAEL evacuated half a dozen wounded Palestinians from the Gaza Strip today, but left behind dozens more struggling to escape since Hamas Islamists seized control.

Ambulances rushed victims for treatment in Israeli hospitals, including several wounded in a shootout between Israeli soldiers and Hamas gunmen.

JANIS JOPLIN'S KEYBOARDIST DIES

CANADIAN keyboardist and songwriter Richard Bell, who played with Janis Joplin, has died of cancer in a Toronto hospital aged 61.

Bell, who died after a long battle with multiple myeloma, began playing with Joplin's Full Tilt Boogie Band in 1970.

Load-Date: June 20, 2007

Doom & gloom

End of Document

Book Festival Reviews: At the scene of the crime writers' conversation: Val McDermid & Denise Mina / Nick Cohen

The Scotsman

August 16, 2007, Thursday

3 Festival Edition

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Section: Pg. 5

Length: 401 words

Byline: David Robinson

Body

VAL McDERMID & DENISE MINA

IMAGINE you're out for a night in the pub and the two women sitting opposite just happen to be world-famous crime novelists. They're just in a mellow mood, talking about what they like and hate about their job, and somehow you get to join in the conversation.

Despite the presence of 550 strangers in front of them, that was exactly what last night's session with Val McDermid and Denise Mina felt like. Hair was (metaphorically) let down, confidences were shared, literary passions explained with a rare intimacy. Some of the most enjoyable book festival events happen when friends share the stage, and this was definitely the case here.

So McDermid revealed how one of her former journalist colleagues is convinced she's her heroine Kate Brannigan's feisty best friend when really she was written in as a particularly sleazy journalist. And Mina named a bookselling chain (libel laws won't let us do the same) whose book-buying decisions are apparently decided by two men sitting at either end of a table, one holding up a book at a time and the other saying "Yes" or "No" at random.

Yet it wasn't all casual banter among friends. Sexism in publishing, police bungling in the Rachel Nickell murder case, statistics about paedophile murder ("Just the same now as in 1957," said McDermid. "You're more likely to be run down by the man in the white van as to be abducted by him"), the newspaper cases that had sparked off various books - all were discussed with intelligence, honesty and great good humour.

If you do ever meet these two in a pub, buy them a drink. If they're in this kind of form, you'll be glad you did.

NICK COHEN

IF YOU want your prejudices challenged, Nick Cohen's your man. On Iraq, Hamas and Iran, he swims against the tide of left-wing sentiment, and he makes a case worth answering.

It's this: why did the Left, in 1990-1 as much as in 2003, abandon Iraqi socialists and the rest of Saddam's victims in campaigning against war? Why, even apart from the lies on which the war was based, did it not support them? Why does it listen to antisemitic organisations like Hamas rather than Palestinian feminists, gays and Christians whose freedoms Hamas would jeopardise?

Book Festival Reviews: At the scene of the crime writers' conversation: Val McDermid & Denise Mina / Nick Cohen

Is it blinded by anti-Americanism? Does it appease Islamofascists out of fear of being thought racist? And even if you're not convinced, isn't it odd how few other people are asking these questions? ***

Load-Date: August 17, 2007

End of Document

Leading article: Gaza killings: The blood of innocents

The Guardian - Final Edition

November 9, 2006 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN LEADER PAGES; Pg. 34

Length: 435 words

Body

Israel enjoys overwhelming military superiority over its Palestinian enemies, but there was no military or indeed any other logic to yesterday's killing of 18 people, at least 14 of them members of one sleeping family, in the northern Gaza Strip. International and regional reactions to the carnage were grimly predictable. The US called on Israel to exercise "restraint", noting its "regret" at civilian casualties and the launch of an inquiry into how a residential area had come under artillery fire. The EU said it was "appalled". The Palestinian movement **Hamas** called for swift retaliation. Islamic Jihad promised suicide bombings. Sadly, only the latter statements carried much conviction.

Fifty other Palestinians killed in the preceding week of Israeli operations in the area included civilians as well as fighters who have been provocatively firing home-made Qassam rockets across the border. Yesterday's victims were all civilians and mostly **women** and children. Their deaths will fan the flames of a conflagration in danger of getting out of control.

Experience suggests that even if the Beit Hanoun slaughter turns out to have been accidental, and Palestinians were to accept that, it will still be remembered as an Israeli atrocity. Israel's critics acknowledge that it has the right to defend itself - and it can only be by chance that rockets launched from Gaza since the August 2005 withdrawal have caused only damage and injuries and no Israeli fatalities. But Israel's actions, as in Lebanon this summer, have ignored the obligation to act in proportion to the threat, to avoid civilian casualties, and comply with international humanitarian law, which includes the personal responsibility of commanders for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Louise Arbour, the UN human rights commissioner, should formally remind the Israeli government of those principles when she visits Gaza and Jerusalem shortly.

This violence is not only a terrible reminder of the dangers of deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. It also deepens the crisis further by bringing an unnecessary suspension of talks between **Hamas** and President Mahmoud Abbas on the formation of a national unity government, needed to prompt the US and EU to ease their sanctions and end the debilitating siege of more than a million Gazans. It is hard too in this atmosphere to see progress in negotiations on the release of an Israeli soldier captured by **Hamas**. It bears repeating that there are no military solutions to this conflict. Those who ignore that will always end up staining their hands with the blood of innocents.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

Female suicide bomber, 64, attacks Israelis in Gaza

The Guardian (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island)

November 24, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B5

Length: 372 words

Byline: AP

Body

A 64-year-old Palestinian grandmother blew herself up near Israeli troops sweeping through northern Gaza on Thursday, wounding two soldiers, and eight other Palestinians were killed in a day of clashes and rocket fire.

The militant ***Hamas***, which is in charge of the Palestinian government, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack and identified the bomber as Fatma Omar An-Najar.

Her relatives said she was 64 - by far the oldest of the more than 100 Palestinian suicide bombers who have targeted Israelis over the past six years.

Israeli forces were moving through the Jebaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza on the second day of an operation to stem rocket fire from the coastal strip into southern Israel.

They spotted a woman acting suspiciously, the military said.

Soldiers threw a stun grenade, a weapon that makes a loud noise but causes no damage.

The woman then set off explosives she was carrying, killing herself and slightly wounding two soldiers.

At the compound where her extended family lives near Jebaliya camp, her oldest daughter Fatheya explained the bomber's motives.

"They (Israelis) destroyed her house, they killed her grandson - my son. Another grandson is in a wheelchair with an amputated leg," she said.

Female suicide bombers were a rarity during the first several years of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but that has gradually changed. The last suicide bombing, on Nov. 6, was also carried out by a woman in northern Gaza.

But the past few weeks have seen an increase in militant activity by ***women*** in Gaza who have served as "human shields" defending the homes of militants that Israel has threatened to destroy.

Fatheya said she and her mother had taken part in rally at a Gaza mosque three weeks ago where ***women*** defied a cordon of heavily armed Israeli troops to create a diversion for besieged ***Hamas*** fighters to slip away.

"She and I, we went to the mosque. We were looking for martyrdom," the daughter said.

Female suicide bomber, 64, attacks Israelis in Gaza

Before setting out on her mission, An-Najar filmed the video testament customary for suicide bombers. A copy obtained by The Associated Press showed a petite woman wearing a white headscarf and black dress, toting an assault rifle on her shoulder and standing in front of a **Hamas** wall mural.

Graphic

Palestinian woman Fatma Omar An-Najar, 68, who blew herself up near Israeli soldiers in northern Gaza is seen in this undated photo released by her family in Jebaliya, Thursday. Associated Press photo

Load-Date: November 24, 2006

End of Document

Doom & gloom

MX Brisbane (Queensland, Australia)

August 21, 2007 Tuesday

BRIS Edition

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Section: MX; Pg. 10

Length: 251 words

Body

* BUS PLUNGE LEAVES 29 DEAD

A BUS has plunged off a mountain road into a river bank in northern Pakistan, killing 29 people and injuring 10.

The bus, carrying more than 40 people, crashed in Pakistani-administered Kashmir region 40km north of Muzaffarabad.

* ISRAELI AIRSTRIKE KILLS SIX

AN ISRAELI airstrike in central Gaza killed six Hamas militants, Palestinian officials said.

A car was leaving a Hamas military installation when it was targeted by Israeli aircraft.

* PERU STRUGGLES AFTER QUAKE

PEOPLE left homeless by a devastating earthquake in Peru lined up for hours for blankets, food and water as President Alan Garcia struggled to solve a logistical nightmare in the disaster zone.

An 8.0 magnitude quake killed more than 500 people and destroyed about 34,000 homes last Wednesday.

* COPS NAB SERIAL KILLER SUSPECT

GERMAN police believe they have captured a serial killer responsible for the deaths of at least five young women between 1983 and 1990.

Police in the western German town of Aachen arrested a man, 51, for stealing scrap metal in March. At the time of his arrest, fingerprints and DNA samples were taken and cross-referenced with a central criminal database.

The man has since confessed to five murders.

* BRIDGE COLLAPSE BODY RECOVERED

US DIVERS have recovered another body from the wreckage of the collapsed bridge in Minneapolis, bringing the number of people confirmed dead to 12.

The man was identified as Scott Sathers, a university worker.

Doom & gloom

The search is continuing for the last person missing.

Load-Date: September 27, 2007

End of Document

Israel to keep shelling Gaza

Birmingham Post

November 11, 2006, Saturday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 7

Length: 748 words

Byline: Mildred Dunkley

Body

Israel will keep targeting Palestinian rocket squads in Gaza despite the risk of hitting civilians, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said.

He spoke as tens of thousands of Palestinians buried 18 victims of an Israeli artillery strike.

Olmert said the artillery was meant to hit an orange grove from which troops saw rockets fired seconds earlier, but instead hit homes in Beit Hanoun,.

The military said the results of its inquiry concluded that "the Palestinian civilian casualties were caused by IDF (Israeli army) artillery".

The military statement said the inquiry determined the problem was a "technical failure" in the system that directs the fire. It said the army commander ordered a halt to artillery fire at Gaza until a further check is completed.

Defence Minister Amir Peretz ordered the military to "re-evaluate its policy of artillery fire in Gaza," his ministry said in a statement.

Women collapsed in grief, gunmen fired in the air and a man hoisted his dead baby aloft during the funeral procession in the northern Gaza border town of Beit Hanoun, where several Israeli shells struck a residential area early on Wednesday. All of the dead belonged to a single extended family.

Amid the anguish, moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas picked up the phone and called his main political rival, **Hamas**' supreme leader Khaled Mashaal - a move that could help prevent the Islamic militant group from renewing attacks on Israel and also pave the way for a moderate Palestinian government.

Abbas and Mashaal, who lives in exile in Damascus, Syria, agreed to meet after agreement has been reached on a new government of experts, to be appointed by **Hamas** and Abbas' Fatah movement, said a senior Palestinian official who sat in on the conversation.

Both sides hope that such a government will be acceptable to the West and end a crippling international aid boycott.

Abbas had refused to talk to Mashaal since April, when the **Hamas** leader harshly criticised the Palestinian president in a speech.

Israel to keep shelling Gaza

However, with violence threatening to escalate further after the Beit Hanoun strike and militants calling for revenge, he contacted Mashaal to try to lock up a coalition deal.

A key sticking point is the choice of a new prime minister who has ties to Hamas, but would also be acceptable to the West.

In Jerusalem, Olmert said that while he regrets the latest deaths, Israel will press ahead with strikes against Palestinian militants firing rockets at Israeli border towns.

"The military will continue as long as there will be Qassam shooting," he said, using the name for Hamas' homemade rockets. "We are not going to stop."

"We will take precautions in order to avoid unnecessary mistakes," he said.

"We will do everything in our power to avoid it. I think it would not be serious to promise that it may not happen. It may happen."

Beit Hanoun has been the focus of a week-long Israeli offensive meant to halt rocket the attacks.

The shelling came a day after Israeli ground forces pulled out of Beit Hanoun.

The shells landed as residents were still asleep, and witnesses said many were killed as they fled their homes in panic.

The 18 dead was the highest Palestinian civilian toll in a single incident since the current conflict erupted in September 2000.

The highest toll of Israeli civilians was 29 killed in a Palestinian suicide bombing at a Passover gathering in March 2002.

For Wednesday's funeral, the bodies arrived at the cemetery in a convoy of 18 ambulances which drove from the local hospital through the artillery-scarred cluster of apartment buildings. Cries of "God is greater than Israel and America," punctuated by gunshots, rang out as the bodies were brought out on stretchers.

"I will avenge, I will avenge!" screamed one of the victims' relatives as he fired his weapon, voicing a common sentiment among the mourners.

"The Zionist enemy understands only the language of force and therefore I say, 'an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose,'" chanted Abdel al- Hakim Awad, a Fatah spokesman. "The residents of Sderot, the residents of Ashkelon, even the residents of Tel Aviv, are not going to enjoy security or peace as long as you are suffering, our beloved people in Beit Hanoun."

The freshly dug graves were lined up in a single row, each marked by a concrete block. A Palestinian flag fluttered over each one.

Two Israeli unmanned aircraft buzzed overhead.

All of the dead belonged to the al-Athamnas, a prominent family in town that includes several doctors and professionals.

Graphic

Israel to keep shelling Gaza

A relative carries the body of one-year-old Maram Al-Athamna during her funeral in the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun
Picture, ADEL HANA/AP

Load-Date: November 11, 2006

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Tears, family greet prisoners after release; 256 Palestinians back in West Bank after Israeli government frees them

The Toronto Star
July 21, 2007 Saturday

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Section: WORLD AND COMMENT; Pg. AA01

Length: 739 words

Byline: Oakland Ross, Toronto Star

Dateline: RAMALLAH, West Bank

Body

As the first of seven buses tottered into the presidential compound when the steel gates finally slid open around noon yesterday, the crowd erupted.

Women ululated, men whistled, children waved flags, and hundreds of Palestinians swarmed toward the boxy blue-and-white vehicles bearing 256 security prisoners released earlier in the day by the Israeli government, a gesture aimed at solidifying the regime led by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Young men danced atop the buses under cobalt skies and a radiant sun, as the prisoners reached through the open windows, making victory signs and accepting handshakes, embraces and kisses from their welcomers below.

One teary reunion followed another, as mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, fell upon their liberated offspring or siblings.

"I am very, very happy," declared Sami Salah Rumi, 29, after being reunited with his mother and father, an uncle and a brother.

As for the future: "I want to work in an occupation and get married."

Four years ago, Rumi was sentenced to seven years in prison for being a member of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, Fatah's armed wing.

Like the other prisoners released yesterday, he was obliged by Israeli authorities to sign a statement vowing not to re-offend against Israel's security laws.

In Rumi's case, he will also have to contend with his father, Salah Arad Rumi, 51, a furniture vendor, who believes firmly in peaceful accommodation between Israelis and Palestinians and who yesterday confessed to feeling anger at his son, whose actions four years ago have imposed many hardships and security restrictions upon the family.

"We are not allowed to cross into Israel," said the father, who owns land there. "We are put under all sorts of controls. Of course, we are angry."

Tears, family greet prisoners after release 256 Palestinians back in West Bank after Israeli government frees them

But the overwhelming sentiment at the presidential compound in the West Bank capital yesterday was joy, with many people voicing praise for the man they call Abu Mazen - Abbas's nom de guerre.

"I think all the Palestinians are lining up behind Abu Mazen," said Sami Salah Rumi, enjoying his first day of freedom in four years.

"I support Abu Mazen, although not in everything he does," said Susan Saleh, 31, whose two younger brothers - aged 28 and 30 - were released yesterday. "We want him to enhance peace among Palestinians."

Last month, the frail facade of peace among Palestinians collapsed in blood and ruins after five days of ferocious infighting in the Gaza Strip forced the secular Fatah to retreat to the West Bank, where the organization continues to exercise power. The move leaves Gaza under the control of Hamas, a radical Islamist movement that favours armed struggle against Israel and refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the Jewish state.

Since then, the government of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has been making determined efforts to promote Fatah's fortunes, while shunning Hamas. Yesterday's prisoner release - the largest such initiative in several years and the first since Hamas won legislative elections early last year - is the most dramatic in a range of Israeli measures aimed at shoring up Abbas's moderate but unstable government.

Although there are thousands of Hamas militants among the more than 10,000 Palestinian security prisoners in Israeli jails, none was included in this week's amnesty - a calculated discrimination that upset many of those gathered in the presidential compound in Ramallah yesterday.

"They should release Hamas also," said Fatma Shei, 57, who had come to greet her son, 26-year-old Majdi Abdullah Shei, convicted four years ago of shooting at Israeli soldiers - he failed to hit any - and sentenced to seven years in jail.

"I will hug him," she said, anticipating the moment of their reunion. "I will dance with him."

But as passengers disembarked from the buses, Shei grew increasingly frantic. She pushed her way this way and that through the laughing and cheering throng, desperate to find her own son, but in vain.

Only when the crowd had thinned considerably did Shei come upon her son, standing alone beside the last of the seven buses.

She rushed toward him, silent, arms raised for an embrace.

Clad in khaki fatigues and hiking boots, her bearded, sandy-haired son first took his mother's right arm in both of his.

"Let me kiss your hand, my mother," he said and did so in a stiff and formal way.

Only then did the two fall into each other's arms, as family members tossed candies into the air.

Graphic

AMMAR AWAD REUTERS A Palestinian man is reunited with his family in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday after Israel released 256 Palestinian prisoners. NAYEF HASHLAMOUN Maysoun Abu Aisheh, right, is hugged by her mother upon her arrival at the family house in Hebron yesterday after Israel freed 256 Palestinian prisoners as part of a deal to bolster Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. NAYEF HASHLAMOUN Maysoun Abu Aisheh, right, is hugged by her mother upon her arrival at the family house in Hebron yesterday after Israel freed 256 Palestinian prisoners as part of a deal to bolster Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Tears, family greet prisoners after release 256 Palestinians back in West Bank after Israeli government frees them

Load-Date: July 21, 2007

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After a six-day barrage, Israel leaves Gaza town to count dead

The Independent (London)

November 8, 2006 Wednesday

Fourth Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 24

Length: 590 words

Byline: Sa'id Ghazali in Beit Hanoun and Eric Silver in Jerusalem

Body

The Israeli army withdrew from Beit Hanoun yesterday at the end of a six-day search-and-destroy operation, leaving behind a ravaged Gaza town angrily counting the cost.

A dozen of the 56 Palestinian dead were still being buried in rough, hurriedly assembled open coffins. "Damn the Jews," shouted some among thousands of mourners. "A nation of sacrifice and blood will never kneel," a **Hamas** activist blared through a loudspeaker. Palestinian health officials said that 17 of the dead were civilians.

During an emotional funeral procession, tens of thousands of mourners filed behind ambulances carrying the bodies.

Women wailed as the dead were brought out to the streets on stretchers draped with Palestinian flags. Children ran alongside the procession and crowds chanted "God is great", Israeli troops, who had invaded the northern Gaza Strip to stop militants launching home-made Qassam rockets at their border towns and villages, killed eight more militants and a woman civilian yesterday in skirmishes after the withdrawal. They included Nahala Shanti, 45, the sister-in-law of the **Hamas** legislator who organised a human shield of hundreds of **women** that enabled 60 gunmen to escape an Israeli siege. A tank shelled the MP's house after soldiers said that militants fired two rocket-propelled grenades at them.

A green-topped minaret was all that remained of the 700-year-old an-Nasr Mosque, where the fugitive gunmen had defied Israeli bulldozers for 19 hours last Friday. "This is a movie that should be seen by Arab leaders and George Bush," a woman in black head-scarf protested to anyone who would listen.

"They have destroyed the house of God. If it was a synagogue, the whole world would condemn it."

The town's 43,000 inhabitants have paid a heavy price. The invasion destroyed 25 houses and damaged 200 more, as well as 20 lorries and other vehicles. Sewage flowed over muddy roads yesterday; trees were uprooted; electricity poles were tilting and buckled; telephone lines hung loose.

After a six-day barrage, Israel leaves Gaza town to count dead

Zakaria Nasser, a travel agent, found his two buildings severely damaged when he returned to work. "I have lost all that I have earned and saved for many years," he lamented amid the rubble.

Sufian Hamad, the town clerk, estimated the damage could reach \$15m (£7.5m). "This is worse than the 1967 war," he said. But he did not think the devastation would turn people against the militants, as the Israelis hoped. "Do you want me to stop the resistance while the Israelis are killing us?" he asked.

Ismail Haniyeh, the **Hamas** Prime Minister, has pledged \$1m to rehabilitate Beit Hanoun and residents criticised Mahmoud Abbas, the more moderate Fatah President, for doing nothing for the town. "I am a Fatah supporter," Mr Hamad confided, "but this war against Beit Hanoun has made **Hamas** stronger". As four Qassam rockets hit the Israeli coastal town of Ashkelon yesterday, damaging a school, the army was drawing up its own balance sheet. Major Avital Leibovitz, a military spokeswoman, said: "The object of this operation was not to stop the Qassams 100 per cent. The point was to try to minimise the launchings and to target the rocket infrastructure. We have attained that goal."

Israel's ground and air forces killed dozens of fighters for the loss of one Israeli soldier. They hit nine rocket launching cells, including some responsible for manufacturing Qassams. The army captured or destroyed what it described as "large quantities" of arms and ammunition, including rocket launchers, anti-tank missile launchers, AK-47 rifles and many grenades.

Load-Date: November 8, 2006

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hobart Mercury (Australia)

April 11, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 17

Length: 222 words

Body

N Korean deadline

THE US says \$30.6 million frozen in a Macau bank will be released to North Korea, and it is now up to Pyongyang to start shutting down a nuclear reactor before Saturday's deadline.

Obama shuns Hillary

US Democratic senator Barack Obama made it clear yesterday that he was not running to be Hillary Clinton's vice-president. "You don't run for second," he told TV host David Letterman.

BHP loses US bid

CALIFORNIA'S Lands Commission has rejected BHP Billiton's bid to lease land off the state's southern coast for a \$981 million liquefied natural gas terminal, citing environmental concerns.

China trade warning

CHINA hit back yesterday at a US decision to file a WTO complaint against it for copyright abuse, warning it would damage trade relations between the countries.

Hamas plot foiled

ISRAEL said yesterday it had arrested 19 **Hamas** militants from the West Bank who had planned to set off a 100kg car bomb in Tel Aviv during the Passover holiday.

Russian tipple triples

RUSSIA'S average annual alcohol consumption has reached 15 litres a person, nearly tripling the 1990 average of 5.4 litres, the country's consumer rights office says.

Shock jock banned

US radio networks have suspended shock jock Don Imus's show after he described a mostly black **women's** basketball team as looking like a bunch of "nappy-headed hos".

Load-Date: April 11, 2007

NEWS IN BRIEF

End of Document

Palestinian newswomen face threat of beheading

The Straits Times (Singapore)

June 5, 2007 Tuesday

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Length: 429 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich, For The Straits Times

Body

JERUSALEM - AMID fears that growing religious extremism may turn the Gaza Strip into a Taleban-like zone, an underground group has threatened to behead female news presenters who do not wear strict Islamic dress.

'If necessary, we will behead and slaughter to preserve the spirit and morals of our people,' said a leaflet issued by the Righteous Swords of Islam in a weekend threat to presenters on the Palestinian Authority TV station.

The leaflet said the women presenters were corrupting Palestinian society by appearing on television with their faces uncovered.

The group is one of three Al-Qaeda-affiliated organisations which have emerged in Gaza over the past two years.

These groups have taken responsibility for the bombings of more than 30 Internet cafes, music shops and pool halls during this period. The explosions have taken place at night when there is less likelihood of death or injury, but extensive damage has been caused.

'These are extremely dangerous groups which are trying to take Palestinian society back to the Dark Ages,' said a Palestinian Authority official in Ramallah on the West Bank, who warned that existing radical groups could be replaced by even more extreme fanatic groups.

The threat to the women announcers was condemned by the armed wing of the secular Fatah, the Al-Aksa Martyr's Brigade.

'We will not allow anyone to harm our national institutions,' said a brigade spokesman.

About 50 female TV anchors and workers marched on Sunday to protest against the threat.

'Shame on you,' said Ms Sally Abed, a Palestinian news anchor, addressing the Islamist group. 'The people working in this institution are your people - if it is not your sister, it is your mother,' she was reported as saying by the Associated Press.

In many parts of the Muslim world, conservative policies keep women out of TV anchor positions or dictate they wear headscarves on air.

Most of the 15 women broadcasters on Palestine TV wear headscarves. But they also wear make-up and Western clothing, which is not considered observant by extremists.

Palestinian newswomen face threat of beheading

Meanwhile, reports that **Hamas** leaders were inclined to seek a renewal of the ceasefire with Israel broken two weeks ago by the launching of rockets from Gaza were apparently confirmed. 'We may agree to a one-year ceasefire,' **Hamas** deputy political leader Moussa Abu Marzouk told the Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram on Saturday.

Hamas has launched almost 300 rockets at Israel in the past two weeks, most of them hitting in and around the town of Sderot, where three people have been killed and others wounded.

abra@netvision.net.il

Load-Date: June 4, 2007

End of Document

Gazans stuck at filthy border

Herald Sun (Australia)

June 21, 2007 Thursday

FIRST Edition

Copyright 2007 Nationwide News Pty Limited All Rights Reserved

Section: NEWS; Pg. 33

Length: 244 words

Body

AP

EREZ CROSSING -- Israel's new Defence Minister yesterday ordered the army to allow into Israel any of the hundreds of Gazans holed

up at a fetid, concrete-lined crossing who might desperately need medical treatment.

About 200 Gazans, petrified by the chaos in the **Hamas**-controlled coastal strip, have been camped for six days in the concrete tunnel on the Palestinian side of the Erez crossing with Israel, pleading with Israeli authorities to grant them safe passage to the West Bank.

Hamas seized control of Gaza last week after vanquishing security forces allied with the rival Fatah faction, leaving many Gazans petrified that chaos and further violence will ensue.

Some in the tunnel fear their lives are in danger because of their Fatah loyalties; others seek a better life than volatile Gaza can offer.

Among their number are people wounded in gun battles between the rival factions.

With no sanitary facilities at the tunnel, which is designed as a secure crossing to screen potential suicide bombers, the stench of urine and sweat has permeated the air.

Food and water were in short supply as **women**, children and young men sat waiting on mats or concrete.

The situation at the crossing was expected to be one of the first issues Defence Minister Ehud Barak tackled after he took over the job this week.

Yesterday, he instructed officials to let in humanitarian cases at the crossing.

No numbers were specified, and guidelines for determining urgency were not released.

Load-Date: June 20, 2007

Gazans stuck at filthy border

End of Document

The suicide sisters; Armed to the teeth, these women pledge to blow themselves up defending the Gaza Strip if Israeli troops launch an invasion

Daily Mail (London)

May 22, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: ED 1ST; Pg. 4

Length: 607 words

Byline: MATTHEW KALMAN

Body

CLAD head to toe in black and clutching submachine guns and automatic rifles, they vowed to die killing Israelis.

The women, at once sinister and yet awkward in their long dresses and munitions belts, say they will blow themselves up in attacks on Israeli soldiers if the Gaza Strip is invaded.

They gathered as Israel pounded the Strip with airstrikes yesterday in response to weeks of rocket attacks from Palestinian fanatics.

'If the Israelis try to invade northern Gaza Strip, we will defend our land and our homes,' one of the women declared as the group gathered at the Jabalya refugee camp north of Gaza City.

'We will turn our bodies into living bombs against the Israeli army,' she added and demanded revenge against Israeli 'crimes' carried out against the Palestinians.

The women belong to the military wing of Palestine's ruling Hamas party. A day earlier rival militants of Islamic Jihad released a video in which dozens of women said they were 'eagerly awaiting' the chance to become suicide bombers. One said she would like to be the first to commit suicide on behalf of the Palestinian resistance.

Four Islamic Jihad gunmen were killed in their car as Israeli aircraft struck back at the fanatics.

Weapons stores were also struck.

Islamic Jihad, which has carried out hundreds of rocket attacks and suicide bombings in recent years, threatened 'earthshaking' revenge.

The barrage of Palestinian rockets continued unabated. At least 12 rockets were fired at Israel yesterday, the military and Israeli media said, bringing the total over the past week to more than 150.

In the town of Sderot a woman of 35 was killed when a rocket hit her car yesterday evening. At least 14 other people have been injured by the homemade rockets over the past week, according to medical officials.

Sderot has been particularly hard hit and yesterday's strike came during a meeting in the city between Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni and EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana. Thousands of residents have fled the city.

The suicide sisters Armed to the teeth, these women pledge to blow themselves up defending the Gaza Strip if Israeli troops launch an invasion

'No nation would tolerate the consistent rocketing of its citizens, and neither will Israel,' said David Baker, an Israeli government spokesman.

'We will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to bring these attacks to an end and to prevent terror from being inflicted upon the residents of Sderot and the western Negev.' **Hamas** militants went underground, fearing more Israeli reprisals similar to the attack on a house on Sunday which killed eight relatives of a **Hamas** legislator.

They were instructed by their leaders to avoid using mobile phones or travelling by car.

More than 40 Palestinians have been killed since Israel decided last week to start responding to the rocket attacks. There were calls among politicians yesterday to start targeting the political leaders of **Hamas**.

U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones urged Israel to do its best to avoid harming civilians.

British travellers in Israel were warned against going within three miles of the Gaza Strip, because of the danger from rockets.

Gordon Brown was yesterday urged to stand firm against domestic political pressures and maintain troop numbers in Iraq.

Iraqi foreign minister Hoshiyar Zebari said progress was being made in Iraq since the latest security crackdown began in mid-February, but it was important there were no signs of weakness with coalition forces.

He said he was confident there would be no 'dramatic changes' when Mr Brown take over as Prime Minister.

He spoke as another British soldier was killed in a convoy attack in Basra.

The unnamed soldier's death brings the total number of British military fatalities since the hostilities in Iraq began to 149.

Graphic

DEATH WISH: HOLDING UP THEIR GUNS AND HIDDEN BEHIND THEIR VEILS, THE **WOMEN** PLEDGE THEIR LIVES AS SUICIDE BOMBERS. IN FRONT OF THEM ARE ROCKETS LIKE THOSE WHICH HAVE PLAGUED ISRAEL ARMED TO THE TEETH, THESE **WOMEN** PLEDGE TO BLOW THEMSELVES UP DEFENDING THE GAZA STRIP IF ISRAELI TROOPS LAUNCH AN INVASION

Load-Date: May 22, 2007

Human shields prevent Israeli air strikes in Gaza

The Independent (London)

November 20, 2006 Monday

Fourth Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 22

Length: 419 words

Byline: Eric Silver in Jerusalem

Body

Israel is reviewing its advance warnings policy after calling off two air strikes when civilians formed "human shields" around the homes of Palestinian militants in Gaza.

A similar incident occurred two weeks ago in Beit Hanoun, in northern Gaza when hundreds of women took to the streets to shield Palestinian gunmen besieged in a mosque. Speaking after the two incidents in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya at the weekend, an Israeli army spokesman said: "We warn people in advance because we don't want to harm innocent civilians, but after they took advantage of it we will have to think again."

The incidents did not deter the air force from firing a missile at a car driven by two Hamas militants in Gaza City. Israel said they were senior members of a unit producing Qassam rockets, which are used against Israeli border towns and villages.

Palestinian witnesses reported that the militants fled unharmed just before the missile struck, but nine wounded passers-by were treated in hospital. Dr Jomma al-Saqa said that an 80-year-old man who was driving a donkey cart was killed. Two others were in serious condition. Four teenagers were treated for shrapnel wounds. Ishmail Haniyeh, the Palestinian Prime Minister, joined the human shield which gathered early yesterday outside the home of Mohammed Baroud, a leader of the Popular Resistance Committees. Standing on a flat roof decorated with black and green militia flags, Mr Haniyeh said: "We are so proud of this national stand. It is the first step towards protecting our homes, the homes of our children."

Answering calls from local mosques, dozens of supporters, some brandishing AK-47 assault rifles, were still guarding the roof last night. Working 12-hour shifts, they said they were prepared for a long vigil. A band of women, led by Jamila al-Shanti, a Hamas MP, joined the family inside Baroud's home.

Israel is increasingly frustrated at its failure to stop the Qassam assault, which killed a woman in the town of Sderot last week. Hamas and Islamic Jihad launched seven of the home-made rockets into the western Negev yesterday, bringing the weekend tally to 20. Three civilians were wounded. About 1,000 Sderot residents have been given a week's holiday in the Red Sea resort of Eilat as the guests of Arcady Gaydamak, a Russian-Israeli millionaire.

Human shields prevent Israeli air strikes in Gaza

The army has tried air strikes, shelling and ground incursions to stop the rockets. A missile-defence system is on the drawing board, but is not expected to be deployed for at least five years.

Load-Date: November 20, 2006

End of Document

Before summit, a Rice shuttle; She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

February 19, 2007 Monday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly.com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 841 words

Byline: Glenn Kessler, Washington Post

Body

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice shuttled yesterday between meetings with Palestinian and Israeli leaders, seeking to lay the groundwork for a successful three-way summit today in the face of Israeli anger at a new Palestinian government that includes **Hamas**.

Rice made it clear she was staking her reputation as secretary of state on her ability to leverage the talks into a new effort at forging Middle East peace that includes not only the two parties but also neighboring Arab nations.

"I am committed to this," Rice told a group of U.S. reporters last night. "This takes hard work. It takes patience. It takes perseverance. It takes getting up after a bad day and trying to make a better day. And that's what I am going to do. As long as I am secretary of state, that's what I am going to do. And that's what the president wants me to do."

The talks are officially "informal discussions" on what Rice calls a "political horizon" for a possible Palestinian state. By all accounts, Rice faces daunting odds.

Both Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas are politically weakened, making it difficult for either side to make tough compromises. Olmert also is feuding openly with his foreign minister, Tzipi Livni; she is also Olmert's chief political rival, making him less interested in backing diplomacy that might enhance her position.

Abbas, meanwhile, recently agreed to have his Fatah party join a new government dominated by **Hamas**, which is dedicated to the destruction of Israel. Israeli officials, in particular Olmert, have condemned the new government, saying it cannot be a partner in peace.

Yesterday, Olmert touted a phone conversation he had Friday with President Bush, in which the Israeli leader said they agreed to shun the Palestinian government unless it recognized Israel, renounced violence, and committed to previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

Those principles had earlier been outlined as conditions for the government's recognition by the mediating group known as the Quartet, made up of the United States, the European Union, the United Nations and Russia.

Palestinian officials said Abbas, in a meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah, asked Rice to promote the idea of launching regular, exploratory talks on the contours of a Palestinian state. Palestinian officials reported she favored it, but Olmert was skeptical.

Rice declined to say whether she raised the concept when she met later yesterday with Olmert. "We have to be open to determining how to explore the political horizon," she said. "But I don't want to get ahead of the discussions tomorrow."

Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of **Hamas**, who will remain in his post, has said he hopes to assemble the government in the next three weeks and only then will outline the specifics of its policies. But **Hamas** officials have made clear that the new government will not explicitly recognize Israel, among the Quartet's conditions for restoring vital economic aid.

Abbas assigned Haniyeh last week to form a power-sharing government that "respects" previously signed agreements that recognize Israel. The guideline was set out in the Mecca accord reached this month between Fatah and **Hamas**.

Rice has walked a careful line in recent days, saying that thus far it appeared the new government would fall short of the Quartet's demands but that no decisions would be made until the Palestinian government was formed.

Israel's Top Cop Resigns

Israel's police commander resigned yesterday, after a government commission said he ignored ties between senior officers and underworld figures and failed to ensure a thorough investigation into the 1999 killing of a suspected crime boss.

The resignation of Moshe Karadi was the latest in a series of public scandals and controversies involving Israel's top leadership - including rape allegations against the president and questions over the prime minister's role in a bank sale.

Commission chairman Vardi Zeiler, a retired judge, said Karadi should lose his job for the incomplete investigation and for ignoring ties between senior police officers and top organized-crime figures. Karadi was not police commissioner at the time of the killing but was a departmental head.

Karadi insisted that the allegations against him were untrue but said he was resigning to "set a personal example" and spare the police the harm of a scandal.

Other recent government controversies:

Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz recently resigned as military chief of staff after coming under withering criticism for the flawed summer war against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

President Moshe Katsav, now on a leave of absence, has been accused of preying on **women** who worked for him, and faces allegations of rape, sexual assault and abuse of power.

Former Justice Minister Haim Ramon was recently convicted in a separate sexual-misconduct case.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is under investigation for his

role in the sale of a government-controlled bank, and accused of improprieties in a string of real estate deals.

Associated Press

Before summit, a Rice shuttle She traveled between Israeli and Palestinian leaders a day before talks. "I am committed to this," she said.

Load-Date: February 19, 2007

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**Gaza - Tears of the mothers in a nation the outside world has forgotten;
Israel has taken their land and killed their children, say the mothers of Gaza.
Now, since trading borders with Israel were closed, the economy is on the
brink of collapse and Gaza's 1.4 million citizens face humanitarian disaster**

Sunday Tribune (Ireland)

July 8, 2007

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Section: NEWS; Pg. N07

Length: 2421 words

Byline: Mick McCaffrey, Mark Condren

Body

Monday, 7.30am

We knew we were close to the border when the taxi driver turned off his radio and stopped talking. He was visibly nervous and uncomfortable being anywhere near Palestine. The look of relief on his face after he dropped us off was clear. Tens of thousands of Palestinians used to go through Erez each morning to go to work in Israel. Today the massive terminal building is empty. The only people waiting to gain entry are a family of four. The Palestinian couple and their two children now live in America. The man's 90-year-old mother is about to die and she wants to see her son for the final time. They are refused entry. The woman tells us they have been trying to get into Gaza for four days. We hand our press accreditation to the **female** soldier and are told to wait for a decision. The army eventually refuse to let us cross. They are unhappy that we do not have official government press passes. Our National Union of Journalists press cards are supposed to be recognised across the world. We are told we will have to get a taxi to Jerusalem to apply for Israeli accreditation. This means a six-hour round trip.

3pm

We arrive back at Erez. The Palestinian family is still there. The mother takes her two-year-old daughter to go to the toilet in nearby wasteland. It is 32 degC and there is nowhere for them to shelter. The soldiers are happy with our press cards and we are allowed to cross the border after a number of security checks. I phone our 'fixer', a local who is hired to look after journalists and ensure their safety. He tells me he can't pick us up and we will have to get a taxi to our hotel. You are at your most vulnerable when you cross the border and face the real possibility of kidnapping. BBC journalist Alan Johnston was snatched 112 days ago and has been filmed with a bomb strapped to his body. It's about a 500-metre walk past the buffer zone into Gaza. It felt far longer as we walked nervously into the unknown. We are immediately surrounded by over a dozen porters, all eager to carry our bags. We are herded into a taxi and the driver smiles and tells us we will be safe and not to worry. Needless to say we are extremely worried.

4.03pm

We arrive at the Beach Hotel, which is billed as the safest hotel in the Gaza Strip. We had originally booked into another hotel but were warned our safety could not be guaranteed there so we changed our minds. The taxi journey

Gaza - Tears of the mothers in a nation the outside world has forgotten Israel has taken their land and killed their children, say the mothers of Gaza. Now, sin....

took us past filthy streets and the rubble of buildings shelled by the Israelis. Locals drive battered cars or ride donkeys with carts. The receptionist laughs when we ask if there are any other international journalists here. He tells us they have all gone and do not stay at night in Gaza anymore because it is too dangerous. The Department of Foreign Affairs does not recommend that Irish citizens travel to Gaza and were not able to help us plan this trip. I get a phone call from a contact in the UN. He says there is intelligence to suggest another foreign journalist will be snatched because earlier today Hamas arrested two of the criminal gang suspected of kidnapping Alan Johnston. This does little to steady the nerves. We go to the hotel bar for a much-needed pint. We are told Hamas will not allow alcohol into Gaza so the city is dry. It's going to be a long night. I lock myself in my room and turn on the shower. The water comes out black. It is going to be a very long night.

Tuesday, 7.30am

We met with John Ging last night and he arranged for his organisation, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), to bring us on a tour of Gaza. We are picked up by Ging's assistant, Dustin Okazaki. We also have an interpreter, a local UNRWA expert, driver and a close protection bodyguard. UNRWA officials always travel in convoys for security reasons and are accompanied by the local Hamas police, the ESF. Hamas drove the Fatah ruling party out of the city last month and are now in charge. Hamas are far more extreme than Fatah and are regarded as terrorists by Israel. Seven ESF policemen armed with rifles also travel in the convoy. The reality for UNRWA is that they have to work with whoever runs the city. Hamas might not be acceptable to the international community but UNRWA wouldn't be able to function if it was to get involved in the ever-changing politics of the Middle East.

8am

We arrive at Beach Camp, a refugee camp with 80,000 residents. About 1.4 million people live in the Gaza strip and 1.1 million of these are refugees. The humanitarian situation is so bad it is now practically impossible to distinguish ordinary houses from refugee houses.

Refugee camps here are not like you would imagine. All eight camps were built in 1948 and have developed since then into what can only be described as shanty towns. Most families have houses, or at least rooms, but the poverty in the city is almost absolute. We went to a complex of 14 flats which houses around 65 members of the Baker family. The Bakers are Fatah supporters. On 13 June, during Hamas's purge of the city, armed police called to the flats and rounded up everybody. The four male Bakers were brought to a local mosque while Hamas police looted all the flats and then set the complex alight. The head of the family, Mohammed Baker, told me Hamas shot two Baker women in the legs and when they were being brought to hospital in a taxi other Hamas police stopped the car and shot the women in the head. There are still bloodstains and the remnants of mines sit in the basement of the complex. The 60 or so of the family still left now live in one small apartment.

8.50am

Khalid Shahim owns one of the few shops still open in Beach Camp. Only about 15% of his stock is now delivered because the trading border has been closed by the Israelis. Every day for the last 18 months he has given credit of around EUR300 to local people who cannot afford to pay him. All his savings are almost gone and he will have to close his business in two months' time. "I understand the peoples' circumstances and I sympathise with them. My shop could be bombed so why not distribute the food? I can't afford any more credit but I still give it." There is a severe lack of wheat and flour in Gaza because it is imported. The main staple of people's diet is bread and it provides the majority of the daily calorie intake. The health of local people will begin to suffer if the border is not reopened for trade soon.

10.10am

The UNRWA food distribution centre at Beach Camp feeds 180,000 people in two-month cycles. Every food pack contains flour, rice, sugar, sunflower oil, whole milk and lentils. The majority of refugees rely almost totally on this assistance. There are hundreds of local people here collecting their two months' worth of food. Cars are packed to

Gaza - Tears of the mothers in a nation the outside world has forgotten Israel has taken their land and killed their children, say the mothers of Gaza. Now, sin....

overflow, donkeys are given heavy loads and men walk down the street with huge sacks of flour. Hazem Kaloub used to work in the Palestinian Authority's security services but lost his job like many other PA men. Around 100,000 of these are fed by UNRWA and the people who still work for the PA haven't been paid in 15 months but still go to work each day. Kaloub has a wife and seven children.

"Life here is very difficult. We have nothing to feed our people with, I cannot feed my family. I used to be a policeman, I have nothing now. UNRWA is doing a very good thing for us. We can eat but it's not enough to survive totally but it really helps. I can't get a job, I'm frustrated, we are all frustrated. There should be an end to this, life shouldn't continue like this. This is no life." Although women are treated with less respect than men in the Muslim faith, they have strong opinions. Azizh Abunahi is 70 years old and six of her seven sons have been killed by the Israeli army. "UNRWA is of great assistance and gives us food to eat. If not we'd have no way of living. Israel has taken our land and killed our children. They are all we have. I hope with God's help that things will end and that God will support the Arabs and defeat the disbelievers."

1.26pm

The UN is only too aware that if young Palestinian children are not educated they will end up as the next generation of suicide bombers targeting Israel. UNRWA has set up Summer Games, a play camp for 192,000 Gaza youngsters. There are no playing fields here, no cinemas, nothing to keep the children busy. The only thing they have to amuse them is the sea - and raw sewerage is pumped in there. Summer Games consists of art classes, educational learning and sports and takes place six days a week. The children are picked up at their refugee camps each morning and bussed to games. I met a group of young girls painting pictures. Shaimaa Abed (13) and her friend Ghadeer invited me to paint with them. They painted birds, the sea and the Palestinian flag. They asked me to draw the Irish flag and taught me phrases in Arabic. Females cannot mix freely because of their religion and they had never played games before. Last month the refugee camp where Shaimaa and Ghadeer are from was the scene of vicious street fighting as Hamas and Fatah killed each other. The two terrified girls hid in their shacks as they heard the constant sound of gunfire outside. Now they are laughing and playing like normal children. UNRWA knows that if things are to ever change in Gaza then programmes like Summer Games need to continue.

3.02pm

We went to a meeting with 12 of Gaza's most influential businessmen. The border crossing at Karni is the only trading crossing but it has not been opened by Israel since 11 June. This has meant factories manufacturing furniture, clothes and other textiles have not been able to fulfil their contracts with Israeli customers. Orders are finished and on the back of trucks ready to be exported but the border is practically permanently closed. Unemployment in Gaza stands at 36% and the last month has seen hundreds of layoffs. The clothing factory owned by Maged Khldim usually employs 240 people. He has laid every single worker off. Every businessman tells the same story. If Karni is not reopened over the next few weeks they will all go permanently out of business and their customers will desert Gaza and the economy will collapse.

4.18pm

Jabalia Camp in northern Gaza is home to 120,000 people. UNRWA operates 36 schools and several health centres here and a rehousing project is under way but this has been halted because raw materials cannot be imported through Karni crossing. Fayez Karch is waiting to be rehoused. He has nine children and lives in a three-roomed house. The whole family sleeps in one bedroom and the stove and toilet are in the same room. Fayez offers us a share of the meal he is eating with his large family. His hospitality is typical of the Gaza people. The smell of urine in the house is strong. He had hoped to leave this place by the end of the summer but that will not happen now. We are brought to see a finished house. It is 109sq m and would rival any new apartment in Ireland. It cost UNRWA just \$16,964 to design and manufacture. If the border was reopened tomorrow dozens of families could move into houses like this in just four months' time.

5.45pm

Gaza - Tears of the mothers in a nation the outside world has forgotten Israel has taken their land and killed their children, say the mothers of Gaza. Now, sin....

On 27 March a cesspool wall at Umm Nasser collapsed onto a community of Bedouins releasing a tsunami of raw sewerage. Five people literally drowned in a massive lake of human waste. The lake contains three million cubic metres of sewerage and children play beside it ignoring the indescribable smell. We wanted to get out and take photos but our Hamas police escort said they could not come with us because the land was too exposed. They said if the Israeli army saw them in an open area they would launch an operation to kill them. We did not stop for photos.

6.32pm

One of the most controversial actions Israel has embarked on in Gaza in recent years left 18 members of the same family dead last November. A "technical failure" resulted in an apartment block being destroyed by heavy tank fire. Ramiz al-Athamna (31) lost his wife and two daughters in that attack in Beit Hanoun. His girls were aged three and eight months. Ramiz is now deaf in one ear and his eight-year-old son Abdullah had to have his leg amputated in the US. He is too upset to talk. His brother, Dr Ali al-Athamna told me: "My family all suffer from depression. It destroyed all our lives. We haven't got over it yet, I saw it all. The Israelis shot my family in the head as they tried to escape." The apartment block has not been fully repaired yet and there are gaping holes in walls from the shelling. Giant posters dedicated to the 18 dead, who were mostly women and children, are on every wall. The al-Athamna family are eager to show us around and shout and cry as they recount the night of the tragedy. We go on to the roof to assess the damage from above but have to leave because it is not safe to be on top of buildings so close to the border. From Beit Hanoun, Palestinian militants fire rockets into Israel and spending too long on buildings could literally be a fatal mistake. As we prepare to leave, 20-year-old Elham al-Athamna gives me her email address and asks me to tell the world their story. Her three brothers died.

Wednesday 5.50am

We are awoken by a call to tell us Alan Johnston has been freed. We'd slept right through this sensational development. It is not surprising given the lack of press facilities in Gaza. Before we could react, Johnston had been whisked off to Jerusalem where he spoke with great dignity about his terrifying ordeal. Massive signs have started appearing on the street from Hamas saying: "Journalists and our visitors are safe now." That's not very reassuring so we head for Jerusalem to play catch-up on the story.

Just how unsafe and unstable Gaza can be was illustrated as we approached the Erez crossing. As we made our way with a porter through the buffer zone we heard the unmistakable crackle of a rifle being fired. We quickened our pace and I glanced into the buffer zone and saw two young children in the distance. We looked to the porter for reassurance but when he started running we feared the worst. Luckily the terminal building was only about 50 yards away. As we got to the main door another shot sounded.

We later found out the kids had been trying to steal some wire in the buffer zone and the Israelis were warning them off by firing over their heads. Whatever the reasons for the gunfire the experience was frightening and when the reinforced steel door opened to allow us back onto Israeli soil I don't think I've ever been as relieved.

Load-Date: July 11, 2007

Israeli arms expert slams Gaza shelling

The Toronto Star

November 9, 2006 Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A01

Length: 1079 words

Byline: Mitch Potter, Toronto Star

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

One of the main architects of the Israeli weapons industry last night called on his government to end the tactic of artillery bombardment of the Gaza Strip after a volley of errant shells rained on civilian homes, killing 19 Palestinians.

Arms expert Bonen Zeev called the weapons system "too inaccurate to expect no civilian casualties."

The 15-minute Israeli cannon barrage over the hard-hit northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun killed 16 members of a single Palestinian family, the al-Athamnehs, including eight children aged 4 to 17 and seven women.

Several of the victims were killed in their sleep when the first of the shells blasted into two houses belonging to the Athamneh clan. The rest were cut down by shrapnel from 11 additional shell strikes after rushing outside to escape the early morning bombardment, which came just hours after the Israel Defence Force announced it was withdrawing from the besieged town after a weeklong hunt for Palestinian rocket launch crews.

Israeli leaders expressed regret and launched an immediate investigation into the circumstances of the attack, which injured 53 Palestinians, making it the worst single-day tragedy of its kind in four years. Palestinian leaders declared a three-day strike of mourning, amid vows of revenge from militant leaders in Gaza, the West Bank and Damascus.

The bloody scene at Beit Hanoun was eerily reminiscent of the explosion last June that killed eight members of a Palestinian family enjoying a picnic on a Gaza beach, an event that soon spiralled into tit-for-tat kidnappings and counterattacks that culminated eventually in Israel's war with the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

A probe of the beach blast cleared the Israeli army of any wrongdoing, concluding a Palestinian-planted explosive was the likely cause.

Amid widespread international condemnation yesterday, military officials appeared to acknowledge responsibility for the shelling, which they described as "preventative" fire intended to strike a suspected Palestinian Qassam rocket launch site some 500 metres from the town.

Zeev, widely regarded as a founder of the Israeli military-industrial complex, told the Toronto Star Israel should end its practice of firing artillery into Gaza, calling the weapons system "too inaccurate to expect no civilian casualties."

Israeli arms expert slams Gaza shelling

"Artillery is a statistical weapon," said Zeev, using a military euphemism for devices designed to launch multiple projectiles over a wide area in the hope at least one will find its intended target.

"As such, it just isn't accurate. You feed in the co-ordinates, and 'dumb shells' fly, often 12 at a time. It is a mistake to use such weapons in built-up areas with a lot of civilians because it doesn't have the precision. No matter how precise your information is, mistakes can happen."

Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz yesterday halted the artillery fire, pending the outcome of an IDF probe, which is expected to provide preliminary answers as early as today.

The chorus of international concern was led by Alvaro de Soto, the UN Special Co-ordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, who said he was "shocked and appalled" at the shelling of Beit Hanoun, noting it came after assurances from Israeli officials that the weeklong IDF operation was coming to an end.

Israeli officials offered medical care for the wounded.

In a show of solidarity, Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas and President Mahmoud Abbas of the rival Fatah movement arrived together at one Shifa Hospital to donate blood for the wounded.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat condemned the killings, calling them "war crimes" that are certain to undermine Palestinian attempts to unite the militant Hamas party and secular Fatah movements under a unity government in the hope of resuming a political process with Israel.

"Israel must be told that its actions will not go unchecked and unpunished by the world. Palestinian lives are no less precious than Israeli, American or any other lives," he said.

Israel peace organizations, including B'Tselem and the Israel chapter of Physicians for Human Rights, called on the Israeli government to open a criminal investigation into the shelling.

Citing statistics showing as many as 96 Palestinian children have been killed in Gaza Strip during 2006, Physicians for Human Rights has joined other human rights groups to petition the Israeli High Court to outlaw artillery fire into the densely populated coastal territory.

Though Israel's operations in Gaza are intended to staunch the flow of homemade Qassam rockets into Israel, the country last night braced for a wave of deadlier Palestinian violence amid warnings from nearly every militant faction. Israeli officials were today expected to rule on whether to cancel a controversial gay pride parade scheduled for tomorrow in Jerusalem amid concerns an expected confrontation between marchers and opponents will provide too vulnerable a target for bombers.

The reaction of the ruling Hamas party exposed internal divisions when one prominent militant leader in Gaza urged the movement's supporters to attack American targets wherever they can find them, citing blanket U.S. support of Israel as justification. Officials with Hamas's political wing, which has long insisted its battle with Israel not spill beyond the region, renounced the statement, saying the movement's enemy remains Israel alone.

Khaled Meshaal, the exiled Hamas politburo chief, told reporters in Gaza the movement would "respond with deeds, not words."

The Beit Hanoun killings aroused new fears for the fate of captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who has been held at an undisclosed location in Gaza since July after he was seized by Palestinian militant groups.

After months of Egyptian brokered talks for Shalit's release, Israel and the Palestinian leadership was believed to be close to a deal that would see the Israeli soldier go free in exchange for the release of as many as 1,000 of the estimated 9,000 Palestinians in Israeli custody. The deal is also believed to be tied to ongoing negotiations for a Palestinian unity government that would see the international community of aid donors, including Canada, end a nine-month boycott of the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority.

Israeli arms expert slams Gaza shelling

Prime Minister Haniyeh yesterday called a halt to the unity talks in the wake of the Beit Hanoun attack, telling the Arabic news channel Al-Jazeera that Palestinians must instead "dedicate their efforts to face the Israeli aggression."

Graphic

KHALIL HAMRA AP Palestinians sit next to a pool of blood mixed with water in the northern Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanoun yesterday. Israeli tank shells killed at least 19 people, including eight children and seven women.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

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REVENGE VOW AS 22 KILLED IN GAZA

Daily Record

November 9, 2006, Thursday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 17

Length: 250 words

Body

PALESTINIANS vowed revenge yesterday after 22 civilians were killed when Israeli tanks shelled a town in Gaza.

Seven children and four women were among the dead after at least 15 rounds tore into a residential district.

More than 60 were wounded in the early-morning attack, which destroyed seven houses and caused carnage in Beit Hanoun.

The town was targeted after Palestinian militants used it to launch rocket attacks into Israel.

Prime minister Ehud Olmert expressed regret at the deaths and artillery attacks were suspended pending an investigation.

But Palestinian leaders accused Israel of "a massacre" and called for a wave of reprisals, including suicide bombings.

President Mahmoud Abbas described the deaths as "a horrible and ugly massacre".

And in the Syrian capital Damascus, exiled Hamas chief Khaled Meshal called for feuding militants to unite.

He said: "Our response will be by deeds, not words. There must be a roaring reaction so that we avenge all those victims."

Outside a mosque in Gaza, Hamas leader Nizar Rayan vowed: "The reaction is coming - prepare the coffins and black body bags."

And Islamic Jihad vowed to launch suicide bombings inside Israel in revenge.

The European Commission described the deaths were a "profoundly shocking event".

And Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett expressed her "deep concern" over the action.

She added: "Israel must respect its obligation to avoid harming civilians. It is hard to see what this action was meant to achieve and how it can be justified."

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

REVENGE VOW AS 22 KILLED IN GAZA

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Peace, violence do not go together

Ottawa Citizen

May 15, 2007 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 248 words

Byline: Mahmood Elahi, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Re With friends like these, May 10.

Terry Galvin is right about the blatant hypocrisy of the leaders Canada's anti-war movement who travelled to Cairo to swap notes with **Hamas** and Hezbollah -- the groups who champion suicide bombings of **women** and children in the name of anti-imperialism. These leaders should take a look at why Mahatma Gandhi rejected all groups preaching violence in the name of anti-colonialism.

When Gandhi launched his anti-colonial movement against the British rule in India, he stated: "If India makes violence her creed, I will not care to live in India. She will fail to evoke any pride in me." Gandhi rejected the idea that the end justifies the means. For him, the means must be noble if the end is noble.

When some militants in his movement attacked a police station, he called off his non-violent movement. Assured that there would be no recourse to violence, Gandhi resumed his struggle.

Although Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist who thought he was too soft on the enemy (the Muslims), he gained India's independence without taking a single British life. The same applies to violent groups such as **Hamas** and Hezbollah, which can achieve their goals only through non-violent political actions. Their acts of wanton violence will only provoke Israel to strike back. By associating with such violent groups, anti-war movement leaders are making a mockery of themselves. You cannot promote peace and justify violence at the same time.

Mahmood Elahi,

Ottawa

Load-Date: May 15, 2007

Israel Declares End to Gaza Mission, but Firing Continues

The New York Times

November 8, 2006 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2006 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 3

Length: 1072 words

Byline: By IAN FISHER

Dateline: BEIT HANUN, Gaza, Nov. 7

Body

"My heart is bouncing," Hiam Yazgi, 24, said Tuesday, and for good reason: Palestinian militants had just fired four homemade rockets, and the Israelis were rattling down retaliatory shells dangerously close to her toppled house here.

One resident of Gaza seemed unfazed, and maybe because she has known only fighting in her short life: Ms. Yazgi's daughter, who was born in the middle of the street just three days ago, halfway through a major Israeli military operation to stop the ongoing rocket fire from Gaza.

As the older children flinched at every shell, the baby, Fairouz, lay sleeping in a turquoise blanket.

"This is our fate," Ms. Yazgi said.

In theory, today should have been quiet, at last. Israeli tanks and soldiers withdrew from Beit Hanun early on Tuesday, saying their six-day operation to stop the firing of rockets into Israel was over and had been successful. They said they killed dozens of armed militants, recovered "large amounts" of weaponry and showed the Palestinians the price of such attacks.

But Palestinians and the United Nations said the price was too high. In the first glimpse of Beit Hanun since the operation began -- the largest in Gaza since July -- it was apparent that large swaths of the northern Gaza neighborhood from where most of the rockets were fired had been devastated.

At least 30 houses were destroyed, or nearly so, with 100 more damaged, a United Nations team that surveyed the damage reported. The stench of sewage wafted over streets churned up and sopping after Israeli bulldozers crunched through water mains. Scores of trees and lampposts were uprooted. At least 52 Palestinians were dead; the Israelis insisted that most were fighters, while Palestinians emphasized the civilians who were killed.

A leader of the United Nations survey team, John Ging, said he was "gravely concerned" by the extent of the damage.

"The scale of destruction that is now evident to anybody who wishes to go to Beit Hanun underscores the impossibility of conducting large-scale military operations in intensely built-up areas without creating this result," said Mr. Ging, operations director for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

Israel Declares End to Gaza Mission, but Firing Continues

As Palestinian leaders worked to form a new national unity government that could ease the hardships here, the violence continued elsewhere in Gaza. In scattered incidents around the strip, the Israeli military said it had hit as many as 10 Palestinian fighters. Reuters reported that at least eight people were killed.

Among them were two people, including a woman, Nahla Shanti, killed after Israeli tank fire hit the house of Jamila Shanti, a Palestinian legislator from the militant faction **Hamas**.

The military said it had responded to two rocket-propelled grenades fired from the house. Ms. Shanti was reported to have been in the house at the time but was not wounded. The dead woman was her sister-in-law.

"The Israelis leave one area and enter another," Reuters quoted the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, as saying. "We have spoken to the American administration and to the Europeans that such a situation cannot help restore security and stability."

In all, the day seemed an illustration of the situation here at this stalemated moment in which there seems no plan to go forward on either the Palestinian or Israeli side, with deep internal divides on both.

The Israeli operation was intended to stop the rocket fire, and although it was reduced, it did not stop. In midafternoon, just hours after the Israeli troops left, four of the crude Qassam rockets sputtered up into the sky out of the destruction of Beit Hanun, leaving behind jagged trails of black smoke.

The rockets hit deeper into Israel than they have in months, landing in the city of Ashkelon, about six miles north of Gaza, but there were no injuries, the Israeli military reported. A fifth rocket landed harmlessly in the Negev desert.

Israel responded rapidly, hammering Beit Hanun with dozens of artillery rounds.

The rounds fell as Yousef Seweil, 47, greeted mourners for his son, Ayman, 18, killed by Israelis on Friday in front of the Nasir mosque here -- now leveled except for the minaret. Ayman, his father said, was killed along with two **women** after the Israelis opened fire on a crowd during a standoff between Israelis and fighters in the mosque.

Palestinians say it was a peaceful demonstration. Israelis counter that the **women** were acting as human shields to allow the fighters to escape and that there was fire from the crowd.

Mr. Seweil was unable to bury his son until Tuesday, he said, because the soldiers in tanks outside his house would not let him go to the hospital to retrieve the body. Mr. Seweil -- who had another son, a fighter for the militant group Islamic Jihad, killed two years ago -- said he was not sure whether he supported the firing of the rockets if the cost was so much destruction.

But he said he was furious with Israel.

"They kill," he said. "They do whatever they want. They demolish houses. They arrest people. This time, they had no mercy."

In a week when a Palestinian newspaper issued a rare public questioning of the wisdom of firing the rockets, many on the streets said they strongly supported it, no matter the price, simply because it scared the Israelis.

"We fire rockets to respond to what Israel is doing to our people," said Ibrahim Seweil, Yousef Seweil's brother, a policeman who said he was arrested during the operation and whose son was arrested, and let go, four times. "We are not sheep they can just slaughter."

Israel says the rocket attacks are unprovoked, particularly because the government emptied all settlements and military outposts from Gaza last year.

On Tuesday evening, Mr. Abbas, who is based in the West Bank, remained in Gaza for a second night in a row to try to form a national unity government that would put technocrats approved by both his Fatah party and **Hamas**, which controls the government, into cabinet posts.

Israel Declares End to Gaza Mission, but Firing Continues

The new government would seek to end the Palestinians' international isolation and win a restoration of Western aid, which was cut off after **Hamas** came to power this spring.

But the efforts had not yet produced a solution. Mr. Abbas reportedly rejected **Hamas**'s proposed candidate to succeed Ismail Haniya, the current **Hamas** prime minister, and **Hamas** met for internal talks.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: A Palestinian woman walked through the rubble of her home in the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanun after Israeli troops withdrew yesterday. (Photo by George Azar for The New York Times)

Load-Date: November 8, 2006

End of Document

Suicide bomber was 64-year-old grandmother

The Vancouver Province (British Columbia)

November 24, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A39

Length: 238 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Dateline: JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip

Body

JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip -- A Palestinian grandmother blew herself up near Israeli troops in northern Gaza yesterday, wounding two soldiers.

The militant **Hamas**, which is in charge of the Palestinian government, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack and identified the bomber as Fatma Omar An-Najar. Her relatives said she was 64 -- by far the oldest of the more than 100 Palestinian suicide bombers who have targeted Israelis in the past six years.

Israeli forces were moving through the Jebaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza on the second day of an operation to stem rocket fire. They spotted a woman acting suspiciously and soldiers threw a stun grenade, a weapon that makes a loud noise but causes no damage. The woman then set off explosives she was carrying, killing herself and slightly wounding two soldiers.

At the compound where her extended family lives near Jebaliya camp, her oldest daughter Fatheya explained her mother's motives.

"They [Israelis] destroyed her house, they killed her grandson -- my son. Another grandson is in a wheelchair with an amputated leg," she said.

Female suicide bombers were a rarity during the first several years of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but that has gradually changed.

Fatheya said she and her mother had taken part in rally at a Gaza mosque three weeks ago where **women** defied a cordon of Israeli troops to create a diversion for besieged **Hamas** fighters to slip away.

Load-Date: November 24, 2006

Review: Non-fiction: Top 10 non-fiction paperbacks

The Guardian - Final Edition

October 21, 2006 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN REVIEW PAGES; Pg. 19

Length: 1037 words

Byline: Ian Pindar and Tom Jaine and John Dugdale

Body

Journals: Captain Scott's Last Expedition , by Robert Falcon Scott, edited by Max Jones (Oxford, £8.99)

The men who discovered Scott's corpse had to break his arm (it cracked "like a pistol shot") to get at his journals. It was worth it. The death of Captain Oates ("I am just going outside and may be some time") and Scott's last entry ("For God's sake look after our people") have become the stuff of legend, but what stands out is his skill as a writer. Unlike Amundsen, who simply raced to the South Pole, Scott took a more leisurely, scientific interest in everything he saw, making notes on the "green ghostly light" of dawn, the changeable weather, the blizzards, the penguins, the killer whales, even his own dogs and ponies. He has nothing but praise for his men (his more critical remarks, admittedly, were removed by his publishers; everything they cut is available in an appendix in this definitive edition). What is surprising for a man whose powers of endurance inspired a generation about to enter the Great War is that his writings are full of panic and pessimism. As Jones reveals in his introduction, Scott admired Ibsen and Hardy. He certainly lived up to Hardy's definition of tragedy: "the worthy encompassed by the inevitable".

Ian Pindar

Edge of the Orison: In the Traces of John Clare's 'Journey Out of Essex' , by Iain Sinclair (Penguin, £8.99)

"No detours, no church towers, no museums, no book pits or interrogations of eccentrics along the way." These were Anna Sinclair's conditions when she agreed to accompany Iain on yet another of his psychogeographical quests. So this time it's Sinclair & Wife, which is important because "Who you walk with alters what you see". She brings out the softie in him. There are tender recollections of how they first met in Dublin, and Anna's biography forms a major strand in the book. Whereas Sinclair claims "common blood" with Samuel Beckett, Anna's father claimed a tenuous kinship with the "peasant poet" John Clare, who escaped from an asylum in Epping Forest in 1841 and walked 80 miles to his home in Northborough, looking for his long-dead muse Mary Joyce. The Sinclairs follow in his footsteps, and there is a fine biography of the poet mixed in with the impressionistic travel notes, erudite reverie and bons mots ("Oxford is Fleet Street with a hangover"). Nobody writes about the motorway "edge lands" quite like Sinclair, and perhaps we also pick up on his "energy surge" at escaping the "gravitational field" of London. Ian Pindar

Culinary Pleasures: Cookbooks and the Transformation of British Food , by Nicola Humble (Faber, £9.99)

Dr Johnson was adamant that "women can spin very well; but they cannot make a good book of cookery". Nicola Humble proves him wrong in this most entertaining account of the literature of cookery in Britain since Mrs Beeton. He also observed, correctly, that cookbooks were "works of transcription", ie filched from other people's work. There

Review: Non-fiction: Top 10 non-fiction paperbacks

are examples here of this method of composition, but also rich pickings from a well-stocked library, nicely dropped into the context of 20th-century social change. Two aspects get special treatment: the appreciation of British cuisine and hence British identity is well explored, as is the development of our liking for the cookery of the Mediterranean. "Elizabeth David" is our shorthand for that process, but there were plenty of signs in the 1930s that this would have happened anyway, if the war hadn't stopped us in our tracks. As the narrative draws closer to today, some of the rich allusion evaporates in a cloud of nonsense from brand leaders in the land of bestsellerdom, but here is proof that cookbooks can tell you more than just whether the flour should be plain or self-raising.

Tom Jaine

The Anatomy of Dessert, With a Few Notes on Wine , by Edward A Bunyard (Modern Library, £12.95)

This is the most important study of the English fruit bowl published in the 20th century (first printed in 1929). It does not get a mention in Nicola Humble's book, perhaps because it contains no recipes. But that's the wonder of fruit: it needs no cooking. Get variety, harvest and storing right, and heaven awaits. Bunyard was a Kentish nurseryman and a man of taste. He knew how to grow his subjects and he can describe their flavour: the blended honey and musk of Pitmaston Pine Apple, or how Rival makes a pie of subtle memories. Now that we embrace once more the English orchard (with apples of more complex flavours than almost anyone's), this paeon is timely. It's a catalogue, occasionally wordy but never less than charming, rehearsing the best varieties (and the optimum time to eat them) of all the nuts and fruits that might once have been arrayed in pyramids upon a mahogany board while the port was nudged on its stately round. In the garden, we may have substituted polytunnels for walls and espaliers, but we can still cut the mustard in the fruit department. We need to insist on British produce in the shops so the tradition does not die. Tom Jaine

Hamas: A Beginner's Guide , by Khaled Hroub (Pluto, £11.99)

This short, timely introduction combines a history of the Islamist movement, a rundown of key policies, sketches of leading figures and a tentative assessment of how it will be changed by unexpectedly winning parliamentary elections in January; most of the book takes the form of a website's FAQ section, addressing such questions as "why does **Hamas** reject the Oslo accords?" and "is there any cooperation between al-Qaida and **Hamas**". Hroub's aim is to "debunk" western misconceptions by depicting what he calls "the real **Hamas**": embedded in the community by its social arms, and driven to suicide bombing by Israeli intransigence. The choice of Palestinian colours for the book's jacket suggests a partisan account, but Hroub is not afraid to voice criticism or disquiet. Stunned to find itself in power, **Hamas** is unequivocally portrayed as unready for government. More sympathetic to its nationalist goals than its religious agenda, Hroub warns against moves to impose Islamic moral policing. And he suggests that the fallout from **Hamas**' control of the Palestinian Authority may include tension between its political and military wings.

John Dugdale

Load-Date: October 21, 2006

International: Palestinians use human shield to halt Israeli air strike on militants homes: Hundreds of neighbours join first successful action: Air force calls off missile attack to protect civilians

The Guardian - Final Edition

November 20, 2006 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 15

Length: 603 words

Byline: Conal Urquhar,t Tel Aviv

Body

Palestinians yesterday stopped Israel from destroying the homes of two militants by surrounding it with a human shield.

In the first incident of its kind, hundreds of neighbours surrounded the home of Mohammed Baroud and climbed on its roof after he received a call from the Israeli army informing him he had 30 minutes to vacate his home before it was destroyed by missiles.

The Israeli airforce called off its strike because of the risk of killing a large number of civilians.

It is the first time Palestinians have thwarted an Israeli air strike in this way. Israel has developed a strategy of telephoning its targets to ensure that nobody is inside when the homes are struck. Residents are given about half an hour to gather some clothes and escape. Neighbours are also contacted if the explosion is likely to be big enough to endanger them.

Dozens of homes have been blown up on suspicion that they are the site for a smuggling tunnel or arms cache. It is likely that Israel will have to find a new way of destroying homes as yesterday's protest began to be copied elsewhere.

Nizar Rayan, a **Hamas** member who led the Jabalya protest, said Palestinians would continue to rush into every house to be threatened by bombardment. "We will pay with our lives to protect the houses of the fighters so they can resist the enemy assured that their homes are being protected," he said.

The home of Mr Baroud, a member of the Popular Resistance Committees in Beit Lahiya was the first to be saved. Mosques and Palestinian television sent out appeals and protesters gathered outside, chanting "Death to Israel. Death to America," and "We prefer martyrdom to surrender."

Two hours later Israel warned Mohammed Nawajeh, a member of **Hamas**, that his house would be targeted and the same process occurred. Both men are accused by Israel of involvement in firing rockets at Israel.

There was a sense of euphoria in Gaza that people had managed to stand up to the Israeli airforce but Israel proved its military muscle later yesterday when an aircraft fired a missile at a car in Gaza City, wounding nine,

International: Palestinians use human shield to halt Israeli air strike on militants homes: Hundreds of neighbours join first successful action: Air force calls....

including two **Hamas** militants. Four were children, aged five, 13, 14 and 16, who suffered shrapnel injuries, hospital officials told Associated Press. Later an elderly man died of his wounds, they added.

The military said the air strike target was a vehicle carrying senior members of the **Hamas** rocket-launching operation.

Palestinians often avoid peaceful protest against Israel because they fear the army will treat them as if they were armed. However, during Israel's occupation of Beit Hanoun this month, a group of **women** managed to create a diversion to allow gunmen to flee a mosque, where they had been surrounded.

Israel has been under added pressure to avoid killing civilians after 19 Palestinians were killed by shells in Beit Hanoun.

Ismail Haniyeh, the Palestinian prime minister, visited Mr Baroud's home to offer his support to the protest yesterday.

"We are so proud of this national stand. It's the first step toward protecting our homes, the homes of our children," he said. "This strategy was decided by our people. (It) was decided by our leaders, who were here from all the factions . . . and so long as this strategy is in the interest of our people we support this strategy."

A spokesman for the Israeli army confirmed that the strike had been called off. "There was a building targeted last night but once civilians gathered on the roof we cancelled the attack," he said. "We will continue operating against the terrorist infrastructure despite their use of uninvolved civilians as human shields."

guardian.co.uk/israel >

Load-Date: November 20, 2006

Women shot in siege of Gaza mosque

The Toronto Star

November 4, 2006 Saturday

Copyright 2006 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A08

Length: 621 words

Byline: Mitch Potter, Toronto Star

Body

JERUSALEM

Answering a desperate radio appeal from *Hamas*, hundreds of unarmed Palestinian *women* marched past Israeli combat teams yesterday in a bid to free dozens of militants trapped inside a mosque in the northern Gaza Strip.

Two *women* were killed and at least 10 others wounded when Israeli soldiers opened fire as the crowd converged on al-Nasser Mosque in Beit Hanoun, Palestinian officials said. Most of the gunmen are believed to have escaped, some disguised in the ankle-length robes and head scarves customarily worn by *women* in Gaza.

An Israeli military source disputed the Palestinian account, saying Israeli sharpshooters singled out male gunmen who used the *women* as "human shields" as a means of escaping the 19-hour standoff.

By nightfall, the *women* were celebrated as heroes, an unusual role in a deeply conservative society that tends to keep *females* on the sidelines. Until yesterday, battling Israeli troops had been men's business in Gaza.

The confrontation came on day three of an increasingly bloody Israel Defense Forces campaign the army says is aimed at ending the launching of homemade Qassam rockets from Gaza into Israel.

In all, 35 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since Wednesday, including 17 yesterday. Among the dead were the two *women*, both 40, two medics and at least 10 militants. Most of the deaths yesterday were a result of a series of Israeli air strikes after sundown. In the deadliest hit, five Palestinians were killed in an Israeli strike in the Jebaliya refugee camp.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, in his Friday prayer address, "saluted the *women* of Palestine ... who led the protest to break the siege of Beit Hanoun." Haniyeh urged UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to witness firsthand "the massacres of the Palestinian people."

The mobilization of Gaza's *women* was prompted by a plea broadcast overnight on a *Hamas* radio station, warning that as many as 60 Palestinian gunmen were under siege inside al-Nasser Mosque and in need of rescue. Associated Press Television News footage of the melee showed hundreds of Palestinian *women* streaming toward the mosque, coming under Israeli fire at times. Nearly 60 shots were heard on the footage.

One of the wounded was Tahrir Shahin, a 36-year-old mother of seven. She said she left her children sleeping at home after hearing the radio appeal and set out for the mosque with her sister. En route, a bullet hit Shahin's left leg; it had to be amputated above the knee.

Women shot in siege of Gaza mosque

Still, she said, she did not regret her choice. "I was so upset about what was happening, so I answered their call," she said from her hospital bed.

Maj. Avital Leibovich said **Hamas** was exploiting **women**. "They were using those poor **women** as human shields," she said. "This is a clear example of use of innocent population for terror."

In a tactical shift for Gaza, the IDF has adapted a style of attack developed during the massive Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank four years ago, with Israeli soldiers moving house to house, and in some cases, blasting through the walls into civilian living quarters, to scour for militants.

In the al-Masri neighbourhood, men between the ages of 16 and 46 were ordered to report to a local agricultural school for questioning. Hundreds answered the call. The IDF released most, but dozens were detained.

In other violence, an Israeli air strike targeted a minivan being driven by suspected **Hamas** militants in Gaza early today, killing one person and wounding two others, Palestinian security sources and doctors said.

The Israeli military said it was checking the report.

The van was travelling on a busy central street in Gaza City when it was struck, the security sources said.

WITH FILES FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS,

reuters

Graphic

SUHAIB SALEM reuters A wounded Palestinian woman lies on the ground as others run for cover after an Israeli tank opened fire at them in Beit Hanoun yesterday.

Load-Date: November 4, 2006

Katsav forced women into sex, court heard

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

January 31, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: CANADA & THE WORLD; Pg. A3

Length: 247 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- In separate but chillingly similar incidents, Israeli President Moshe Katsav forcibly undressed two much younger **female** members of his staff and, despite verbal and physical attempts to resist him, forced the **women** to have sex with him, according to details of the alleged crimes made public for the first time Tuesday.

Katsav's growing list of legal problems include a new demand from the attorney general Tuesday that he be evicted from the presidential residence until the six charges against him for sex crimes and fraud announced last week are resolved. The affair has continued to divert Israelis' attention from the civil wars that have been brewing in Lebanon and Gaza and from a suicide bombing in the Israeli resort town of Eilat which killed three people including the Palestinian bomber.

A fresh truce which had begun only early Tuesday in Gaza was marred a few hours later when Fatah gunmen killed a **Hamas** commander with a bullet to the head near the Egyptian border.

But the latest ceasefire, which came after 30 deaths in five days, produced enough of a sense of confidence that many ordinary Gazans left their homes to look for food for the first time since fighting broke out again last Thursday.

Another positive development was that by late Tuesday the warring military wings of the presidential and parliamentary parts of the Palestinian government had exchanged 38 of the Fatah and **Hamas** members that they had kidnapped from each other since last week.

Load-Date: January 31, 2007

FAST NEWS

The Courier Mail (Australia)

March 12, 2007 Monday

First with the news Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 24

Length: 255 words

Body

Militant shot dead

GAZA STRIP: A commander of Palestinian militant group **Hamas** has been killed during a gun battle with rival faction Fatah in the northern Gaza Strip. The man was killed in the town of Beit Hanoun after a shoot-out between the two sides. The **Hamas** fighter killed was identified as Mohammad al-Kafarna, a member of the group's Executive Force.

Birthing tragedy

NEW DELHI: A woman dies every seven minutes in India because of complications during pregnancy or childbirth, the Indian Government reported yesterday. The number of **women** dying each year from pregnancy and childbirth is 77,000, the Registrar-General of India said, three times higher than the government target. Rundown maternity services and a severe lack of mother-and-child health centres were blame for the death rate.

Cheers to long life

SAN SALVADOR: A Salvadorian woman believed to be 128 years old and possibly the world's oldest person has died. Cruz Hernandez, whose national birth records show was born on May 3, 1878, in central El Salvador, died in her sleep on Thursday. Mrs Hernandez, who died without being recognised by Guinness World Records, had attributed her longevity to her favourite drink of a beer with two raw eggs in it.

Baby stolen

HOUSTON: A woman posing as a medical worker has kidnapped a three-day-old baby girl from a Texas hospital. Mychael Darthard-Dawodu was last seen on a security camera early yesterday at Covenant Lakeside Hospital in Lubbock when a woman wearing hospital scrubs took her and drove off in a van, police said.

Load-Date: March 11, 2007

**Olmert refuses to trade militants for captured soldier; ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL**

Birmingham Post

June 30, 2007, Saturday

1ST Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 8

Length: 205 words

Body

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel would not free the number of Palestinian militants demanded by the captors of an Israeli soldier abducted a year ago.

Mr Olmert was speaking in televised remarks to an economic conference at the Mediterranean coastal resort of Caesarea, three days after the Hamas-linked group holding Cpl Gilad Shalit released a recorded message from their captive, the first sign of life from the 20-year-old soldier since he was snatched by Palestinian raiders from an army post inside Israel and taken to a Gaza hideout.

The militants demand that Israel trade hundreds of Palestinian prisoners for Cpl Shalit's release. Israel has agreed to a swap in principle, but balked at the number and type of prisoners to be freed.

"The fact that for the release of Gilad Shalit the terrorists demand that we free hundreds of arch-murderers says everything about the differences between us in our regard for human life," Mr Olmert said. "That does not mean we shall give in to extortion."

A Hamas official who has been in touch with Cpl Shalit's captors said on Tuesday that they wanted the release of all Palestinian women and minors held by Israel and 1,000 other Arab prisoners, among them militant leaders.

Graphic

Israeli President Moshe Katsav is surrounded by police as he gets into his car outside his home in southern Israel. He has reached a plea bargain which forced him to resign, but included no rape charges. The deal, which means he will spend no time in jail, follows a seven-month investigation after allegations from at least four female employees against Mr Katsav Picture, EDI ISRAEL

Load-Date: June 30, 2007

Olmert refuses to trade militants for captured soldier ISRAEL INTERNATIONAL

End of Document

Distraught father offers to join hostage son

Windsor Star (Ontario)

January 13, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. D1

Length: 249 words

Byline: Agence France-Presse

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - The father of an Israeli soldier captured by Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip last June offered Wednesday to join him in captivity until a deal can be reached for his freedom.

"I, myself, am prepared to be guarantor for this and, if needed, I am prepared to travel to the Gaza Strip, and to stay with Hamas's security forces until all of their demands are answered," Noam Shalit told Israeli military radio.

Shalit said he made the offer in a telephone call to Abu Mujahid, spokesman of the Popular Resistance Committees.

The PRC, together with the armed wing of the governing Hamas and a third previously unknown group, the Army of Islam, claimed joint responsibility for seizing Corp. Gilad Shalit in a June 25 raid on an army position near the Gaza border that left two other soldiers dead.

Shalit's capture sparked a major Israeli offensive against the Gaza Strip in which hundreds of Palestinians were killed.

Egypt has been mediating Shalit's release in exchange for freeing Palestinian prisoners, mainly women and minors, held in Israel.

"Israel is interested in finishing this deal and releasing a lot of prisoners even after Gilad is released, but I am saying that as long as there is no list (of prisoners), we can't move forward," the elder Shalit said.

Abu Mujahid said Tuesday that the soldier is in good health and is being treated well.

Palestinian prime minister Ismail Haniya said last week that "tangible progress" was being made in negotiations on a prisoner swap.

Graphic

Distraught father offers to join hostage son

Colour Photo: Noam Shalit

Load-Date: January 13, 2007

End of Document

Israel moves to ease restrictions on Palestinians to bolster Abbas

The Independent (London)

December 26, 2006 Tuesday

First Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 20

Length: 452 words

Byline: Eric Silver in Jerusalem

Body

Ehud Olmert, Israel's Prime Minister, yesterday authorised the removal of dozens of West Bank roadblocks as part of a phased package of measures designed to ease restrictions on Palestinians. It also aims to strengthen President Mahmoud Abbas in his power struggle with the Hamas government following a summit meeting on Saturday night at which the two leaders met for the first time since Mr Olmert took office last January.

Israel says it will allow more Palestinian produce to cross from the Gaza Strip and West Bank to Israeli ports and try to shorten queues for individuals waiting to be checked. It will also increase the number of permits for Palestinians to enter Israel.

Israel also said it would start dismantling some of the 400 West Bank road-blocks which currently make it difficult or impossible for Palestinians to go to work in Israel, but it did not give a date. Ephraim Sneh, the Deputy Defence Minister, said 27 would be removed, though a government announcement was less specific. It said a final order would be given "depending on developments in the next few days". This may have been a veiled reference to the continued firing of Qassam rockets into southern Israel from the Gaza Strip in breach of the ceasefire agreed a month ago.

Mr Olmert's security team is meeting on Thursday to reassess Israel's policy of non-retaliation. The same meeting will also consider a token release of Palestinian security prisoners for the Muslim feast of Id al-Adha, which begins next week. Ministers are softening their insistence that Hamas must first free Corporal Gilad Shalit, abducted in a cross-border raid six months ago.

Any prisoner release is expected to be in double figures, much less than the hundreds demanded by Hamas for Corporal Shalit. Most of them, officials indicated, would be women and minors. The Israeli prison service says it is holding about 10,000 Palestinians on security charges. Of these, more than 100 are women and several hundred are under the age of 16.

Amir Peretz, the Defence Minister, said yesterday that he supported a prisoner release, even if Corporal Shalit stayed in captivity. "There has been a humanitarian release of prisoners every year at the approach of Id al-Adha,

Israel moves to ease restrictions on Palestinians to bolster Abbas

Christmas, the holiday week," he argued. "A humanitarian act such as this would not put back the release of Gilad Shalit and, I hope, would increase the chances for it."

As so often in recent years, Christmas festivities in the place where it all began were subdued. Hundreds of worshippers packed the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem yesterday, but most of them were local Christians. Few foreign pilgrims, the mainstay of the town's economy, braved the Israeli and Palestinian security checks.

Load-Date: December 26, 2006

End of Document

Newman says he's quit acting

Irish Independent
May 28, 2007 Monday

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Independent.ie 

Section: WORLD NEWS; World News

Length: 275 words

Body

PAUL Newman's career has included winning an Oscar, establishing a food company to fund charities, and operating a restaurant, but he said he is retiring from acting.

"I'm not able to work anymore as an actor at the level I would want to," the 82-year-old Hollywood star said last week. He earned nine Academy Award acting nominations but his only win was for best actor in 'The Colour of Money' in 1987.

Olmert vows to step up attacks

A **HAMAS** rocket attack from Gaza killed a man in Israel yesterday and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert pledged unlimited military action against the militant group, saying "no one involved in terror" would be immune.

Olmert told his cabinet Israel should "be prepared for a long confrontation" and he would not necessarily agree to halt fire if **Hamas** agreed to a truce deal under negotiation with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah group.

Gay activists in Moscow clash

RUSSIAN nationalists shouting "death to homosexuals" punched and kicked demonstrators calling for the right to hold a Gay Pride parade in Moscow yesterday while riot police detained dozens of gay protesters.

Two European parliamentarians were among those held as they tried to present a petition asking Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, who has called gay marches satanic acts, to lift a ban on the parade.

Swedish inmates demand bikinis

WOMEN prisoners in a Swedish jail are demanding the "human right" to wear bikinis so they can get a decent tan.

The inmates at Sagsjon, near Gothenburg, have petitioned the nation's justice watchdog because bikinis are not standard prison clothing and they are not allowed to wear the swimwear of their choice.

Load-Date: May 28, 2007

Newman says he's quit acting

End of Document

It took this call for a boycott to make Israeli government take notice; The Irish Congress of Trade Unions sparked controversy recently by calling for a boycott of Israeli goods. Belfast-based Brendan Mackin - past President of the ICTU - explains the background to the boycott call

Sunday Life

September 30, 2007

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Length: 1045 words

Body

Since then the Middle East in particular has had a sharp increase in violent conflict with Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon experiencing invasion and war.

In addition, there is a growing fear of nuclear threats from Israel and potentially Iran.

However, it is the conflict between Israel and Palestine that began in 1947 which, internationally, many people believe is the source of Middle East estrangement from Western society.

Backed unconditionally by the US, and more covertly by the EU, Israel's policies have almost destroyed the potential viability of Palestine as an economic and geographical entity.

A recent British Government report that highlighted the woeful state of the Palestinian economy called on Israel to strike a balance between short-term security needs and Palestinian economic development.

The report "Economic Aspects of Peace in the Middle East" confirms the crisis in the Palestinian economy.

It also reports that although International Aid of £5bn was donated since 1993, Palestinians are getting poorer, with 65pc living below the poverty line.

In 2005, the Palestinian population was more than half that of Israel, yet Palestinian GDP was only 3pc of Israel's. Since the start of the second intifada in 2000, per capital GDP has fallen a third from 1612 dollars in 1999 to 1129 dollars in 2006.

The election of a **Hamas** government in January 2006 also led to increased sanctions and blockades as Israel stepped up its programme of annexation and refused to deal with a **Hamas**-led government.

The exclusion of **Hamas** is viewed by many as a contributory factor towards the breaking up of Palestine into the Fatah-led West Bank and **Hamas**-controlled Gaza.

It took this call for a boycott to make Israeli government take notice The Irish Congress of Trade Unions sparked controversy recently by calling for a boycott

It was also the pretext for tightening the stranglehold on Gaza. Israel, with US and EU support, imposed conditions for Palestinian participation in any negotiations. This included Hamas.

The three conditions are:

1. Recognise Israel and its right to exist;
2. Renounce violence;
3. Accept past agreement, in particular, the Road Map as agreed between the US, Europe, UN and Russia.

In what he called the hypocrisy of power, Noam Chomsky has spoken and written that no such conditions are imposed on Israel.

Measured against the three conditions imposed on the Palestinians:

1. Israel does not recognise Palestine;
2. Israel does not renounce violence;
3. Israel rejects past agreements and its support for the Road Map which it formally accepted, has been effectively neutered by 14 amendments.

It is within the context of the above situation that in July 2007 the biennial delegate conference of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) passed a motion in response to mounting public concern about the policies of the government of Israel.

The motion from Belfast Trades Council called for the ICTU to "support and promote a boycott campaign of Israeli goods and services similar to the boycott of South African goods during the Apartheid regime".

The ICTU has received both criticism and support for this motion from many quarters. We have been criticised by some politicians and individuals who are supportive of Israel, just as we have been praised by people who support the human rights of the Palestinian people.

We have also been directly contacted by diplomatic representatives of the Israeli government.

The Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU met with Israel's Ambassador to the UK last month in Belfast, and his equivalent in Dublin met with the ICTU's Executive Council. Both meetings were cordial and respectful. Both Ambassadors made clear their disappointment with the ICTU position, and it was made clear in turn by the ICTU representatives that our concerns were genuine and serious.

We made it clear that this was not a sudden shift in our thinking, that we had been vocal supporters for human rights at home and abroad.

For many years, ICTU conferences had passed motions critical of oppression in many countries, including Israel. However, as admitted by the Ambassadors, it took this call for a boycott of Israeli goods to make the Israeli government take notice.

The Israeli representatives were also told about ICTU's consistent opposition to violence and oppression in Northern Ireland, regardless of its origins. We have opposed paramilitary violence as well as working for the full re-integration of ex-prisoners in to our economy and society.

We have denounced state abuses such as strip-searching and we have lobbied for accountability in the security forces.

Our activists have been arrested, assaulted, and denounced by so-called 'respectable' politicians.

It took this call for a boycott to make Israeli government take notice The Irish Congress of Trade Unions sparked controversy recently by calling for a boycott

We have also worked to head the divisions in our society, through initiatives such as Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, Counteract and TradeMark.

We are assisting and advising migrant workers for the same reasons that we struggled to make the workplace as harmonious as possible between nationalists and unionists, Protestants and Catholics. A united workforce is a stronger workplace.

It has to be said that the ICTU policy is more than a call for a simple boycott.

It also calls for us to "strengthen solidarity links between the Irish, Palestinian and Israeli labour movements through exchange visits".

We are at present organising a visit to both Israel and Palestine in which senior trade union leaders from both parts of the island will be meeting workers, trade unionists, politicians, and NGO's from Israel and Palestine.

When we are in Ramallah and Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, we will make clear our continued firm opposition to violence. We abhor all acts of war aimed at civilians, those carried by missiles from Israeli jets and tanks or by Palestinian suicide bombers and rockets.

We believe that a two-state solution is the most viable solution. We favour independent states for Israelis and Palestinians which are viable, secure, secular and democratic, and where the rights of minorities and women are protected.

We will support our sisters and brothers in the trade unions of both states towards mutual respect and co-operation, just as we support them now in their mutual quest for a just peace.

Load-Date: February 4, 2008

We are men of straw

Ottawa Citizen

April 7, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B6; David Warren

Length: 756 words

Byline: David Warren, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

The British were negotiating with the revolutionary Iranians to get their 15 sailors back. Prime Minister Tony Blair yesterday claimed, probably truthfully, that no concession was made to obtain their freedom; that the freeing of a significant Iranian prisoner the Americans had caught in Iraq had nothing to do with the outcome. Mr Blair said that, nevertheless, the channels of communication opened during the crisis would be useful for the future. (You never know when there will have to be more negotiations.)

The British are still negotiating with **Hamas**, the terrorist party that mostly governs "Palestine," in the hope of freeing a BBC journalist who went missing in Gaza nearly a month ago. That negotiation was a little more open: the British consul-general in Jerusalem went directly in to see Ismail Haniya, the **Hamas** prime minister. After the meeting the envoy, Richard Makepeace, stressed that no change in Britain's policy toward **Hamas** had been signalled. (Don't laugh.)

In Britain, the police are still negotiating with radical members of the Muslim community, in the hope of averting violence and finding more suspects and evidence in light of charges just brought against three alleged conspirators in the London bombings of July 7, 2005. (The actual bombers cannot, of course, be negotiated with, as they blew themselves up that day.)

What a lot of negotiations, for both the Foreign and Home Offices. I'm sure there are many more we know little about, since the object of the negotiations is played down in the news. For instance, the endless negotiations with Pakistan, over both jihadis using Pakistani territory as a safe staging area for their incursions into Afghanistan, and jihadis using Pakistani territory as a safe staging area for their incursions into Britain.

Perhaps there are negotiations with Britain's newfound Iranian contacts to determine which Iranian-sponsored terrorist cell triggered the bombs that blew up four British soldiers in Basra, just as President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was basking in world publicity for releasing the 15 sailors he captured in the international waters of the Shatt al-Arab. These sailors were, we assume, under orders not to offer resistance if the Iranians tried to detain them illegally -- but instead, to negotiate.

As an American military contact has assured me, American or Australian personnel would be under contrary orders. Orders to engage in such circumstances. It breaks my heart (as it breaks his) to see the Royal Navy reduced to such pathetic and squalid grovelling; to see the speed with which first the **female** sailor and then several of the men were persuaded to pose for Iranian propaganda.

We are men of straw

Worse, to my mind, was the cheerful reception they received on returning home, and the statements they gave to the media once they were in freedom. There was no condemnation of the Iranians for having held them illegally. Just expressions of happiness to be home, phrased in the contemporary way, so that every sentence can be parsed to reveal some underlying narcissism. It was as if the whole incident was "all about them."

It was only one generation ago that sailors like these went off and reclaimed the Falkland Islands from the Argentine junta. But that was when Britain was governed by Margaret Thatcher, a woman with a reputation for not always negotiating.

To be fair, I think Mr. Blair probably knows that negotiations with implacable enemies are, in the longer run -- but usually in the shortest run, too -- utterly counterproductive. Just as rewarding any kind of bad behaviour is, by definition, counterproductive: It can only encourage bad behaviour. He has the brains and the experience to grasp this fully, but the political judgment to lose this grasp, and crucially: he lacks the spine of Mrs. Thatcher. She had to face down what had happened in the Falklands from a political position that was as precarious as Mr. Blair's, to start with.

To do what had to be done, from the beginning of the Shatt al-Arab encounter, would have meant publicly risking the lives of 15 sailors, and all the media fallout that would come of it. Ditto with **Hamas**, and in all other circumstances in which we in the West decide that a peaceful outcome for the small matter at hand is more important than a successful outcome for the much larger matter that is really at issue.

We cannot endure difficulties; we cannot endure losses; we cannot endure bad press. For we are men of straw, waiting for the fire to test us.

David Warren's column appears Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Load-Date: April 7, 2007

Tour of the Middle East shows the enormity of its problems

The Irish Times

February 5, 2007 Monday

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Section: OPINION; Opinion; Pg. 14

Length: 1207 words

Body

The peacemakers continue their efforts in spite of a succession of unhelpful developments on the ground, writes Deaglán de Bréadún.

Just as Europe was the seething cauldron of war and revolution in the last century, so the Middle East is shaping up as the equivalent in the 21st. The parallels are compelling: ethnic and territorial disputes, weak governments losing more and more power to the streets, a military build-up involving new and more powerful weapons, and fanatical ideologies that hold increasing sway over millions of minds.

Europe is at peace now and, in many ways, the envy of the world, but its problems in the last century were only sorted out after a massively destructive war. Only the most demented ideologues would wish this kind of shock therapy on the Middle East, and for that reason the peacemakers continue their efforts in spite of a constant succession of unhelpful developments on the ground.

Ireland is firmly in the peace camp, of course, and supports the efforts of the European Union and the United Nations to promote dialogue and reconciliation. In that spirit, Minister for Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern toured the Middle East last week, meeting government and political leaders. Normality and stability are strangers to the Middle East but the region is going through a particularly unsettled period.

Events in Israeli politics recall Charles Haughey's famous phrase, "grotesque, unbelievable, bizarre and unprecedented", or GUBU for short. Just before Ahern was due to meet his Israeli counterpart, Ms Tzipi Livni, the shock news broke that her colleague, former justice minister Haim Ramon had been indicted for stealing an unsolicited kiss from one of his **female** subordinates and was facing a possible three-year jail sentence.

Meanwhile, Israeli president Moshe Katsav has stepped aside to deal with very serious allegations of rape, and prime minister Ehud Olmert is being investigated for allegedly corrupt financial and property dealings in Jerusalem, allegations that he has flatly denied.

But despite the fact that the Israeli political system had other things on its mind, Ahern's visit drew some coverage in the Jerusalem Post, which reported that the Irish-Israeli relationship "can best be described as cool".

The paper added that "Israel's relations with Ireland are widely considered in Jerusalem as among the worst Israel has with any European country, and Ireland is roughly clumped together in Jerusalem with the Scandinavian countries in the EU as being among the most critical of Israel."

This set an unpromising backdrop for the Ahern-Livni encounter, but a member of the Irish delegation said afterwards it was "quite a warm meeting". Ms Livni was described as "very professional" and, as is the custom with

Tour of the Middle East shows the enormity of its problems

Israelis, "very direct". Both sides were agreed on the need to strengthen the position of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, although there was "very little give" from the Israeli side when Ahern conveyed the EU's anxiety about the scope of the Israeli settlement programme on the West Bank, which many see as undermining the viability of a proposed Palestinian state.

The Israeli foreign minister expressed surprise that trade between the two countries had fallen, although this state of affairs was disputed by the Irish delegation. It is understood that Israel is also dissatisfied with the low level of "people-to-people" contact between the two countries. During their Israeli stopovers, Irish ministers always make sure to meet Palestinian leaders and this has contributed to generating a fair amount of tension with the Israelis over the years, leading an Irish diplomat to remark on one occasion: "It's the only place in the world where we are more unpopular than the Brits."

It has to be said that the Israelis don't do themselves any favours. High-profile Israeli politicians rarely visit Ireland to present their case to the public because, a former Israeli ambassador explained, oppressive pro-Palestinian demonstrations would spoil the trip. "You have a lot of do-gooders in Ireland," he said. In the battle for Irish public opinion, Israel has given the Palestinians a walkover.

A visit to Gaza was planned as part of Ahern's tour, but this was called off because of the security situation; in the days preceding his arrival at Tel Aviv airport, some 30 Palestinians were killed in gun battles between opposing factions. However, Ahern did make it to Bethlehem to meet Palestinian officials and, later in the day, to Ramallah for talks with president Mahmoud Abbas, who had just returned from the African Union summit in Addis Ababa.

President Abbas has installed himself at the Muqata, formerly the residence and administrative centre of his predecessor, the late Yasser Arafat. The last time this reporter visited the Muqata, Arafat was still alive and the compound still bore the many hallmarks of the siege mounted on the place by Israeli forces.

Now the Muqata is cleaned up and has been given a lick of paint. There is a businesslike air about the place and the sense of drama and foreboding that characterised Arafat's final months is missing.

Despite the gun-play between Fatah and **Hamas**, president Abbas told Ahern he was optimistic a ceasefire could be concluded between the warring factions and he was very upbeat about the prospects that a government of national unity could be formed, which would strengthen his hand in negotiations with the Israelis. A ceasefire was indeed announced the following day but it proved an empty formula as the fighting and killing continued.

Ahern travelled on to Cairo for meetings with Egyptian foreign minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit and secretary-general of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, both of whom were emphatic about the need for a Palestinian national government and cautiously optimistic that this could be achieved.

The European Union slapped a boycott on the Palestinian Authority when **Hamas** took political control of the PA in the elections of January 2006. The basis for the boycott and suspension of aid was that **Hamas** does not recognise Israel or any previous peace agreements and supports terror attacks on Israeli cities and towns.

At the time the international community, including the moderate element in the Arab world, was in shock over the **Hamas** electoral triumph and quick decisions were taken in response. It would have been wiser, some now believe, to have taken a carrot-and-stick approach and to have given **Hamas** a period of, say, six months to change its policies. This could have generated internal debate within **Hamas** circles and might have been more effective than presenting them with a fait accompli, which is what happened.

Ahern concluded his visit with a stopover in Beirut, where he met Fouad Siniora, the country's embattled prime minister, before motoring south to inspect Irish troops on UN duty.

It's a fair bet that not only Ireland but the rest of Europe are fated to be involved in the Middle East for many years to come, but it may be a source of encouragement that two of the books that were seen in the offices at the Muqata were A Dictionary of Diplomacy and International Affairs, in English, French and Arabic, and the better-known work by psychologist Edward de Bono entitled Lateral Thinking.

Tour of the Middle East shows the enormity of its problems

Load-Date: February 5, 2007

End of Document

LIVE ON AIR; THE FATHER, THE KIDNAPPERS AND THE RADIO STATION THAT GOT THEM TO TALK; Ziad Darwish is a presenter making headlines on an innovative station in Middle East . By allowing both sides of the conflict to air their views, he is bringing hope that the dialogue will spread further and the leaders might just be listening. By Donald Macintyre in Jerusalem; Talk radio with a difference

The Independent (London)

January 24, 2007 Wednesday

Fourth Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 24

Length: 1990 words

Byline: Donald Macintyre

Body

Yesterday was a routine - if relatively newsy - Tuesday for Ziad Darwish's 8am to 9am Arabic morning show on 107.2FM. The Chief Palestinian Islamic Justice, Sheikh Taysir al-Tamimi, was one of his guests, airing a fresh spate of complaints about Israeli inroads into Muslim areas of Jerusalem's Old City, including archaeological excavations that he believes threaten the foundations of al-Aqsa mosque.

Another guest was Seif al-Din Shahin, the much-threatened Gaza correspondent of the Al-Arabiya satellite news channel talking about the attack on the network's offices in the Gaza Strip. It is the latest manifestation of a row between **Hamas** and Al-Arabiya over the latter's broadcast of a tape - deliberately doctored by Al-Arabiya's source according to **Hamas** - in which Ismail Haniyeh, the Palestinian Prime Minister is supposed to have made the "blasphemous" remark that "**Hamas** will not accept the [international] conditions even if they came from God". And Shahin is doing his best to defend the network.

Ziad Darwish is trying to get to the bottom of the dispute; but he isn't taking sides, which is an exception to most Palestinian broadcasting norms when it comes to covering internal conflicts.

He is every bit as likely to interview a **Hamas** spokesman, or an Arabic-speaking Israeli politician or an analyst. But then he works for what is, to say the least, an unusual station, one whose own mission statement says proudly it aims to provide "an unrestricted opportunity for dialogue between the citizens ??? of both sides."

For, after a long and distinguished career as a senior national broadcaster, Mr Darwish has chosen to work for "All for Peace", a small and financially struggling station that happens to be run jointly by a dedicated group of 22 Israelis and Palestinians from a small studio and office complex in East Jerusalem.

LIVE ON AIR THE FATHER, THE KIDNAPPERS AND THE RADIO STATION THAT GOT THEM TO TALK

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Half of its 24-hour output is in Hebrew, half in Arabic. Mr Dar-wish, of a famous Palestinian family - one of his cousins is the poet Mahmoud Darwish - says of his job: "As a peace activist, this is my place, my home. I feel very comfortable working with Israelis who share the same ideas as me."

Conceived at the height of the intifada in 2002, the station finally went on air at the beginning of 2005. But it was a coup by Mr Darwish earlier this month that helped put in on the media map. The seizure of 19-year-old Cpl Gilad Shalit by Gaza militants last June has brought unimaginable anxiety to the soldier's family, including his exceptionally dignified father, Noam. And because of the Israeli military escalation in Gaza it triggered, it has resulted in severely increased misery for many non-combatant Palestinians as well. On 10 January, Mr Darwish managed to bring on the air - at the same time - Noam Shalit and Abu Mujahad, the spokesman for the Popular Resistance Committees, one of the three groups, including Hamas's military wing, that abducted the Israeli corporal.

Mr Darwish believes something important happened in the highly-charged exchange, that attracted attention from the mainstream Israeli and Palestinian media. Neither man spoke directly to the other but instead to Mr Dar-wish who translated from Hebrew and Arabic and vice-versa as well as acting as mediator.

The headlines were made, first, by a promise by Mr Shalit to act as guarantor for any prisoner exchange deal involving his son's release. "If needed, I am prepared to travel to the Gaza Strip and to stay with Hamas's security forces until all of their demands are answered," he said.

And secondly, the comments by Abu Mujahad, reporting on the soldier's condition. "The soldier is very healthy and is getting everything he asks for ??? In appreciation of human emotions we say to Noam Shalit that your son is alive and healthy, and we did-n't abuse him as the Israeli government does to our prisoners."

But Mr Shalit was also able, through Mr Darwish, to press the PRC spokesman on an issue that was deeply concerning him. According to what he learned from Israeli officials -"and it is hard to believe they are lying to me"- no actual target list of prisoners to be released had been passed to them.

Twice Mr Shalit asked about the list but, according to Mr Dar-wish, Mr Mujahad became "defensive" - repeating at length that the groups had demanded through Egyptian mediators the release of 1,000 prisoners, and specified: "A number of our prisoners are looking to be released in the first round ??? In the second phase, we will hand over the soldier to the Egyptians, another wave of releases with specific names will take place and the Egyptians will hand over the soldier to Israel."

Under pressure at one point, Mr Mujahad did say: "It could be the Egyptians didn't pass on our list but we gave them all our demands." But when Mr Shalit asks Mr Darwish: "They didn't pass a list. Is this is what you understand?", Mr Darwish concedes: "Yes, it's true." Mr Shalit declares: "Israel is interested in finishing this deal and releasing a lot of prisoners even after Gilad is released, but I am saying that, as long as there is no list of prisoners, we can't move forward."

It may yet be a long time before it can be said whether the exchange had any positive outcome but it can certainly have done no harm, beside helping to shed light on an issue of intense public interest to both sides of the conflict. Mr Darwish had prepared well for the confrontation, speaking many times to Mr Shalit over months and to Mr Mujahad, in Gaza and by telephone. But the fact a PRC spokesman was prepared to talk to a station partly run by Israelis is also a testament to its increasing importance.

While the Israeli broadcasting regime licenses local Arabic stations as well as Hebrew ones, it doesn't, at present, provide frequencies for joint Arab-Hebrew ones, despite the fact that both are official languages.

So this unique station, dedicated as a matter of policy to raising "public awareness in both the Palestinian and Israeli societies to the problems of the other", is obliged to send its output by audio line to Ramallah from where it is transmitted by FM to the Jerusalem area and by internet throughout Israel and the occupied territories.

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The station can't afford to measure its FM audience but on the internet it is reaching between 20,000 and 25,000 listeners every day. That may sound small but - like the station, whose staff has doubled since the start - it is growing fast - by 65 per cent in just a year. About 39 per cent of listeners are in Israel, about 31 per cent in the West Bank and Gaza.

Mr Darwish, like all his colleagues, is an ardent advocate of dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians and a passionate supporter of a lasting peace. At the height of the conflict, he led the Palestinian side of a highly symbolic joint Israeli-Palestinian expedition to Antarctica called "Breaking the Ice".

But that doesn't stop him, as an instinctive Palestinian nationalist as well as a peace activist, from showing emotion. He was reporting on a story about a group of Palestinian doctors that had been severely harassed by Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint outside Nablus, and was infuriated by the blandness of the Israel Defence Forces' spokesman's response. "I lost my temper. He was saying they hadn't made a complaint, even though the doctors had gone straight to the Red Cross. I pretty well accused him of covering up what was happening."

Nor did it stop him trying to bring Hizbollah on the air - so far, one of his few failures. "I was in touch with them and spoke to one of Nasrallah's senior aides. They asked to see our website but came back very politely and said they couldn't talk to us because there were Israelis involved."

The station's willingness to talk to everyone from the Israeli far right to the most hardline Palestinian militant groups - as well as to many more moderate voices, Israeli and Palestinian, all too easily ignored by the mainstream media - is a cherished part of its independence, one that has cost it dear. The Israeli co-director, Shimon Malka, explains that, in 2005, the station, which already receives about 40 per cent of its \$600,000 (£300,000) annual costs from the European Commission, was delighted to receive a year's grant of \$700,000 from USAid.

But after Hamas took office in the wake of its election victory last year, he and his Palestinian co-director Maysa Baransi-Siniora were told bluntly the grant would be halted unless they agreed to keep Hamas off the air.

He said: "Maysa and I flew to Washington and tried to persuade them we couldn't be real independent media if we became the voice of Fatah, or Washington or whatever." But even though Hamas spokesmen appear on Israeli media, it was to no avail, and All for Peace lost a third of the US money, having to pay back some cash it used to buy equipment.

"We couldn't say we were only interested in half the Palestinian population," adds Mrs Siniora.

The two co-directors joined forces in 2002 to plan the station when both were working for the two peace oriented organisations, the Israeli Givat Haviva and the Palestinian Biladi. Mr Malka, a former producer and reporter for Israeli state broadcasting, was editor-in-chief of Crossing the Borders, an Israeli-Palestinian magazine that was having serious trouble living up to its name because of the checkpoints established after the intifada began.

Mrs Siniora, recently named by Ha'aretz's Marker business magazine as one of the top 40 women in the country for "making a difference", was a reporter on Biladi's Jerusalem Times.

Mr Malka says one of the most difficult tasks was finding the right group of Israelis and Palestinians who shared the outlook in favour of dialogue and peace "so we could speak with something like one voice."

Mr Malka said: "We have to realise these years of military operations, for example against groups such as Hamas in Gaza, is not working and - for them - all the terror and suicide bombings wasn't working either."

Underlining that the quality and commitment of the station's staff is crucial, he says that when an Israeli woman presenter recently left a vacuum on the Hebrew counterpart to Mr Darwish's show, it posed a "crisis" now solved by finding a successor.

The "other crisis" was a financial one left by the Bush administration's funding cut. The dream shared by Mr Malka and Mrs Siniora is to make the station independent and self-financing.

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Thanks in part to an advertising contract with the sympathetic Israeli cleaning materials company, Sano, they hope advertising will account for 20 percent of the station's costs this year compared with 1 per cent last year. And they are also planning deals under which NGOs can buy air time on the station.

But, as Mrs Siniora says, all that will take time, like many other of the changes she would gradually like to see. As an example she cites the fact that most of the music played on the station is European or American, mainly from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s - the target audience is mainly those above their early to mid-20s. They play two Hebrew and two Arabic records per hour, hoping to get the two sides gradually used to each other's music. In time, she'd like to see Hebrew and Arabic music play a bigger part in the output.

She is far from starry-eyed about the attainability of the climate the station is trying to create; indeed she says she is continually "frustrated" by the lack of political progress in the region. But, like Mr Malka, she remains deeply committed to the cause of increasing understanding between the two peoples and cheered by the camaraderie and dedication of the staff -Israeli and Palestinian.

"They motivate you to carry on," she says. And somehow you have the impression this is a project that will grow. Mr Darwish admits this is a small beginning, and - of course - that it is not somehow going to bring peace of itself. But he says: "There is a Chinese proverb, that you go 1,000 miles with your first step. That's how I feel."

Load-Date: January 24, 2007

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Article attacking Israel unfair

The Whit: Rowan University

December 7, 2006 Thursday

University Wire

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 1

Length: 493 words

Body

An opinion article ran in the Nov. 2 issue of The Whit about about the recent fighting in Lebanon. This letter was sent in response to that article. Imagine, as residents of the state of New Jersey, if Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York deny that we have a right to exist as a state, for the only reason being that our state is populated mostly by people who have different beliefs than those of the other states.

As a result, New Jersey is constantly bombarded by mortar shells on a daily basis. Usually targeted are places such as the Rowan Townhouses or Edgewood Apartments, because that is where the most damage can be done to civilians. Sounds preposterous, right? Unfortunately, this happens in Israel every day. Groups such as Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon claim that Israel has no right to exist, and use this to justify the murder of innocent men, women and children. Their justifications are full of half-truths and lies which they use to draw sympathy to their cause. The main goals of the Israeli forces sent into Lebanon this past summer were to take down the key players in Hezbollah with as few civilian casualties as possible. That's why the targets were places where the leaders of Hezbollah were. For Hezbollah, the goal was simple: murder as many Israelis as possible. It is one thing to send rockets that will destroy the site in which it is targeted. It is a completely different situation when you have weapons designed to both kill and maim innocent civilians, such as those used by Hezbollah. Unfortunately, the reality is that many innocent lives were lost on both sides. But what some don't realize is that there are Muslims living in, and protected by, Israel. So by attacking Israel, the Lebanese are attacking those who share the same faith. This paper chose to publish an Op/Ed piece that similarly used these same half-truths and lies to chastise Israel for its military action this past summer. The writer told a lie when he said that Israeli soldiers "invaded" Lebanon. The kidnapped soldiers were indeed kidnapped in Israel, and would not have even been there if not for the constant bombardment of Israel by these terrorists. The author claimed that certain news networks like CNN and FOX only told the American-Israeli point of view. I have found this to be false. CNN especially looks at several points of view. But in the end, CNN, ABC and FOX report the cold hard facts. The author even proudly used the following quotation: "Hezbollah will destroy Israel." These words show the terrorist organization's true intent, and, in itself provide justification for Israel to defend itself, which it did this past summer. Despite the attempt of the writer, no moral equivalence can be made between the act of terror taken by groups like Hamas and Hezbollah and the defensive actions taken by Israel. This is why so many Americans support and stand with Israel, not Hamas and Hezbollah.

Jared Jackson Rowan Hillel President

Load-Date: January 16, 2018

Article attacking Israel unfair

End of Document

International briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 4, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: B; Pg. 5

Length: 575 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

Yemen: Attack on tourists unexpected

MARIB, Yemen - Yemeni security officials were warned about a possible al-Qaida attack,

but said Tuesday that they did not think it would include the suicide bombing that killed a group of Spanish tourists visiting a remote temple.

The vehicles carrying the tourists were shredded almost beyond recognition, with human remains scattered along with women's clothing, a bag, shoes, and picnic items.

A security official said al-Qaida recently warned of attacks against Yemeni oil facilities, government institutions and foreign embassies. Security was heightened at those places.

"They managed to mislead us.," the official said.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh offered a \$76,000 reward for information about those behind the attack, which occurred in the central province of Marib, an area known for lawlessness and al-Qaida sympathies.

Spain's Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos said Yemen believed the attack was directed against the country's tourist sector and not against Spain.

The attack occurred the same day a trial ended in Madrid of 28 people, mostly Moroccan, for the 2004 Madrid train bombings blamed on al-Qaida that killed 191 people and injured 1,500.

Japanese defense minister steps down

TOKYO - Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma stepped down Tuesday amid mounting criticism of comments he made Saturday that some took to justify the U.S. atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the closing days of World War II.

"I met with the mayor of Nagasaki today, and I understand that what I said upset people there," Kyuma said. "My remarks were not reported in the way I intended them, and I've failed to gain the understanding (of Nagasaki people)."

International briefs

The defense minister's resignation came amid growing criticism sparked by his remarks in a speech at a lecture meeting in Kashiwa, Chiba Prefecture, on Saturday. "I understand the bombing brought the war to an end. I think it was something that couldn't be helped."

Expert says plot likely was hatched in Britain

LONDON - They had diverse

backgrounds, coming from countries around the globe, but all shared youth and worked in medicine. They also had a common goal: To bring havoc and death to the heart of Britain.

All employees of the United Kingdom's National Health Service, some worked together as colleagues at hospitals in England and Scotland, and experts and officials say the evidence points to the plot being hatched after they met in Britain, rather than overseas.

"A much more likely scenario (than coordination amongst terrorist sleeper cells) is they were here together, they discovered that they shared some common ideology, and then they decided to act on this," said Bob Ayres, a former U.S. intelligence officer now at a London think tank.

No one has been charged in the plot in which two car bombs failed to explode in London early Friday and two men rammed a Jeep Cherokee loaded with gas cylinders at an airport entrance.

Security talks resume

JERUSALEM - Israel and the Palestinian government of President Mahmoud Abbas have resumed security talks after a long break, both sides said Tuesday, a new sign of cooperation between Israel and Palestinian moderates since the **Hamas** takeover of Gaza.

In parallel crackdowns on the militant Islamic **Hamas**, security forces loyal to Abbas have taken dozens into custody and Israel has also made arrests, underlining their common interest in preventing a **Hamas** takeover of the West Bank.

Load-Date: July 19, 2007

Gaza women shielding mosque gunmen are celebrated as heroes: Mother of seven children whose leg was cut off after she was shot doesn't regret answering call

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

November 4, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 431 words

Byline: Yakub Ralwah, Associated Press

Dateline: BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip

Body

BEIT HANOUN, Gaza Strip -- Hundreds of Palestinian women in robes and head scarves streamed into a Gaza combat zone Friday to help free gunmen besieged by Israeli troops at a mosque. Two women who came under fire were killed and at least 10 wounded, but some gunmen escaped.

The women, many with ties to the Islamic group Hamas, left their homes after daybreak in response to appeals on the local Hamas radio station or telephone calls from friends and relatives. By nightfall, they were celebrated as heroes, an unusual role in a deeply conservative society that tends to keep women on the sidelines. Until Friday, battling Israeli troops had been men's business in Gaza.

The mosque standoff came on the third day of Israel's fiercest bid in months to halt Palestinian rocket fire on Israeli border communities. The offensive began Wednesday, when Israeli forces took over the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, close to the border with Israel.

In all, 35 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since Wednesday, including 17 on Friday. Among those killed Friday were the two women protesters, a 16-year-old boy, two medics and at least 10 terrorists. Most of the deaths Friday were a result of a series of Israeli air strikes after sundown. In the deadliest hit, five Palestinians were killed in an strike in the Jebaliya refugee camp.

The army said the strikes targeted terrorists trying to plant explosives or launch rockets.

The Beit Hanoun sweep is different from previous incursions into Gaza, a senior Israeli military official said. Troops are going house to house in Beit Hanoun, sometimes breaking through inner walls to cut down on exposure to gunmen.

In another new tactic, troops have rounded up hundreds of men for questioning, releasing most of them but detaining dozens, the army official said. On Friday evening, for example, soldiers ordered men between the ages of 16 and 46 in Beit Hanoun's Al Masri neighbourhood to report to the local agricultural school for questioning.

Tahrir Shahin, a 36-year-old housewife, was among the hundreds of women responding to the call to help.

Gaza women shielding mosque gunmen are celebrated as heroes: Mother of seven children whose leg was cut off after she was shot doesn't regret answering call

She said that after hearing the radio appeal, she left her seven children sleeping at home and set out for the mosque, an hour's walk away, with her sister. En route, a bullet hit her left leg; it had to be amputated above the knee.

Still, she said, she did not regret her choice. "I was so upset about what was happening, so I answered their call," she said from her hospital bed.

Maj. Avital Leibovich said **Hamas** was exploiting **women**. "They were using those poor **women** as human shields," she said.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Said Khatib, AFP/Getty Images; Palestinian **women** march in Gaza City to protest against the Israeli army operation in Beit Hanoun, where gunmen were holed up in a mosque.

Load-Date: November 4, 2006

ISRAELI MILITARY KILLS 11 MILITANTS IN GAZA STRIP

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

July 6, 2007 Friday

SOONER EDITION

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Section: WORLD; WORLD BRIEFS; Pg. A-4

Length: 572 words

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip -- Israeli forces killed 11 militants yesterday in one of the deadliest days of combat since Hamas wrested control of Gaza last month, putting the Israeli-Palestinian conflict back at center stage after months of Palestinian infighting.

Israel called in aircraft, tanks and bulldozers to press its campaign against Gaza rocket squads, while Islamic militants laid mines and fired mortars at soldiers at the main Gaza-Israel passage.

Since sweeping out its Fatah rivals in a lightning campaign, Hamas has sought to solidify its regime administering crowded, chaotic, poverty-stricken Gaza. It has initiated few attacks on Israel, but also has not stopped other groups from firing rockets at Israeli towns almost daily, provoking Israeli military action and drawing Hamas forces in.

Fighting escalated quickly Thursday after an Israeli patrol just inside Gaza spotted armed militants approaching and called in an air strike.

Rally protests abductions

BOGOTA, Colombia -- More than a million people marched through Colombia's major cities yesterday and drivers honked horns in unison in a mass protest to demand the immediate liberation of the country's kidnap victims.

In all, some 3,000 Colombians are being held by kidnappers, according to the anti-abduction citizens' group Pais Libre.

Yesterday's protest was organized after leftist rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, said last week that 11 state lawmakers the rebels had held for more than five years were killed in a "crossfire."

Women's rights in Iran

TEHRAN, Iran -- Iran's supreme leader has signaled a willingness to reinterpret Islamic law more favorably to women's rights -- but not by following Western conventions, state media and his official Web site reported yesterday.

"Some issues about women, which exist in religious jurisprudence, are not the final say. It is possible to interpret new points through research by a skillful jurist," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's Web site quoted him as saying Wednesday during a speech to commemorate national women's day.

ISRAELI MILITARY KILLS 11 MILITANTS IN GAZA STRIP

The comments by the Shiite Muslim cleric, who has final say over all state matters, came amid international rights groups' criticism of Iran for giving prison sentences to several women's rights activists.

Fewer political prisoners

HAVANA -- The number of political prisoners in Cuba has dropped by more than 20 percent since Raul Castro took over from his ailing elder brother, Fidel, but widespread repression has continued, a leading independent human rights group said yesterday.

"Still in force is a police state whose nature is reflected in almost every aspect of national life," the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation said in a report.

The commission, whose reports are regularly used by international groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, said 246 political prisoners were being held as of June 30, compared with 283 at the beginning of 2007 and 316 a year ago.

The commission operates independently of the government and without its approval.

Children rescued at sea

DUBLIN, Ireland -- Rescuers plucked about 110 children from the sea yesterday after a sudden squall hit their flotilla of sailboats during a race in the Irish Sea, officials said.

The sailors, mostly teenagers but some as young as 12, were taking part in the National Yacht Club junior regatta when a surge in winds and waves capsized many of their 91 boats.

Load-Date: July 6, 2007

UN halts Gaza construction as blockade bites

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

July 11, 2007 Wednesday

First Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; International News; Pg. 15

Length: 552 words

Byline: Ed O'Loughlin Herald Correspondent in Jerusalem

Body

THE United Nations has halted all construction and repair work in the Gaza Strip because of an Israeli blockade that has cut off the Palestinian enclave's 1.4 million people from the outside world.

A statement by the UN Relief and Works Agency said it had run out of building materials, including cement.

Among the projects halted is an emergency effort to shore up the crumbling banks of a sewage settling pond in northern Gaza, which could drown scores of local villagers if the banks collapsed. Five people drowned in sewage after a smaller pond in the complex collapsed in March.

The agency is also trying to rehouse hundreds of Gaza families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by Israeli shelling and bulldozers or by outbreaks of internal Palestinian feuding.

The agency was founded to help refugees from the Israeli-Arab war of 1948 but has become the main source of jobs, cash and basic services in Gaza, particularly since Israeli border closures shut down most private-sector business, and an international boycott cut off funds to the strip's other main employer, the Palestinian Authority.

The Israeli Army, which controls all access to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, has progressively intensified restrictions on people and trade, citing security concerns including attacks on the border by Palestinian militant groups.

In March last year Israel and the US persuaded most Western countries to join a boycott of the authority in response to a surprise election victory for the Islamist **Hamas** movement, which refuses to recognise Israel's right to exist.

The Gaza Strip, which is completely isolated by land, sea and air, has been particularly harshly affected. Severe restrictions on the movement of goods had already shut down much of Gaza's economy even before **Hamas** militias defeated forces loyal to the former ruling party Fatah last month, prompting Israel to shut the borders, apart from a trickle of humanitarian supplies.

According to UN figures 85 per cent of people in the Gaza Strip now live beneath a poverty line set at \$2US.41 (\$2.80) per person per day.

UN halts Gaza construction as blockade bites

About 6000 people from Gaza have been stranded on the Egyptian side of the border since Israel last invoked its power to close the Rafah crossing one month ago.

Palestinians in the West Bank, on the other hand, still have some access to trade with Israel, including black market low-wage jobs. The West Bank remains under the control of the Fatah party led by the Western- and Israeli-backed Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas, to whom Israel has resumed payments of millions of dollars in customs revenue.

Last week the Israeli human rights group Gisha accused the Israeli authorities of "attempting to achieve political objectives by exerting pressure on 1.4 million women, men and children, whose suffering is supposed to bring about the change it wants - toppling Hamas control in Gaza. In reality, a policy of collective punishment is being imposed upon 1.4 million people, in violation of international humanitarian law and contradictory to Israel's interest."

The Israeli authorities have always denied resorting to policies of collective punishment and say their actions are intended solely to fight terrorism. The Government says it will continue to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza to prevent innocent people suffering.

Graphic

PHOTO: Suspended ... house building in Rafah. Photo: AFP/Said Khatib

Load-Date: July 16, 2007

End of Document

Release 500 prisoners for soldier, Israel told

The Guardian - Final Edition

April 9, 2007 Monday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 15

Length: 521 words

Byline: Conal Urquhart, Jerusalem

Body

Hamas has sent Israel a list of Palestinian prisoners it wants released in return for the freedom of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, who has been held since last June, officials said yesterday. The Israeli government has insisted that Corporal Shalit's release is a prerequisite to progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

The Palestinian list is believed to include Marwan Barghouti, a Fatah leader who was jailed by Israel for his role in the murder of four Israelis and a Greek monk - and around 500 other prisoners.

Ghazi Hamad, a spokesman for the **Hamas**-led Palestinian government, said: "The big battle will now take place in Israel, because they have problems with releasing prisoners who have blood on their hands or other prisoners for political reasons."

"The Israelis will argue over each name and at what stage they will be released, so this may still take a long time."

Miri Eisen, a spokeswoman for the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, refused to confirm the receipt of the list, adding that the release of Cpl Shalit was a priority for the government but was too sensitive to be discussed publicly. However, Yitzhak Herzog, an Israeli cabinet minister, said there appeared to have been some progress - but "on the other hand I would be very wary . . . because there is still a long way to go".

Cpl Shalit was abducted during a raid on an Israeli border post just outside the Gaza Strip 10 months ago. Israel initially launched a military operation to put pressure on, but eventually turned to diplomacy through Egyptian intermediaries.

Those holding Cpl Shalit, a consortium of groups headed by **Hamas**, have insisted that Israel release more than 1,000 prisoners from its jails, including **women**, children and long-serving prisoners.

The shape of the proposed deal has been established by Egyptian diplomats, but there has been no apparent progress for several months. The first stage of the exchange deal would be the release of a minor group of Palestinian prisoners which would be followed by the transfer of Cpl Shalit to Egyptian custody. Then a larger group of prisoners would be released in return for the transfer of Cpl Shalit to Israel; a further group of important prisoners would be released after a few months.

According to the Israeli media, the Palestinian list is being reviewed by the Shin Bet security agency which will give its recommendations to Mr Olmert. There is a widespread opposition in Israel to releasing Palestinian prisoners who have participated in the killing of Israelis, although some politicians have warned that it may be unavoidable.

Release 500 prisoners for soldier, Israel told

Meanwhile, John Sentamu, the Archbishop of York, yesterday pleaded for the release of Alan Johnston, the BBC Gaza's correspondent kidnapped in Gaza four weeks ago. "In God's name, please release Alan Johnston. He is not your enemy," the archbishop said. "He is a symbol of ensuring that freedom of the press is not violated - an issue Palestinian journalists are too familiar with after facing routine attacks, harassment and arrests."

Mr Johnston is believed to have been kidnapped by a Gaza clan as a pawn in domestic political disagreements.

Load-Date: April 9, 2007

End of Document

'Sewage tsunami' kills five Palestinians: Village under pool of foul-smelling effluent after reservoir bursts, causing collapse of septic system

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 481 words

Byline: Mahmud Hams, Agence France-Presse

Dateline: UMM AL-NASR, Gaza Strip

Body

UMM AL-NASR, Gaza Strip -- At least five Palestinians, including two toddlers, drowned in a "sewage tsunami" on Tuesday when a water treatment reservoir burst, flooding a village in the northern Gaza Strip.

The deluge, triggered by the collapse of a septic system aid organizations had long warned was dangerously overburdened, submerged dozens of homes in the Bedouin farming village of Umm al-Nasr under a pool of foul-smelling effluent.

Three women, one more than 70 years old, and two boys aged one and two died in the flood.

At least 15 people were injured and scores more are still missing, according to Palestinian medics.

Village children clung to wooden doors floating on the putrid waters and rescuers paddled through the village in makeshift boats in search of victims. Frantic goats and cows, sustenance for the village of Bedouin shepherds, were also pulled to safety.

"We woke up at 10 this morning with sewage water pouring into our homes and covering everything," said resident Tawfir al-Bansh.

Umm al-Nasr mayor Ziad Abu Thabet said 70 per cent of the village's mostly ramshackle homes had been buried in raw sewage. "The situation is very bad," he said.

By late afternoon, receding flood waters had left a malodorous muck that further hampered rescue efforts.

Palestinian television proclaimed a "sewage tsunami" had rocked Gaza. An adviser to president Mahmud Abbas declared the village a disaster area. Interior minister Hani al-Qawasmeh rushed to the scene to inspect the damage, but angry villagers opened fire on his convoy and wounded two police officers, witnesses said.

In Israel, Defence Minister Amir Peretz ordered the army to provide assistance to the victims if asked to do so by the Palestinian Authority.

'Sewage tsunami' kills five Palestinians: Village under pool of foul-smelling effluent after reservoir bursts, causing collapse of septic system

The **Hamas** movement, the leading partner in a newly formed Palestinian unity government, blamed the disaster on a foreign aid boycott slapped on the Palestinian Authority a year ago when the Islamist hardliners first came to power. Israel and the West consider **Hamas** a terrorist outfit.

"The overflowing of the basin is one of the results of the suspension of international aid to our people, which is preventing the government from improving and developing infrastructure," **Hamas** said in a statement.

As far back as January 2004, UN aid agencies in the Gaza Strip had warned that the north Gaza sewage treatment facility was operating far beyond its capacity and posed a grave danger to nearby residents.

Designed to serve just 50,000 people, the plant at that time was handling waste from 190,000 Gaza residents.

Excess sewage had already flooded around 110 acres, and 50 per cent of children in Umm Al-Nasr had developed problems with their digestive systems, a UN report found.

"Unless action is taken to address this problem, water in this effluent lake will spill out over the holding basins into residential areas, and directly into homes," the report concluded.

Graphic

Photo: Hatem Moussa, Associated Press; Palestinian rescue workers search for bodies after a cesspool embankment collapsed in the village of Umm Naser, in the northern Gaza Strip, Tuesday. ;

Load-Date: March 28, 2007

Gaza death toll hits 24 as rival factions start hostage-taking

Sunday Independent (Ireland)

January 28, 2007

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Independent.ie 

Section: FEATURES

Length: 572 words

Body

TWO men were killed yesterday, the third straight day of **Hamas**-Fatah factional clashes in Gaza City. The deaths brought to 24 the number of Palestinians killed since late on Thursday, and at least 66 people were wounded, medical officials said. The rival **Hamas** and Fatah movements traded angry accusations, and each held several supporters of the other side hostage.

The violence froze talks about bringing Fatah into the **Hamas**-led government, negotiators said. Fatah's leader, moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, said he would go ahead with his plan to call early elections if the negotiations don't produce results within two to three weeks.

Rwanda genocide killers freed RWANDA will release more than 8,000 prisoners convicted or awaiting trial in the 1994 genocide, many of them elderly and sick, the justice minister said. Rwandan authorities have held several similar prisoner releases since 2003, when President Paul Kagame ordered them as part of an effort to decongest Rwanda's crowded prisons and promote reconciliation. Some 63,000 genocide suspects are detained in Rwanda.

Women shot in US embassy car GUNMEN carjacked a US Embassy vehicle on the outskirts of the Kenyan capital yesterday afternoon and killed two **women** in the car, police said. "The thugs ordered the two **women** out but they hesitated," said Isaiah Osugo, a criminal investigations officer in Nairobi. "Then they were shot." Jennifer Barnes, a spokeswoman at the US Embassy in Nairobi, said she could not comment due to privacy concerns.

Collapse of school kills 11 girls AT least 11 schoolgirls were killed and another 14 injured when a school building in the western Indian state of Gujarat collapsed, an official said yesterday. Some 25 children and six staff members were in the building at the time of the accident on Friday. The four-storey girls' residential school in Tichakpura village, usually houses about 330 students, but as it was a holiday, most of them were away.

Pensioner wins battle of bills A 77-year-old pensioner has won a two-month battle with a cell phone company over bills for about \$31,000 (26,000) in calls from Nicaragua he says he never made.

Oliver DeSofi's Cingular Wireless bill from November listed more than \$21,420 in roaming charges for more than 4,000 calls made from his phone from Nicaragua. When he contacted Cingular about the charges, DeSofi learned there were already \$9,554 (7,406) in similar charges on his next bill. The former bank executive said his bill was normally about \$150 (116) - he has never been to Nicaragua.

Gaza death toll hits 24 as rival factions start hostage-taking

Police refuse to chase thievesA MOTHER said she was outraged after British police refused to chase thieves who stole her sons' motorbikes - because the riders were not wearing helmets.

Pauline Nolan, from Manchester, said officers told her yesterday they could not pursue the offenders in case they fell off and sued them. Mrs Nolan, 44, said: "It's outrageous, I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Everything in this country is weighted towards the criminals, what about the victims? I think this kind of thing sends out the wrong message because people think they can get away with anything."

Double child murder, woman heldA 30-year-old woman has been arrested on suspicion of murder by police in Hackney, East London after two children aged three and 10 were found dead in a flat yesterday morning. The identity of the children has not yet been announced.

Load-Date: January 28, 2007

End of Document

Palestinians list names of prisoners for swap

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

April 8, 2007 Sunday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. C11

Length: 302 words

Byline: Karin Laub, The Associated Press

Dateline: RAMALLAH, West Bank

Body

RAMALLAH, West Bank -- After months of deadlock, the captors of an Israeli soldier handed over the names of Palestinian prisoners they want freed in exchange for the hostage, a senior Palestinian official said yesterday.

The release of Israeli Cpl. Gilad Shalit is seen as a precondition for any possible progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. A swap could also help the new Palestinian unity government, a coalition of **Hamas** and Fatah, in its quest for international acceptance.

Palestinian Information Minister Mustafa Barghouti did not say how many names were on the kidnappers' list, which he said was forwarded to Israel by Egyptian mediators. Barghouti said the next move is up to Israel and that he hopes the swap will be carried out quickly.

Israel declined formal comment, although the Israeli media cited unidentified officials as saying there had been some progress, but that resolution was still not assured.

Shalit was captured 10 months ago by **Hamas**-allied guerrillas who tunnelled under the Gaza-Israel border, attacked an army post in Israel and snatched the soldier.

His captors initially demanded the release of 1,400 Palestinian prisoners, including **women**, minors and dozens of the longest-serving inmates. In all, some 9,300 Palestinian security prisoners are being held by Israel, one of the highest totals in 40 years of its military occupation.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said he is willing, in principle, to release prisoners. However, the swap has been held up by disagreement over who should be freed.

In recent weeks, there had been repeated reports that a list of names was handed to Israel. However, Barghouti's comments marked the first public confirmation.

"If the Israeli government is serious, there is now a very good opportunity to end this chapter," Barghouti said.

Load-Date: April 10, 2007

Palestinians list names of prisoners for swap

End of Document

Sewage Reservoir Floods in Gaza, Killing 5

The New York Times

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2007 The New York Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 7

Length: 482 words

Byline: AP

Dateline: GAZA, March 27

Body

An earthen embankment around a sewage reservoir that was filled to capacity collapsed Tuesday, and officials said it spewed a "tsunami" of waste and mud that killed five people and forced residents to flee Umm Naser, a village in the northern Gaza Strip.

One local official blamed the collapse on shoddy infrastructure, and United Nations officials said they had warned of such a catastrophe for more than two years.

Emergency workers traveled among the houses on flat-bottomed boats, and chickens fled their coops to perch high on power lines. The stench of sewage mixed with mud and dead animals caused people to cover their mouths.

Ziad Abu Farya, the leader of the village council, described the scene as "our tsunami."

A 2004 United Nations report warned that the sewage plant was at maximum capacity and that flooding was inevitable unless a new waste treatment plant was built. It said the effluent lake was a breeding ground for mosquitoes and waterborne diseases, posing a serious health hazard.

Efforts to build a new waste treatment plant were repeatedly hampered by fighting between Israel and the Palestinians. Stuart Shepherd, of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, said that since the report was published, international money for a new plant had been secured but construction could not proceed because the area was too dangerous.

Umm Naser is about 300 yards from the border with Israel in an area where Palestinians have frequently launched rockets into Israel, and Israeli artillery and aircraft have fired back.

Fawzi Barhoum, a **Hamas** spokesman, blamed the international sanctions imposed on the Palestinians after the **Hamas** victory in elections in January 2006 for the condition of the infrastructure in Gaza. But Mr. Shepherd said the Umm Naser project had not been affected by the boycott.

Two **women** in their 70s, two toddlers and a teenage girl died in the sudden flood, and 25 people were injured, said Dr. Muawiya Hassanin of the Palestinian Health Ministry. At least 25 houses were submerged.

Sewage Reservoir Floods in Gaza, Killing 5

Fadel Kawash, director of the Palestinian Water Authority, said the level of sewage in the pool had increased over the last few days, creeping up the earthen embankments around it until one collapsed, "causing the sewage to pour toward the village."

Rescue crews and gunmen from **Hamas** rushed to the area to search for people feared buried. Most residents fled or were evacuated.

Angry residents drove reporters out of the area and mobbed arriving government officials. When Interior Minister Hani Kawasmeh arrived to survey the damage, his bodyguards fired in the air to disperse the crowd.

"We lost everything," said Amina Afif, 65, whose small shack had been destroyed. "Everything was covered by the flood. It's a disaster."

The Israeli Army offered to help clean up. Whether the offer was accepted was not clear.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Villagers tried to rescue goats from rising floodwaters that injured 25 people and submerged at least 25 houses. (Photo by Mahmud Hams/Agence France-Presse)

Palestinians inspected their homes for damage after the earthen embankment around a sewage reservoir filled and collapsed yesterday, flooding Umm Naser, a village in the northern Gaza Strip. (Photo by Abid Katib/Getty Images)

Load-Date: March 28, 2007

End of Document

Why Islamist political parties are prospering

Ottawa Citizen

August 29, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 1135 words

Byline: Harry Sterling, Citizen Special

Body

If totally free and open elections were held in Arab countries, Islamic political parties would win almost everywhere. And most would be anti-American.

Those sentiments did not issue from the lips of a militant Islamic supporter, but rather were expressed to me the other day, in a matter-of-fact way, by a diplomat from a pro-Western country in the Middle East.

Such views obviously provide little comfort for those increasingly concerned about inroads being made by Islamic movements and political parties, particularly radical Muslim groups implicated in acts of terrorism. These concerns raise important questions regarding why Islamic political parties have been able to win greater support in recent times.

Equally importantly, what is it about Islamic extremism that attracts individuals to its doctrines, including those willing to become suicide bombers?

The most recent elections in Egypt saw a large number of so-called independent candidates enter parliament even though they were linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, which was banned from presenting candidates.

Last year, the militant **Hamas** party in the occupied Palestinian territories stunned everyone by winning power in parliamentary elections over the traditional Fatah party, now led by Mahmoud Abbas.

Although **Hamas**'s Ismail Haniya was appointed prime minister, western nations, including Canada, refused to deal with the new government and stopped all financial and development assistance, citing **Hamas**'s links with terrorism.

Notwithstanding the perceived threat posed by Islamic parties in the minds of many, Turkish voters these days clearly don't share such fears.

Despite concerted efforts by Turkey's secular-minded military and traditional power brokers -- as well as ultra-nationalists -- urging Turkish voters to turn their backs on the Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party, AKP, of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan during crucially important July 22 elections, voters rewarded the AKP with 47 per cent of the total vote, up from 34 per cent won in 2002. The AKP's sweeping electoral victory was such that it even won more than 50 per cent of the vote in the violence-ridden Kurdish region of the southeast.

Why Islamist political parties are prospering

And yesterday, Turkey's parliament elected controversial foreign minister Abdullah Gul as president, after his bid was initially blocked by the military over fears about his Islamist political past.

Given the constant warnings about the Islamization of society if avowedly Islamic parties gain power, what explains their appeal?

One key factor is that many Islamic political parties have reputations for being honest and untainted by corruption scandals, the latter extremely pervasive among secular parties such as Fatah. **Hamas**'s electoral victory last year was at least partially based on Fatah's blatant nepotism, corruption and failure to deal with widespread unemployment.

Islamic parties also have developed popular social-welfare programs in their societies. **Hamas**, and Hezbollah in Lebanon, were particularly effective in providing assistance to the people. The rapid aid provided by Pakistani Islamic movements won them considerable praise after that country's devastating earthquake in 2005.

It's generally believed Islamic parties would do well in most Muslim countries, including the more authoritarian ones, such as Saudi Arabia, were they allowed to operate freely. And it's precisely the attempt by authoritarian and monarchical-based systems in the Arab world to ban or manipulate elections that undoubtedly plays a significant role in generating support for Islamic movements, whether ostensibly legal or covert.

Although until recent times there was a belief that the appeal of radical Islamic groups, like Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda, appealed primarily to the poor and marginalized within society, that view has been questioned.

The migration of millions of rural poor to urban centres in the 20th century created considerable socio-economic discontent in many countries, including Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and elsewhere. However, as demonstrated on Sept. 11, 2001, a significant number of militants come from educated and professional backgrounds, including engineers and doctors.

While many Muslims may have regarded Islamic parties as offering opportunities to improve their economic lot in societies ruled by small groups of privileged elites, many also saw Islamic fundamentalism as offering a degree of certainty in a rapidly changing world. Modern concepts and practices -- including the emancipation of **women** -- were seen as undermining traditional ways of life, shunting many to the sidelines in their own countries.

Support for repressive and corruption-ridden governments in the Arab world by the United States and European countries only reinforced anti-western sentiment further.

Islamic radicals offered an antidote to widespread discontent and the sense of humiliation felt by many who were resentful of foreign influences flooding their conservative societies, leaving them alienated and seemingly powerless.

The siren call of Islamic fundamentalism with its demand for a return to the certainties offered by the Koran and universal Muslim brotherhood has fallen on receptive ears, especially among those indoctrinated by imams and mullahs in religious schools, as in Pakistan, where radicalized religious leaders and students -- many of the latter **women** -- participated in the recent bloody showdown with Pakistani commandos besieging the controversial Red Mosque in Islamabad.

Another contributing factor behind the current jihad (holy war) against the west, is the simple desire of younger Muslims to participate in a cause, the present intervention by the U.S. and other nations in Iraq and Afghanistan being regarded as a premeditated war against Islam. In some cases, as in Bosnia, many foreign Muslims joined the fighting as a proxy battle for their own homelands, such as Chechnya and Uzbekistan.

While U.S. President George W. Bush and others have convinced themselves the only way to reduce the appeal of radical Islamists is to promote free market economies and western concepts of democracy and human rights, others in the Muslim world insist their religion and its teachings from the Koran are integral to the daily life of the Muslim faithful, and foreign concepts of secularism and unfettered democracy are alien concepts, unsuited to Muslim society.

Why Islamist political parties are prospering

But until such time as the inhabitants of predominantly Muslim societies benefit from universal education and health care, adequate living standards and employment -- plus assured security -- the question of what kind of society they truly prefer to live in, whether secular and fully democratic, or non-secular, will likely remain unanswered.

Harry Sterling, a former diplomat, is an Ottawa-based commentator.

He served in Turkey.

Load-Date: August 29, 2007

End of Document

Nation & world

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia)

December 19, 2006, Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 575 words

Body

Laura Bush had skin

cancer tumor removed

WASHINGTON - First lady Laura Bush had a skin cancer tumor removed from her right shin in early November but decided it was a private matter and did not reveal it publicly.

The White House acknowledged the procedure Monday night after Mrs. Bush was noticed with a bandage below her right knee.

The cancer was a squamous cell carcinoma, the second most common form of skin cancer, said Susan Whitson, her press secretary.

A squamous cell carcinoma is a tumor that affects the middle layer of the skin. It is more aggressive than basal cell cancer, the most common form of skin cancer.

Second suspect arrested

in prostitutes' murder case

IPSWICH, England - Police investigating the killings of five prostitutes in eastern England said they arrested a second suspect today, and were questioning both men.

A 48-year-old man was arrested at 5 a.m. in Ipswich, where all of the victims worked, said Detective Chief Superintendent Stewart Gull. Police have not released the identity of either suspect.

Sky News reported that the second suspect was arrested at his home in the red-light district of Ipswich.

The suspect arrested Monday has been identified in news reports as Tom Stephens, 37, who had denied killing the women in an interview with a British newspaper. Stephens said he knew all five of the victims and had previously been interviewed by police.

Six sentenced to death for

infecting children with HIV

Nation & world

TRIPOLI, Libya - Five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor were convicted and sentenced to death by a Libyan court today on charges they deliberately infected hundreds of children with the AIDS virus. The verdict can be appealed.

Judge Mahmoud Hawissa read out the verdict at a seven-minute hearing in a Tripoli court at the end of the defendants' second trial.

The six defendants, detained for nearly seven years, had previously been convicted and condemned to death, but Libyan judges granted them a retrial after international protests over the fairness of the proceedings. Bulgaria contends the children were infected by unsanitary practices at their Libyan hospital.

One killed in gun battle

between Fatah, **Hamas**

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - **Hamas** and Fatah forces traded fire today outside the headquarters of the Palestinian intelligence service and within a hospital compound. At least one person was killed and 11 wounded.

Masked gunmen also briefly fired on guards manning a roadblock outside the Palestinian presidential residence.

The clashes were the latest sign that a cease-fire meant to end a week of factional fighting in Gaza is unraveling.

Fatah is the party of President Mahmoud Abbas, who was not at home during the shooting today. **Hamas** controls parliament and the Palestinian Cabinet, putting it in charge of most government functions.

Wholesale prices see

largest surge in 32 years

WASHINGTON - Inflation at the wholesale level surged by the largest amount in more than three decades in November, reflecting higher prices for gasoline and a host of other items.

The Producer Price Index, which measures inflation pressures before they reach the consumer, was up 2 percent last month, the biggest advance since a similar increase in November 1974, the Labor Department reported today.

COMPILED FROM WIRE REPORTS

Economists had been expecting a rebound in wholesale prices following two months of big declines. However, the 2 percent jump was four times bigger than the 0.5 percent increase they had forecast.

30

Load-Date: December 20, 2006

World Ticker

The Toronto Star
January 14, 2007 Sunday

Copyright 2007 Toronto Star Newspapers, Ltd.

Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 592 words

Body

West Bank

Secret coalition talks progressing: Officials

Significant progress has been made in secret coalition talks between the top Hamas leader and envoys of moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, officials from both sides said yesterday, signalling a sudden shift after several weeks of deadly internal fighting.

In Gaza, Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh called on his Hamas movement and on Fatah to halt the increasingly violent power struggle that has claimed 35 lives in recent weeks.

The secret coalition talks started in Syria two weeks ago between top Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal and two Abbas envoys, independent legislator Ziad Abu Amr and Mohammed Rashid, a former adviser to Abbas' predecessor, the late Yasser Arafat.

Bangladesh

Police arrest 2,500, raid leaders' homes

Police and soldiers have arrested more than 2,500 people and raided the homes of several political leaders after a new caretaker government was sworn in to quell unrest ahead of elections, police said yesterday.

The arrests and raids came after Fakhruddin Ahmed, a respected economist and former central bank governor, became head of the country's caretaker government in a bid to restore calm to a nation beset by violence amid preparations for national elections.

Fakhruddin Ahmed's appointment came less than 24 hours after President Iajuddin Ahmed had declared a state of emergency, postponed the Jan. 22 vote and stepped down as leader of the caretaker government.

Italy

Ex-Nazis convicted

for 1944 massacre

A military tribunal yesterday convicted 10 former members of the Nazi SS in the 1944 slaughter of more than 700 people near Bologna.

World Ticker

Ten of the defendants - one former officer and 16 enlisted personnel - received life sentences for murder, while seven were acquitted. But none of the men was in custody. They were tried in absentia, and all are believed to be living in Germany.

The massacre occurred around Marzabotto, a town south of Bologna, during a retreat by German troops.

From Sept. 29 to Oct. 5, 1944, SS soldiers slaughtered more than 700 people - mostly children, women and elderly - in what was ostensibly a hunt for resistance fighters.

Britain

Prince Harry to start Iraq training: Tabloid

The News of the World newspaper reported today that Prince Harry is scheduled to begin final training for deployment to Iraq with his army regiment, but the defence ministry said no decision had been made on whether he would be deployed.

The paper said the 22-year-old prince, who is third in line to the throne, would take part in a two-day pre-deployment course,

Harry, known as "Cornet Wales" by his Blues and Royals regiment, has trained to command 11 soldiers and four Scimitar tanks.

The defence ministry has previously said Harry could go to Iraq if his unit was deployed, but he might be kept out of situations where his presence would jeopardize his comrades.

Spain

Throngs march for

renewed peace talks

Hundreds of thousands of people called for peace as they marched through the capital yesterday, following a car bombing that killed two people Dec. 30 and derailed a peace process with Basque separatists.

A sea of people filled Madrid's main north-south artery, and rallies were also held in the Basque city Bilbao. The rallies were called by labour federations and endorsed by hundreds of other organizations

The attack at Madrid's airport came nine months after the Basque separatist group ETA declared a ceasefire. The separatists insist the truce still stands, but the government cancelled plans to negotiate, ending the peace process.

FROM STAR WIRE SERVICES

Load-Date: January 14, 2007

'UK must help Gulf states in war on terror'

The Evening Standard (London)

December 19, 2006 Tuesday

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London Evening Standard

Section: B MERGE; Pg. 6

Length: 300 words

Byline: PAUL WAUGH

Body

TONY BLAIR made clear the war on terror comes before democratic rights today as he urged the West to do more to boost "moderate" Arab states.

As he arrived in Dubai on the last leg of his Middle East tour, the Prime Minister lavished praise on oil-rich Gulf states and said it was time for the world to help them fight Islamic extremism.

Unabashed by criticism of his recent decision to ditch a fraud probe into Saudi Arabian arms deals, Mr Blair underlined his new doctrine that Britain's "national interest" sometimes has to overrule worries about an ally's lack of democracy.

He met rulers of the United Arab Emirates today ahead of a speech calling for international support for moderate leaders offering an alternative to the "arc of extremism" running from Iran to Syria and Palestinian militants Hamas.

Although just one per cent of the UAE's population has the right to vote and women's rights are negligible, Mr Blair hailed it as a model of how Arab states could look if they opened their economies and allied with the West against extremists.

The country, which runs the Emirates airline that sponsors Arsenal, has 100,000 British ex-patriots and is the UK's ninth biggest trading partner.

Mr Blair also today held secret talks with Abu Dhabi premier Mohammad bin Rashid, whose al Maktoum family is leading a bid to take over Liverpool Football Club.

Earlier Mr Blair's push for peace in the Middle East won its first breakthrough after Israel announced plans to swap prisoners and release funds for Palestinian moderates.

'UK must help Gulf states in war on terror'

Under the plan, hatched by Mr Blair and Gordon Brown, millions of pounds withheld by Israel could be channelled to Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah. The money would bypass **Hamas**, which runs the territory's government but refuses to recognise the state of Israel.

Load-Date: December 19, 2006

End of Document

Running Guns to Gaza: A Living in the Desert

The New York Times

June 19, 2007 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1283 words

Byline: By MICHAEL SLACKMAN

Mona el-Naggar contributed reporting.

Dateline: RAFAH, Egypt, June 17

Body

The **Hamas** military takeover of Gaza last week was partly fueled by caches of weapons smuggled through tunnels below this gritty Sinai border town. Two days spent with smugglers here suggest that to stanch the flow of weapons, Egypt will have to address the economic and social concerns of the region, and not rely solely on its security forces.

"There are two things here," said Ibrahim Sawarka, a Bedouin who used his tribal name, not his family name, for fear of retribution from the police. "There is poverty, and there is smuggling."

In more than a dozen interviews shortly after **Hamas** solidified its grip on Gaza, local residents said that the Palestinian territory was a primary market for goods in a region short of jobs and other economic opportunities.

They said, almost without exception, that the business of ferrying weapons was more about profit than ideology. Working with small construction tools like jackhammers, people here said they dug a tunnel to Gaza in about six months. The shoulder-width passages were often strung with lights and a mechanized pulley system -- like a tow rope at a ski lift -- to deliver the merchandise.

One person said that most of the weapons smuggled into Gaza were Russian- and Chinese-made. Others said that the guns, often AK-47s, may have come from Sudan and moved through Egypt.

In the last two years, since Israel withdrew its forces and settlers from Gaza, Egyptian officials said they had increased their policing of the border, blowing up tunnels when discovered and arresting people connected with smuggling. But local Bedouins said that instead of digging tunnels from inside homes, they started outside to avoid the Egyptian authorities' linking them to an individual.

Israel installed a 25-foot wall of concrete and iron along the border that extends 10 feet underground. But the tunnels are typically 20 to 65 feet deep. Israel also used sonar and other sensors to hunt for the tunnels, occasionally setting off charges in the ground to collapse undiscovered tunnels. They also urged the Egyptians to do more, which they did.

"Of course the tunnels are one of the largest sources for weapon smuggling into Gaza," said Emad Ghad, with the Ahran Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo. "The Egyptian authorities try, and they have uncovered

Running Guns to Gaza: A Living in the Desert

some of the smuggling. They announced a case about six months ago. But the number of Egyptian forces allowed does not allow for the capacity needed to control the border."

In the days since the Hamas takeover of Gaza, smugglers say the increased Egyptian security presence has forced them to lie low for now.

But no matter how much the authorities crack down, people here say the outlaw culture can never be overcome without economic development. Unemployment in the region is among the highest in Egypt.

Many of the Bedouins said they also worked to smuggle people into Israel, often women from Eastern Europe, looking to work in the sex industry.

To discuss their situation, Mr. Sawarka and some neighbors gathered at a relative's house in Mahdiya village, in Rafah city. They complained about the isolation and discrimination they felt as Bedouins, a circumstance they say leaves no alternative but to work as smugglers.

Smuggling has long been a part of the Bedouin life, but weapons smuggling to Gaza began in earnest with the start of the first Palestinian intifada 20 years ago, people here said.

"Why do you think that people resort to smuggling?" said Abdalla el-Shaer, a resident of Rafah who said his brother was killed more than a year ago, fighting for Hamas in Gaza. "If the country provides employment opportunities, no one will smuggle weapons. With no other opportunity, they smuggle weapons."

In the expanse of rocky, rolling desert that extends past the dusty, rundown center of this town, there is a subculture of poverty and relative wealth that illustrates both the lack of resources provided to people from the region and the allure of what smuggling can bring. Unlike southern Sinai, with its upscale Red Sea resorts, the north has long been ignored. Homes do not even have fresh running water.

Officials also say that a small group of Bedouins from the area carried out three bombing attacks on southern Sinai resorts. The Bedouins reject the authority of the state because they feel brutalized and discriminated against. And the state continues to press the Bedouins because they question their loyalty to the state, because of their smuggling and because of a fear that a strain of radical Islam has taken hold.

"Security cannot be the sole solution to any problem, no matter how small," said a general with the Egyptian Interior Ministry who spoke on the condition that he not be identified. "It is the social problems that create security problems, and not the other way around."

The region's former representative in Parliament criticized the government. "There is only security," said El-Kashef Muhammad el-Kashef. "The government does not play its second role of resolving such issues as unemployment and discrimination."

Forty miles from Rafah lies Wadi Amr, a bleak desert landscape. It is home to about 3,000 people, including many, like Jedeeiya eid Musleh, 67, who live in huts made of twigs and scrap metal. Mr. Musleh lives with two sons; a third is in prison for drug running, he said. They have nothing but a few cushions on the ground beneath a lean-to, and their hut.

"Anyone who has the chance to smuggle will do it," said a neighbor, Salim Lafy Ali Tarabeen, 30, as he sat beside Mr. Musleh. Mr. Tarabeen, who also was using his tribal name, carries two cellphones, one with a local number, the other with an Israeli number. At one point he received a call from a friend who said he was in an Israeli jail for smuggling weapons.

Not far from Mr. Musleh's hut was a large one-story house with four white Toyota pickup trucks parked out front. "You have seen how poor people live, now you will see how the smugglers live," said Ahmed Muhammad Hussein, who is working to help improve the Bedouins' social conditions. The house was filled with men in fresh clean clothing. Large bowls of rice and mutton were served for lunch.

Running Guns to Gaza: A Living in the Desert

The Bedouins' problems are one factor in a region that has been tense since the day in 1982 that Rafah was cut in half by the peace treaty that had Israel return the Sinai to Egypt. Israel occupied the peninsula after the 1967 war. As the border was fortified with walls and guards, families were split and the challenge of crossing from one side to the other became an act of defiance.

Over time, Rafah became one of the most heavily policed areas in Egypt because authorities wanted not only to stop the flow of weapons to Gaza, but also to stop the flow of ***Hamas***'s radical ideas to Egypt. The huge security presence meant that even the beach was closed, cutting off a major source of recreation and stoking tension between local residents and the authorities.

Today, as a result of the ***Hamas*** takeover of Gaza and fears of refugees pouring into Egypt, there are even more troop carriers in Rafah. High-ranking officers set up card tables to rest their walkie-talkies and to drink tea as they monitor the scene. There have been reports of some people crossing from Gaza into Egypt, and officials said they had sent some people back to Gaza and taken others to the regional capital of El Arish.

For now, the Bedouin men who said they are smugglers say it is too risky to conduct business, because the security is so tight. But they still manage to drive the area, easily avoiding checkpoints, and are planning a protest for next month to demand their rights.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: Bedouins in the northern Sinai, a bleak landscape of trash-strewn dunes, complain of isolation and discrimination. Ignored by the government, their homes do not have running water. (Photograph by Mohammed Saber/European Pressphoto Agency) (pg. A8) Map: Despite the efforts of Israel and Egypt, tunnels cross into Gaza. (Map by The New York Times) (pg. A8)

Load-Date: June 19, 2007

TO HELL WITH WORLD PEACE

The Nation (AsiaNet)

February 8, 2007 Thursday

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Length: 813 words

Byline: DR A.H. KHAYAL

Body

When Bush occupied Iraq, he gave reasons for the occupation. When he occupied Afghanistan, he gave reasons for the occupation. Did someone ask him for the reasons? None. Then why did he volunteer reasons? It is a great mystery. By giving reasons, Bush has insulted the American people. Imagine a supreme military power giving reasons for its international military orgy! Bush must be impeached for making mockery of America's military supremacy.

Does an earthquake give reasons for destroying what it destroys? An earthquake is a supreme destructive power. It destroys whatever it fancies to destroy. It never degrades itself by volunteering reasons for its destruction spree. Bush is a supreme political earthquake. He must destroy whatever he fancies to destroy without insulting Americans by giving reasons for his military revelries.

Bush is a professional creator of human misery. All the dead professional creators of human misery must be envying Bush in their graves. Some of them may have emailed their congratulations to him on his consummate anti-humanity accomplishments. The misery which Bush has inflicted upon millions of innocent Iraqi, Afghani and Palestinian men, women and children is unparalleled since the World War II.

Bush's greatest political creation is that he has manufactured a new world globe in his political factory. He passionately desires to replace the existing globe with his own new globe. To his sensitive political nostrils, the existing globe reeks of deadly poisonous gases like the Iranians, the Taliban, the Bathists etc etc. He religiously believes that his new globe would annihilate all the existing political marshes and the world would become more fragrant than cologne.

Bush loves democracy. But his love of democracy is not a platonic love. It is a purely self-seeking and opportunistic love. Any democracy which does not lick his shoes is not a democracy. A legitimate democracy is a democracy which only serves Bush's political ambitions. For example, he alleges that the Iranian democracy is not behaving itself. He has demanded a regime-change in Iran. The Iranian democracy is a piece of barbed wire, which is twirling in Bush's kidneys. It must be destroyed and the vacuum filled with a democracy, which is strictly in accordance with Bush's specifications.

Let's have a look at another democracy. Recently, the Palestinians voted Hamas into power with an astounding majority. Not a single world government expressed even an iota of doubt about the justness, fairness and transparency of the elections. Hamas formed the government. It inaugurated its functioning by declaring that Israel was an illegal state. The declaration was a political hurricane.

TO HELL WITH WORLD PEACE

There was a rumour that at the time of the declaration, Bush was soundly asleep. But the rumbling of the hurricane rolled him off his bed. He got to his feet with a strenuous effort. When he had recovered his senses, he declared that Hamas government itself was a fake government. And if it wanted to be accepted as a democracy it must at once forget about the power, which the Palestinians had invested in it and start behaving like Bush's butler.

In pre-Bushian days, democracy was universally defined as the will of the people. But Bush has demonetised this definition and has coined a new definition for it. According to the new definition, democracy is not the will of the people but Bush's will. The teachers of political science all over the world must declare that the ages-old definition of democracy has become obsolete. It must forthwith be expunged from all the textbooks and the new Bushian definition inserted in its place.

If Iran continues to obey the will of its people, it will do so only at the risk of its very survival. Likewise, if Hamas continues to obey the will of its compatriots, it will do so only at the risk of its very survival. Bush defended his Iraqi invasion by calling it a pre-emptive strike. Some people say that an oracle had warned Bush that if he did not destroy Iraq, Iraq would destroy his Texas ranch. Obviously, the warning from the oracle was a warning straight from the horse's mouth. Bush had no choice. His invasion was meant to prevent Saddam from destroying his ranch and the ranch horses.

Robert Browning said: "God is in his heaven and all is well with the world". Maybe the observation was valid in Browning's own day. But today it is begging for a revision. The revised version should be somewhat like this: "God is in his heaven and everything is wrong with the world because Bush is down here."

The world is yearning for peace. But so long as Bush is at the White House, he must keep blackening the world's face. World peace and Bush are as different from each other as a churchgoer is different from a church mouse. For Bush, world peace is not worth a teaspoonful of his sputum. To hell with world peace!

Load-Date: February 13, 2007

Women human shields killed in Gaza

The Evening Standard (London)

November 3, 2006 Friday

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London Evening Standard

Section: B MERGE; Pg. 8

Length: 275 words

Body

NICHOLAS CECIL TWO Palestinian women were killed today after acting as human shields to protect 60 gunmen holed up in a Gaza mosque under fire from Israeli troops.

At least six other women were injured after Israeli soldiers opened fire towards the mosque in the town of Beit Hanoun.

The deaths threatened to spark more violence in the Middle East just months after the bloody conflict between Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon and Israel which left more than a thousand dead, mainly Lebanese civilians.

Hopes of peace between Israel and the Palestinian authorities were also dealt a blow.

The two women were killed as a 19-hour stand-off at the al-Nasir mosque ended with all of the gunmen escaping.

The gunmen were cornered by the Israeli army in Beit Hanoun last night. It was the third day of what has been the largest Israeli operation in the Gaza Strip in months, to put a stop to militants firing rockets into Israel.

Hamas radio broadcast a call for Palestinian women to form a human shield around the mosque.

Around 50 women, all of them veiled, had marched to encircle the building.

Army authorities said soldiers had fired at armed men but said it was investigating whether soldiers had also shot the women. In the confusion, the gunmen escaped.

Witnesses said army bulldozers demolished a wall at the mosque.

The roof of the mosque, one of the oldest in Gaza according to locals, collapsed.

Earlier, an Israeli air strike killed four Hamas militants in northern Gaza.

Six home-made missiles were fired at the Israeli town of Sderot from Gaza yesterday.

Women human shields killed in Gaza

At least 22 Palestinians have been killed in this three-day offensive, more than half of them militants.

Graphic

FLEEING IN TERROR: TWO PALESTINIAN **WOMEN** LIE DEAD AFTER AN ISRAELI TANK FIRED ON HUMAN SHIELDS OUTSIDE A MOSQUE IN BEIT HANOUN TODAY

Load-Date: December 1, 2006

End of Document

Gaza children cannot escape as Israel mounts its bloodiest attack in months

The Independent (London)

November 9, 2006 Thursday

Fourth Edition

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The INDEPENDENT

Section: WORLD; Pg. 28

Length: 758 words

Byline: Donald Macintyre in Beit Hanoun

Body

Eighteen Palestinian civilians, most of them women and children from the same family, were killed yesterday as they tried to flee a barrage of Israeli artillery shells fired on and around the house where they had been sleeping minutes earlier.

The victims were killed by an estimated 10 to 12 155mm shells which landed on Beit Hanoun less than 24 hours after troops had ended a six-day ground incursion into the northern Gaza town aimed at stopping militants firing Qassam rockets into Israel.

All but one of the dead were members of the Athamneh family and included six children under 16. They were killed when they rushed out into the dirt road beside their four-storey building after the first shell struck, punching a hole two feet in diameter through the roof. Large puddles in the road were still dark with blood five hours after the attack. The artillery salvo, which began at 5.30am, inflicted the highest single civilian death toll in four months of operations by the Israeli military since Gaza militants seized the Israeli corporal Gilad Shalit. Among the dozens of wounded, 17 people, including three children and six women, were still in intensive care in Gaza City's Shifa hospital last night.

At the mortuary at Kamal Adwan hospital Majdi Saad Athamneh, 37, wept as he wrote down the names of relatives whose corpses he had identified. As a neighbour opened one of the containers to reveal the bodies of his 10-year-old son, Saad, and his brother, Mohammed, 28, Mr Athamneh said he had lost 13 members of his family. He added: "My wife is in the hospital and so is my other son."

Lying in a bed at Al Awda hospital, Haneen Athamneh, 20, said she had finished washing before dawn prayers in their fourth-floor apartment when she heard the explosion from the shell hitting the roof.

She said: "I ran with my husband into the road outside. I was hit by shrapnel on my side. There was smoke and dust everywhere. It was like a fog. It was hard to breathe. There were heads decapitated. I saw my aunt Jamila's leg flying. I tried to help her but she said, 'Run for your life'."

Gaza children cannot escape as Israel mounts its bloodiest attack in months

She said Israeli troops had occupied the building for two days during the incursion, in which more than 50 Palestinians - most but not all militants - were killed. "They told us not to worry, they were not going to hurt us," Ms Athamneh said. "They said they wanted peace. What kind of peace is this?"

At her bedside, her mother, Sarya Basiouny, 62, said: "Yesterday we buried our dead. Today we are burying the dead again." The youngest victim killed was Maysa Athamneh, eight months, who had been sleeping before her father Ramzi, 30, rushed her and his two other children out of the building on hearing the first explosion. Her seven-year-old brother Abdullah lost a leg.

After one hardline **Hamas** spokesman was quoted calling for a resumption of suicide bombings in retaliation, the exiled **Hamas** leader Khaled Mashal said in Damascus the faction would retaliate "by deed, not words". The normally more moderate Ghazi Hamad, spokesman for the **Hamas** cabinet, declared: "Israel believes in killing, and therefore this state should cease to exist."

The Israeli Defence Forces said they had been launching "preventative" shelling in response to Qassam rocket attacks after the Israeli troops' withdrawal from Beit Hanoun on Tuesday. No injuries were reported from the rocket attacks. The IDF said it "regrets any event in which uninvolved [people] are hurt" while insisting that the "responsibility for civilian casualties" lay with factions who launched Qassam rockets "from the shelter of populated areas". But in an implicit explanation that the killings were caused by human or technical error, the military said the artillery fire was "directed at a location distant from the one reportedly hit".

The military inquiry has been entrusted to Maj-Gen Meir Khalifi, who also investigated the deaths of seven members of the Ghalia family in an explosion on a Gaza beach last June. Despite doubts raised over its evidence, including the timeline it gave of Israeli attacks on the day, his report insisted that the IDF was not responsible.

One resident, Usama Ahmed Athamneh, 34, told the independent politician Mustafa Barghouti, who visited the scene of the carnage: "We do not want to see any of Fatah and **Hamas**. For playing the firecrackers [Qassams] we are getting killed."

In a wave of critical international reaction, King Abdullah of Jordan; the Italian Foreign Minister, Massimo D'Alema, and Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian President, described the event as a "massacre".

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

A TANGO WITH ISLAM; The new Cold War within a conflict of civilizations

What the Papers Say Part A (Russia)

April 16, 2007 Monday

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Section: PRESS EXTRACTS;; No. 68

Length: 1675 words

Byline: Alexei Malashenko

Highlight: Russia, the West, and the Islamic world; Fighting extremists hasn't brought Russia and America closer together. The rising tension in relations between Russia and the West is giving Islamic radicals additional opportunities for maneuver.

Body

American-Russian relations have deteriorated. They are being labeled a new Cold War. From our experiences in the last Cold War, we know how important it is to have reliable allies - or at least some leverage for putting pressure on an opponent.

Under the circumstances, Islam is drawing additional attention.

When we take a detailed look at Islam as a political entity, its surface immediately breaks up into separate components: regions, countries, ideological trends, and so on and so forth. Nevertheless, many American, Russian, and European politicians and citizens still believe - if only at the instinctual level - in a kind of homogenous "average" version of Islam: alien at best, hostile at worst. The word "xenophobia" springs to mind.

The recognition of a conflict between civilizations cannot be concealed, regardless of hypocritical political correctness. On the opposite side, Muslims tend to speak of a war against Islam or a new crusade. The conflict exists in people's minds: not everyone, but many people. Consequently, it's bound to be reflected in their behavior and political orientation.

This clash is used as a scare tactic, forgetting that it has always existed: look at any medieval history textbook. It used to be entirely "concrete" - that is, military. It killed men, women, and children in far greater numbers than it does now. The conflict dies down and flares up again, but it's never extinguished entirely. Neither the Christian civilization nor the Islamic civilization will emerge from it victorious or defeated.

Something's going wrong between the Muslim and Christian worlds, and we're trying to come up with rational explanations for that.

Religion has always been more than a form in which various conflicts are expressed; it can make up their ideological foundations, and it has been used as a tool. Most importantly, it is part of the socio-cultural landscape in which politics takes place. This is particularly characteristic of Islam, although Christianity has also long since lost its political innocence.

Let's look at the reasons for the current inter-civilizational conflict.

A TANGO WITH ISLAM The new Cold War within a conflict of civilizations

First: the development gulf between the West and the Islamic world which claims to know the perfect model and believes in the certainty of its ultimate victory: that is, it believes in a multipolar Islamic world. And this point of view certainly isn't confined to Islamic radicals.

Second: the persistent influence of Islamism, especially its radical wing.

Third: local conflicts in which Muslims face non-Muslims. It doesn't matter who started these conflicts. No one believes they are to blame.

Fourth: Muslim migration - rapidly advancing into Europe (I would also add the Turkish question here), and creating problems in Russia and (to a lesser extent) in the United States).

Fifth: growing xenophobia on both sides. This can be provoked in various ways: the cartoon controversy, the Pope's incautious remark, arson attacks on mosques, talk of the inevitable Islamization of Europe and Russia. The media and the arts are also facilitating a rise in xenophobia. Negative stories always sound more convincing than positive stories.

All these reasons will persist indefinitely, nourishing the feeling of reciprocal alienation.

It is not the subject of this essay to work out why relations have cooled between Russia and the West, and primarily between Russia and America. Feeling stronger and simultaneously aggrieved, Russia is simply feeling out a game of its own, seeking partners (in the Islamic world and elsewhere), and trying to take advantage of the inter-civilizational confrontation's circumstances. Fighting extremists hasn't brought Russia and America closer together.

Russia has some grounds for claiming a special relationship with the Islamic world. Russia has an Islamic component, and it is not fully part of Europe. Russia occupies an intermediate and uncertain position between civilizations. Contrary to our crude attempts at Eurasianism, there's nothing to be proud of in that.

Russia is positioning itself as part of the Islamic world; it has observer status with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Putin himself attended an OIC conference in Kuala Lumpur, where he heard the anti-Jewish remarks of a leading Muslim authority, former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohammed; the Duma has established a parliamentary formation called "Russia and the Islamic World: Strategic Dialogue." Officially, the Muslim direction is presented as a foreign policy priority.

Russia is speaking out against US policy in Iraq; it is playing a separate game in Iran; it is establishing its own position with regard to the Middle East - for example, it is engaging in dialogue with Hamas.

In 2006, Moscow "legalized" its categorization of Islamic radicals into good and bad radicals. Is Russia's present-day "tango" with radical Islamists reminiscent of the 1950s-1980s, when the Soviet Union assisted national liberation movements and its own satellites generated by such movements? I think not. Firstly, the scale is different. Secondly, the goals are different: back then, we sought to do more than cobble together a pro-Soviet group - we also sought to convert the more susceptible Third World regimes to our Marxist-Leninist faith. That approach is most unlikely to work on the adherents of radical Islam.

Paradoxically enough, in communicating with Hamas and Iran, Russia is encouraging them to make concessions in the West's favor - while simultaneously demonstrating to the West that Russia can influence the Islamists effectively.

Judging by Moscow's anti-American rhetoric, we are almost entirely on the side of the Islamic radicals. If we also look at our domestic ideological discourse - sovereign democracy, a special path of development, and so on - Russia seems more like the West's opponent than its partner in this "misunderstanding" between civilizations. After all, the Islamists also claim that their path is a unique alternative.

In the meantime, US Ambassador in Russia William Burns is saying that Russia and the USA have common interests in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and the Middle East. Believe me, his words aren't just paying tribute to politeness. Ultimately, Moscow certainly doesn't want the Taliban, or a nuclear-armed Iran, or the destruction of

A TANGO WITH ISLAM The new Cold War within a conflict of civilizations

Israel. Yes, Russia could cooperate with the USA. But it's held back by Ameriphobia - largely an internal political stratagem, not external.

An inevitable question arises: whose side is Russia on? If it's with the anti-Western Islamists, then it's on the Muslim side in the inter-civilizational conflict. Or is rapprochement with radical Islam just a means of self-assertion - an instrument of self-expression in global politics?

As ever, Russian officials are in no hurry to make things perfectly clear. They're categorically opposed to any contact with non-governmental Islamist organizations. The Muslim Brotherhood, for example, is denied access to the Kremlin or the Duma. Yet the Brotherhood's supporters - as long as they're official politicians - are granted high-level meetings in Russia.

The stern Kremlin doesn't sing the praises of Hamas. It delegates this task to its ideological kindred, the anti-Americans in "token opposition" movements: nationalists, imperialists, Eurasianists, and others in service to the regime. When Hamas leader Khalid Mashaal was interviewed by Alexander Prokhanov, chief editor of the nationalist "Zavtra" newspaper, Prokhanov expressed admiration for the Islamists and congratulated Hamas on its election victory. (And how would Moscow have reacted if anyone had congratulated Shamil Basayev?)

Yet Moscow still isn't deriving any substantial benefits from Russian-Islamic friendship: neither Hamas nor Iran are making concessions to Russian negotiators. Russia hasn't managed to persuade the Palestinian Islamists to ease up on Israel. There's a heated dispute over the construction of a nuclear power station at Bushehr. Russia never managed to intervene decisively in the Hezbollah-Israel conflict in Lebanon in summer 2006. Russia's influence on the civil war in Iraq is zero. No Islamic radicals lifted a finger to help when several Russian Embassy staff in Iraq were abducted and murdered last year.

Contacts with radical Islam, which might be productive in themselves, aren't yielding any victory laurels for Russia. Why not? Possibly because the chief functionaries responsible for foreign policy in the Muslim direction have proved to be unprepared for such a turn of events. Rumor has it that the Russian Foreign Ministry didn't find out about the Hamas visit to Moscow until President Putin mentioned it in a speech in Madrid in 2006.

Besides, the Islamists simply don't trust Russia. They see it as part of a different civilization - wandering over the the Muslims for purely tactical purposes. They also remember the wars in Afghanistan and Chechnya.

So Moscow is having to prove its loyalty to the Muslims. Naturally, the Muslims aren't interested in weakening Russia. They'd have no use for it if it were completely helpless. Thus, while criticizing it for brutality in Chechnya, they have never recognized the Chechen separatists, and they have supported Russia's territorial integrity. Whatever else it may be, at least Russia is some sort of counterweight to the United States. There's also a certain amount of inertia here - a kind of lingering post-Soviet mindset, and fascination with Russia's nuclear might.

Overall, however, Russia is alien to them. It's on the other side; part of an alien, hostile civilization. And the new Cold War doesn't change that at all. At times, it seems like Moscow's activity in the Islamic world, including Putin's visit to the Middle East in February, simply soaks into the Arab sands and disappears. Russian companies usually don't do very well in the Islamic world, and companies from Islamic countries show no interest in Russia. There are many fine words, but all too few results.

Source: Nezavisimaya Gazeta, No. 76, April 13, 2007, p. 11

Translated by Elena Leonova

Load-Date: April 16, 2007

Wall is sensible solution to strife

Daily News (South Africa)

August 02, 2007 Thursday

e1 Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 16

Length: 333 words

Body

With reference to the opinion piece by Iqbal Jassat entitled "A blot on our liberated nation's conscience" (Daily News, July 24), he uses the emotive rallying call of apartheid to show a similarity between the pre-democratic South Africa and Israel.

Factually, nothing is further from reality.

The population of Israel is made up of more than 50% of people of Near Eastern and North African origin, mainly Jews driven out of their homelands in Arab countries and including more than one million Israeli Arabs, who enjoy all the democratic freedoms Israel's dictatorial neighbours can only dream about.

Israeli Arabs of both sexes have full voting rights, enjoy freedom of expression, sit in the Knesset (parliament), are judges and hold other senior positions, have freedom of movement and enjoy freedom of religion.

Compare this to, say, Saudi Arabia where women cannot go on to the street alone, drive a car or vote. In other countries Christians are persecuted and definitely cannot proselytise.

The writer is concerned that South Africa recognises a sovereign state and member of the United Nations and is upset that Hamas, which refuses to recognise Israel's right to exist, is penalised.

The arguments under reference have nothing whatsoever to do with apartheid but is rather the relationship between Israel and those Arab countries who still consider themselves at war with Israel, including Syria and Saudi Arabia, plus the emerging world threat, Iran, whose hand-maidens are Hamas and Hezbollah.

Finally, has the writer ever considered how many suicide bombers from Israel have blown up aircraft, buildings, trains and buses worldwide over the years?

Israel has found an antidote - a wall and fence - which has been most successful in keeping these murderers at bay. This is not apartheid, but self-defence against foreign invaders.

The solution is simple.

If the Arabs put down their arms there will be peace.

However, if Israel were to put down its arms, there would be no Israel.

Wall is sensible solution to strife

BERNHARD LAZARUS

Durban

Load-Date: August 1, 2007

End of Document

News Summary

The New York Times

June 24, 2007 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2007 The New York Times Company

Section: Section 1; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2

Length: 591 words

Body

INTERNATIONAL 3-14

Migrants Reshape Economies

Virtually every aspect of global migration can be seen in the tiny Cape Verde off West Africa, a microcosm of the forces remaking societies across the globe where the number of people who have left approaches the number who remain. 1

Competing Reviews on Iraq

The Bush administration has commissioned assessments of the war in Iraq that could dilute the eventual conclusions of the progress report Gen. David H. Petraeus must give to Congress by Sept. 15 about the impact of the current troop increase. 1

Iran in Fierce Crackdown

Iran is in the throes of one of its most ferocious crackdowns on dissent in years, with the government focusing on labor leaders, universities, the press, women's rights advocates, a former nuclear negotiator and Iranian-Americans. 1

No Fatah Talks With Hamas

A top leader of Hamas, which last week routed its rival, Fatah, from Gaza, called for talks to re-form a power-sharing Palestinian government. Fatah leaders, looking forward to a Monday regional summit meeting that excludes Hamas, rebuffed the offer. 10

Sri Lankan Killings Unsolved

Nearly a year after the massacre of 17 aid workers in Sri Lanka, the most basic questions about the killings remain unresolved. Sri Lanka's government is facing condemnation from human rights monitors who say the investigation has been wanting because of the possibility that its security forces were involved. 4

Chirac Won't Testify in Scandal

News Summary

Having lost the immunity that protected him from prosecution while in office, Jacques Chirac, the former French president, has refused to testify in a political scandal that sought to discredit Nicolas Sarkozy, the current president. 6

NATIONAL 16-22

Roots of Bush's Stance

A divide over immigration in Midland, Tex., the city where President Bush spent much of his childhood, helps to shed light on a broader rift, as Mr. Bush and like-minded Republicans set on providing citizenship for millions of illegal immigrants engage in a contentious fight with the rest of their party. 1

Risks of Golf Course Homes

With golf communities sprouting nationwide -- 70 percent of new courses include housing -- errant golf shots have become an increasingly prominent problem. 1

Challenge to Clerical Celibacy

Voice of the Faithful, the lay group formed in response to the sexual abuse scandal in the Roman Catholic Church, is calling for the Vatican to review the requirement that priests be celibate, saying the policy may have played a role in the scandal. 16

Political Impact of "Sicko"

The film "Sicko," Michael Moore's cinematic indictment of the American health care system, is predicted to have broad political impact by crystallizing the frustration that is a pre-existing condition for many health care consumers. 21

Missing Woman's Body Found

A body believed to be that of a pregnant woman who vanished from her home has been found. A police officer thought to be the father of the unborn child was arrested on two counts of murder. 19

Hilton to Speak With Larry King

After deals with ABC and NBC fell through, Paris Hilton is set to give her first post-jail interview to Larry King on CNN. 22

NEW YORK/REGION 25-29

A Bloomberg Candidacy

New Yorkers may have become accustomed to the eccentricities of the billionaire information mogul who took an unorthodox path to public service. But, as Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg takes a prominent part on the national stage, even he has questioned whether the rest of the country is ready for him. 19

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Load-Date: June 24, 2007

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hobart Mercury (Australia)

April 24, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 12

Length: 354 words

Body

Nigerian poll 'flawed'

UMARU Yar'Adua, the ruling People's Democratic Party candidate and President Olusegun Obasanjo's chosen successor, last night was declared the winner of Nigeria's presidential poll. But monitors said the vote for the first handover of power from one civilian leader to another in the vast West African oil-producer was compromised by ballot-stuffing, violence and a shortage of voting papers.

Hamas wants revenge

A FIVE-MONTH ceasefire between Israelis and Palestinians in Gaza was threatened yesterday when Hamas called for attacks after weekend army raids killed nine, and moderate President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah urged him to cut contacts with Israel. The killings followed a rocket attack on the Israeli town of Sderot.

Afghan beheading

TALIBAN militants abducted and beheaded an Afghan intelligence service worker in eastern Lagham province and struck one of the intelligence agency's vehicles with a remote-controlled bomb in Nuristan, killing six employees yesterday. A bomb killed two policemen in southern Zabul.

Ex-PMs face exile

BANGLADESH'S former PM Sheik Hasina was blocked from boarding a flight home from London on the orders of the military-backed government. Hasina had vowed to return to fight murder and corruption charges after the government moved last week to force her and another former female PM, Khaleda Zia, into exile.

India into space

AN Indian rocket carrying an Italian satellite blasted into space yesterday, marking the country's first foray into the commercial space business. The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle blasted off from Sriharikota spaceport, north of Chennai.

Well fumes kill six

SIX people died in Vietnam's central highlands north of Ho Chi Minh City after inhaling toxic fumes in a water well. Five men died trying to rescue a neighbour who was repairing a water pump when overcome by fumes.

World's road toll

NEWS IN BRIEF

TRAFFIC accidents worldwide claim 1.2 million lives a year, the World Health Organisation says in a new report. Every day, 1000 people under 25 are killed in accidents, with 90 per cent of the deaths in low to middle-income countries mainly in Africa and Asia.

Load-Date: April 24, 2007

End of Document

WORLD BRIEFS

Herald Sun (Australia)

April 25, 2007 Wednesday

FIRST Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 27

Length: 346 words

Body

Six held in terror raids

LONDON -- British anti-terrorism officers arrested six Muslim men in London in dawn raids yesterday on suspicion of inciting terrorism overseas and raising funds for terrorists.

The six, including Abu Izzadeen, who millions saw on television heckling British Home Secretary John Reid at a public meeting last year, were arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000, a spokeswoman for Scotland Yard said.

Hunters kill rare leopard

MOSCOW -- Hunters in Russia's Far East have shot and killed one of the last seven surviving **female** amur leopards living in the wild, the World Wildlife Fund said yesterday, driving the species even closer

to extinction.

Last week, environmentalists said there were only 25-34 amur leopards, described as one of the most graceful cats in the world, still living in the wild.

Huge cocaine seizure

SAN FRANCISCO -- The United States Coast Guard has seized about 18 tonnes of cocaine, said to be worth \$600 million, in what has been described as the largest maritime drug bust in history.

The agency is set to unload the drug following three separate raids off Central America in the past two months, authorities say.

Hamas ends ceasefire

GAZA CITY -- **Hamas** militants fired a barrage of rockets and mortar shells toward Israel yesterday and said it considered a five-month truce with Israel to have ended.

Also in Gaza, an angry clan stormed the parliament building, carrying the body of a slain family member, to demand the killers be brought to justice.

The rocket attack, which came on Israel's 59th independence day, did not cause any damage or injury.

WORLD BRIEFS

Vatican steps up attacks on gays

VATICAN CITY -- The Vatican's second-highest ranking doctrinal official yesterday forcefully branded homosexual marriage an evil, and denounced abortion and euthanasia as forms of "terrorism with a human face".

The attack by Archbishop Angelo Amato, secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was the latest in a string of speeches made by either Pope Benedict XVI or other Vatican officials as Italy considers giving more rights to gays.

Load-Date: April 24, 2007

End of Document

Gaza fighting escalates

Irish Independent

February 3, 2007 Saturday

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Independent.ie 

Section: NATIONAL NEWS

Length: 352 words

Body

FIGHTING between rival Palestinian factions escalated across Gaza yesterday, killing at least 17 people, as **Hamas** overran compounds used by President Mahmoud Abbas's forces.

Violence first erupted after the Islamist **Hamas** beat Fatah in a parliamentary election last year.

Human rights award for J-Lo

JENNIFER Lopez will receive an award for her work as producer and star of a film examining the continuing murders of hundreds of **women** in a Mexican border town, Amnesty International said yesterday.

Lopez will receive the Artists for Amnesty award on February 14 at the Berlin Film Festival. The film 'Bordertown' will make its debut the following day. In it Lopez plays a journalist reporting on the serial killings of **women** Juarez, Mexico.

Kidnap suspect 'made threat'

BRITISH police are investigating claims that one of the terrorist suspects held over the alleged plot to execute a soldier recently threatened to kill a Muslim serviceman after a public fight.

During the skirmish the suspect is reported to have described the young soldier as a traitor, adding that "he should have his head chopped off".

Gambian leader claims Aids cure

THE smallest country in Africa is this morning playing host to one of the longest queues on the continent, as hundreds of people line up for miracle cures for asthma and Aids, promised by the Gambian president.

Scientists have reacted with horror to a claim by President Yahya Jammeh that he can cure asthma on Fridays and Saturdays and HIV/Aids on Mondays and Thursdays. All patients need is a doctor's referral and to queue up outside State House in the capital, Banjul.

Farrah Fawcett cancer-free

Gaza fighting escalates

FARRAH Fawcett got an unbeatable gift for her 60th birthday: a clean bill of health.

The actress, who revealed in October that she was fighting cancer, learned this week that she is cancer-free, a spokesman said yesterday.

Katie: I love to call Tom husband

KATIE Holmes claims she fell in love with Tom Cruise the moment she first shook his hand.

"I love calling him husband," she told Harper's Bazaar magazine adding that she definitely wanted more children.

Load-Date: February 3, 2007

End of Document

President's legal woes captivate Israelis

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

January 31, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A13

Length: 331 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

In separate, but chillingly similar incidents, Israeli President Moshe Katsav forcibly undressed two much younger female members of his staff and, despite verbal and physical attempts to resist him, forced the women to have sex with him, according to details of the alleged crimes made public for the first time Tuesday.

Katsav's growing list of legal problems include a new demand from the attorney general Tuesday that he be evicted from the presidential residence until the six charges against him for sex crimes and fraud announced last week are resolved.

The affair has continued to divert Israelis' attention from the civil wars that have been brewing in Lebanon and Gaza and from a suicide bombing in the Israeli resort town of Eilat which killed three people including the Palestinian bomber.

A fresh truce which had begun only early Tuesday in Gaza was marred a few hours later when Fatah gunmen killed a Hamas commander with a bullet to the head near the Egyptian border. But the latest ceasefire, which came after 30 deaths in five days, produced enough of a sense of confidence that many ordinary Gazans left their homes to look for food for the first time since fighting broke out again last Thursday.

Another positive development was that by late Tuesday the warring military wings of the presidential and parliamentary parts of the Palestinian government had exchanged 38 of the Fatah and Hamas members that they had kidnapped from each other since last week. But an unknown number of hostages were still being held.

The two women who made the most serious allegations of sexual impropriety against Katsav claimed Israel's 65-year-old ceremonial head of state came up to them from behind in their offices and groped their stomachs and buttocks as he placed his body against theirs.

Both alleged they were then raped, although Katsav faces a rape charge in only one of the cases and indecent assault, sexual harassment and breach of trust for the other.

Katsav has denied the charges.

President's legal woes captivate Israelis

Load-Date: January 31, 2007

End of Document

The little town that symbolises the suffering of the Middle East; LEADING ARTICLE

The Independent (London)

December 23, 2006 Saturday

First Edition

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The  INDEPENDENT

Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 26

Length: 629 words

Body

In one of the unfailing ironies of the place religious believers call the Holy Land, its most famous emblem of peace - the little town of Bethlehem - is once again a symbol of its troubles. Its economy is in crisis.

Concerns over security are keeping many tourists away. Israel's security wall has cut the town off from much of its agricultural hinterland. Unemployment stands at 65 per cent. The West's financial boycott against the Palestinian Authority has meant no salaries have been paid at the municipality for four months.

It is a complex business. The wall reflects legitimate Israeli security concerns; half the suicide bombers in 2004 are said to have come from Bethlehem. And, although Israel ceased its military activity in the Gaza Strip a month ago, Palestinian militants continue to launch rockets against Israel from there. On the other side, the recent escalation of internecine strife between the Palestinian factions has added to the tensions which have been building since voters ousted the corrupt Fatah leadership and replaced it with the more militant **Hamas**. Yesterday fierce gun battles raged between the two groups; some predicted all-out civil war.

But Bethlehem tells us something revealing. The Archbishops of Canterbury and Westminster, who arrived there on a Christmas pilgrimage earlier this week, have expressed concern - not just at the barrier which is "strangling" the place, but also at the flight of Christians from the town. Christians constituted more than 85 per cent of the population in 1948; today they make up just 12 per cent. This matters because it is the Christians who own most of the town's hotels, restaurants and shops. Throughout the West Bank and Gaza there is an exodus of the middle classes responsible for what little prosperity there was.

Prosperity for Palestinians holds the key to peace. A meeting is urgently needed between President Abbas and the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert. They have a lot to discuss. High on the agenda must be the rocket attacks on Israel and the Israeli incursions into the Palestinian territories. They must also make progress on the release of Palestinian prisoners, in which they would be assisted by **Hamas** freeing the Israeli soldier they captured last June. To do so would be an important signal from **Hamas** that it intends to continue to move along the path of political realism it adopted by contesting the elections in the first place. But their guiding strategy must be to give the Palestinians the prospect of prosperity. Mr Olmert needs to look beyond short-term security considerations and ease those Israeli restrictions that are hampering the organic growth of the Palestinian economy. A new horizon of

The little town that symbolises the suffering of the Middle East LEADING ARTICLE

prosperity, even more than symbolic political gestures, is essential to dispelling the sense of despair that grips so many Palestinian youths.

Shifts are needed internationally too. The recent Baker-Hamilton plan called for movement in US policy on the Israeli/Palestinian problem. President Bush needs to heed that. And the European Union, which has salved its conscience in the past by giving more aid to charities working with Palestinians, needs to get off the fence and apply some political pressure to Israel.

In the midst of it all, the innocents - terrified children, disabled people, women cut off from hospitals by security checkpoints - continue to suffer. Two of the three charities for which we are raising money in our Christmas appeal this year work with such people. Supporting them is the only gesture of solidarity open to most of us. We exhort our readers to be generous in their giving. In the end, though, personal hopes must be allied to politics. If there is anything good in the present flux it is that it offers a chance to find new ways forward.

Load-Date: December 23, 2006

End of Document

International briefs

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

August 12, 2007 Sunday

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Section: A; Pg. 9

Length: 975 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

Taliban: 2 hostages

will be released

GHAZNI, Afghanistan - A Taliban spokesman said Saturday that two sick, female South Korean hostages would be released "soon" for the sake of good relations between the Taliban and South Korea. Neither the international Red Cross or the Afghan government could immediately confirm the claim.

The spokesman, Qari Yousef Ahmadi, said the two women would be freed because they are sick. He said the decision had been made by the Taliban's high commanders, but he said it had not yet been decided when the women would be freed.

Two Taliban leaders and four South Korean officials met Saturday for the second day of face-to-face talks over the fate of 21 South Korean hostages being held since July 19 by the militants.

Mullah Qari Bashir, one of the Taliban negotiators, said the face-to-face talks were going well and that the Taliban were sticking with their original demand - that 21 Taliban prisoners be released from prisons in Afghanistan.

Separately, Taliban militants attacked a small U.S. base in southern Afghanistan early Saturday for the second time in a week, and the U.S.-led coalition said the insurgents could be probing for intelligence for a future attempt to overrun the outpost.

Four militants were killed during the attack on Firebase Anaconda, the coalition said.

Hamas detains

32 Fatah supporters

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - **Hamas** militiamen detained 32 Fatah supporters across Gaza, half of them after breaking up a bachelor party and beating guests with clubs and chairs, Fatah officials and witnesses said Saturday. Ten people were hurt.

Fatah-affiliated Palestine TV broadcast footage Saturday of the arrests and later of the interrogation of a prisoner who **Hamas** claimed had been tortured to death by rival security forces loyal to President Mahmoud Abbas.

International briefs

The prisoner, Moayad Bani Odeh, seemed to have suffered no visible injuries, though he was only shown from the waist up. He said he had not been mistreated, though it was unclear whether he was speaking under threat.

In a separate incident, near Abbassan village in southern Gaza, 12 Fatah supporters were arrested after Friday prayers, including a member of the municipal council, Fatah activists said.

Hamas had no comment on the incident.

Early Saturday, five unarmed members of Fatah's militia, the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, were detained for five hours, beaten and released, Fatah officials said.

Sierra Leone holds

presidential elections

FREETOWN, Sierra Leone - Sierra Leone held its first presidential elections Saturday since U.N. peacekeepers withdrew two years ago, a historic poll that many hope will show this country can transfer power peacefully after being ravaged by coups and a long, diamond-fueled civil war.

Voters arrived before dawn, weathering a light drizzle and long lines, for a chance to choose from seven candidates. Electoral officials said balloting had gone smoothly, with no reports of violence.

Saturday's victor must take more than 55 percent of the vote to avoid a run-off between the top two finishers. Final tallies are expected within 12 days of voting.

In other races, some 572 contenders vied for 112 parliamentary seats. About 2.6 million of the nation's 5 million people are registered to vote.

Livestock ailment did

not spread, tests show

LONDON - Livestock on an English farm that were tested after showing signs of possible foot-and-mouth disease do not have it, Britain's chief veterinarian said Saturday. The result strengthens indications that the highly contagious livestock ailment has not spread beyond the small area where it was first discovered last week.

"The latest tests on the farm to the east of the surveillance zone are negative," said Chief Veterinary Officer Debby Reynolds.

Reynolds announced late Thursday that cows in a second area of the southern England county of Surrey had shown "mild clinical signs of infections" and were being tested. Officials established an exclusion zone around a farm previously unlinked to the outbreak and some 10 miles from the two confirmed cases of the disease.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on Saturday lifted restrictions around the farm, near the village of Wotton.

British authorities are increasingly confident that they have prevented foot-and-mouth from spreading to livestock across the country, a development that could have devastated the rural economy. An epidemic in 2001 led to the slaughter of 7 million animals and shut British meat out of world markets for months.

23 killed in week

of violence in India

GAUHATI, India - Suspected separatist rebels gunned down a group of migrant workers as they slept and bombed two markets in India's insurgency-wracked northeast, bringing the total number of people killed in a week of violence to 23, police said Saturday.

International briefs

A group of gunmen armed with assault rifles entered a village inhabited by mostly Hindi-speaking migrants from other parts of India late Friday and opened fire, killing 11 people, said L.R. Bishnoi, a senior police officer in Assam state.

2 Somali journalists

killed in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU, Somalia - Two prominent Somali journalists were assassinated within hours of each other Saturday - one just outside his office and the other as he returned from his colleague's burial, authorities said.

Mahad Ahmed Elmi, 30, was shot as he headed to HornAfrik Media Company, where he hosts a daily show focusing on the plight of Somalia's civilians, witnesses said. Ali Iman Sharmarke, who owns the independent radio station, was killed by a remote-controlled land mine as he drove home from Elmi's burial, said another company official, Farah Berey.

"Those who don't want peace for Somalia are behind these attacks," said the deputy police commissioner, Abdullahi Hassan Barise. He said the men were targeted because of their jobs at HornAfrik.

Load-Date: August 12, 2007

End of Document

Nations back 'hybrid' force

Pretoria News (South Africa)

August 03, 2007 Friday

e1 Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 10

Length: 705 words

Body

Addis Ababa - Five African nations pledged yesterday to send peacekeepers to a mission in Sudan's troubled Darfur region, approved this week by the UN Security Council. The UN and AU will deploy up to 26 000 troops in a "hybrid" force, absorbing the smaller AU contingent. Countries which have pledged support are Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Egypt, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

Beirut - Lebanon's most senior Shi'ite Muslim cleric yesterday issued a religious edict banning honour killings, which has been on the increase. Ayatollah Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, head of 1,2-million Shi'ites, called the custom of murdering a **female** relative for sexual misconduct "a repulsive act", saying they were committed without any religious evidence, and mostly on the basis of suspicions.

Bucharest - An ancient gold Dacian bracelet at the Romanian National History Museum in Bucharest. The bracelet, decorated with stylised small palm leaves and animal busts at both ends, dates from the classical Getaean-Dacian era (200BC to 100AD). It is one of three, thought to have been illegally taken out of Romania in 2002, recovered by the museum from American and Swiss art collectors.

Freetown - A UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone yesterday convicted two leaders of a pro-government militia of atrocities which left thousands dead or mutilated during the 10-year civil war. They were acquitted on charges of murder and other inhumane acts. The court found their contribution within the Civil Defence Force had "substantial effect on the organisation" of the war.

New Delhi - The Indian government yesterday sharply increased the pay and benefits paid to its soldiers stationed in high-altitude mountainous areas such as the Siachin glacier area. The move comes after a spate of stress-related violence in the armed forces - 64 cases of fratricidal killings over the past six years, 528 suicides since 2003 and 23 soldiers killed by colleagues' bullets last year.

Ankara - Turkey's two major cities are grappling with water shortages after record-low snow and rain falls in the winter and searing summer temperatures. Reservoirs are less than 5% full in the capital Ankara, which has a 4-million population, and water restrictions have been imposed. The reservoirs of Istanbul, with more than 10-million, have water for another three to four months.

Kinshasa - About 100 people were killed and dozens injured when a goods train derailed in central Democratic Republic of Congo yesterday. Explaining the unusually high death toll for an accident involving a goods train, a railways official said the victims were "clandestine passengers who habitually travel aboard goods carriages unbeknown to railway agents".

Nations back 'hybrid' force

Colombo - The Sri Lankan government's parliamentary majority was cut to the bare minimum yesterday after a Tamil party defected, leaving it dependent on hardline Buddhists and Marxists for survival. The Ceylon Workers' Congress said: "Our party felt insulted due to some reason ... which we are not disclosing. For the moment there is no chance of our patching up."

Gaza - **Hamas** has ordered a Gaza TV station to take a political affairs show - the Red Line - off the air because it "ignored the government in Gaza to which it must report", a reference to the station's refusal to recognise **Hamas**'s authority. **Hamas** seized the broadcaster's main facility several weeks ago. Yesterday, a Palestinian journalists' union called the move an attempt to suppress press freedom.

Paris - British and US troops in Afghanistan and Iraq face rising pressures on their mental health and family life, according to two investigations that shed light on a key aspect of military "overstretch", according to a British study. In the US, research has shown children of soldiers experienced far higher rates of abuse and neglect when their father was deployed on a combat mission.

Manila - North Korea - which last month closed its Yongbyon nuclear facilities - demanded yesterday that the US remove it from a list of states that sponsor terrorism and lift a strict trade ban before further progress could be made on dismantling its nuclear programme. The North also said Washington must scrap its "hostile policy" before it moved to "disable" its nuclear facilities.

Load-Date: August 2, 2007

End of Document

To aid Abbas, Israel frees prisoners

The International Herald Tribune

July 21, 2007 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 4

Length: 628 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Reem Makhoul contributed reporting from Beit Taamar, West Bank.

*

Israel released 255 Palestinian prisoners on Friday in a gesture meant to support the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, who said that more prisoners would soon be released.

The gesture came out of Abbas's last meeting with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel, who also agreed to amnesty for 178 members of Fatah's Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades if they gave up their weapons and pledged to stop attacking Israel.

Both moves are supposed to help Abbas and his Fatah faction in their struggle with the Islamic movement **Hamas**, which routed Fatah and took control of Gaza in June. Since then, Abbas fired the **Hamas**-led government and named a new cabinet led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, an independent. Together, with the help of Western aid, they are trying to create a better life for Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, in contrast to the situation in Gaza, where **Hamas** is isolated and the main crossings for goods and people to both Israel and Egypt have been shut for more than a month.

Abbas invited many of the freed prisoners, most of them affiliated with Fatah, to a celebration at his headquarters in Ramallah. Israel holds some 10,000 prisoners. Those released Friday had at least a year left to their terms, but none were convicted of wounding or killing Israelis.

"This is the beginning," Abbas said. "Our work must continue until every prisoner returns to his home." He added: "I thank God that we are honored by the return of heroes of freedom to their home and the bosom of their homeland."

Ziad Abu Ein, the Palestinian deputy minister for prisoner affairs, said that those freed had an average of three years left on their sentences. They included Abdel Rahim Malouh, 61, deputy head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which murdered an Israeli cabinet minister six years ago.

The release began at dawn when prisoners in shackles were taken from the Ketziot prison camp in Negev and put on buses to the West Bank. At the Betuniya checkpoint, they disembarked, some of them kissing the ground, and boarded Palestinian buses to Ramallah.

To aid Abbas, Israel frees prisoners

Fayyad, the prime minister, welcomed the release but said that "Israel can allow itself to be more bold" instead of practicing "a policy of small change." Palestinians want to release prisoners, he told the Israeli newspaper Yediot Aharonot. "But I am a bit cynical in this matter. I look at the meetings that end in festive photographs and announcements of releases. The conflict between us and you is not over prisoners," he added.

In Beit Taamar, a village near Bethlehem, Khaled Hassan Abiyat, 37, was surrounded by friends and family after more than three years in prison. "I thank Abu Mazen for his efforts to release me and my brothers," he said, using a popular name for Abbas. "I'm very happy, it's an excellent feeling to be free."

The entire village seemed to come out to greet him, and cars were decorated with Palestinian flags and the yellow flags of Fatah. Men held Abiyat on their shoulders, and three armed men with masks and Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades written on their vests shot rifles into the air, joined by another 10 men.

On Abiyat's house was a huge poster with his photo and that of the late Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat, with the words, "Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades." He was also greeted there by some 80 women singing wedding songs and handing out candy.

One villager said: "We have a wedding in the village this evening, but tonight we will celebrate two weddings - the actual one and the Khaled's release and homecoming."

Abiyat's cousin, Muhammad Abiyat, said: "This is an incomplete happiness. Something is missing. We want to see the release of all the Palestinian nation."

Load-Date: July 25, 2007

End of Document

Blackmailing Europe

New York Sun (Archive)

May 24, 2007 Thursday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 9

Length: 949 words

Byline: DANIEL JOHNSON

Body

It isn't hard to spot the difference in the press's reaction to Israel's carefully targeted response to the hail of missiles raining down on Sderot from Gaza, and the Lebanese government's bombardment of a Palestinian "refugee camp" where terrorists belonging to Fatah al-Islam are holed up.

Lebanon's action is - rightly - seen as a legitimate act of self-defense against a Syrian-backed attempt to destabilize its government. Israel, by contrast, is condemned for its decision to retaliate against the **Hamas** leaders who are ordering indiscriminate attacks on its civilians.

Right now, far more Palestinians are dying in the civil war between **Hamas** and Fatah, or between the Lebanese army and Islamist terrorists, than those who are being killed by Israel.

There is nothing new about this disproportion. In fact, since 1945, the number of Muslims killed by other Muslims outnumbers those killed by Israelis by a factor that far exceeds 100-1.

The death toll from the civil wars, genocides, and insurgencies that have raged across the Islamic world from Algeria to Indonesia simply dwarfs the numbers killed in the Arab-Israeli wars or the Palestinian intifadas.

Yet, here in Britain, as elsewhere in the West, the demonization of Israel is relentless. Press coverage during the run-up to next month's anniversary of the Six Day War has been uniformly hostile. A vociferous campaign to lift the European Union's boycott of the murderous **Hamas** regime is gaining ground, and, in any case, the aid is still flowing to the terrorists through all kinds of backwaters.

Nor has **Hamas** abandoned its genocidal policy towards Israel and America. One of its leading spokesmen, the acting speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, Ahmad Bahr, ended his sermon in a Sudan mosque last month with the following prayer: "Oh Allah, vanquish the Jews and their supporters. Oh Allah, count their numbers, and kill them all, down to the very last one. Oh Allah, show them a day of darkness. Oh Allah, who sent down His Book, the mover of the clouds, who defeated the enemies of the Prophet, defeat the Jews and the Americans, and bring us victory over them."

This kind of thinking is driving the violence that is endemic at the interface between Islam and other civilizations. How long will it be before that interface runs through the streets of every major city in the West?

Europe today looks like a continent at peace. And so it is. With the exception of the Balkan nations, Europeans have enjoyed the longest continuous period of peace in modern history. For this, they have America to thank.

Blackmailing Europe

Despite the hysteria directed at the United States, the pax Americana has been incomparably less oppressive than the pax Romana. In reality, however, Europe is a tinderbox.

In Berlin, former Baader-Meinhof terrorists hold master classes in rioting for protesters planning to disrupt next month's the G-8 Summit in Germany. In France, the election of President Sarkozy has galvanized all the Chanel-scented sans culottes of our day to man the barricades.

The further east you go, the more febrile the situation. Poland has not been so worried about Russia since the martial law period of the 1980s. Estonia is fighting the first cyber-war in history. Russian e-sabotage has almost brought the government of Estonia - less than a third the size of New York State and a tenth of the population of New York State - to its knees. The Putin regime has also cut off transport links and trade. What prompted this malicious campaign? The Estonians moved a Soviet war memorial from the center of their capital to a military cemetery. That's it.

But the biggest threat to civil order in Europe comes not from outside, but from within. At least 20 million Muslims now live in Europe, almost all concentrated in a handful of large cities in the richer, western countries. Hopes that they would gradually integrate into these ultra-tolerant societies, economies, and cultures have not become a reality. Muslims have chosen segregation instead. So the host countries are beginning to abandon multiculturalism in favor of integration.

In Sweden, the government is trying to ban arranged marriages and has proposed to ban the veil for girls who are under 15 years old, and instituting compulsory gynecological exams as a deterrent to prevent female genital mutilation, which occurs in some parts of the Muslim world.

The minister behind this policy, Nyamko Sabuni, is herself a former African refugee - and a former Muslim. She rejects accusations of Islamophobia from Muslim organizations: "I will not be scared into silence. I will never accept that women and girls are oppressed in the name of religion."

It is striking that such outspoken voices so often come from those who know the Islamic world from the inside. The Dutch politician forced to go into hiding, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, is the best-known, but there are more emerging all the time.

Ed Husain's book "The Islamist" is a surprise best-seller in Britain. It charts the author's spiritual journey from conversion to radical Islam to the brink of terrorism, followed by disillusionment and a new mission to save other young Muslims from predatory preachers.

As the Islamists take heart from the loss of nerve on Iraq and vilification of Israel, Europe looks ever more vulnerable to blackmail. This week, a terrorist group linked to Al Qaeda warned the French that they would be punished for exercising their democratic rights: "As you have chosen the crusader and Zionist Sarkozy as a leader ... we in the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades warn you that the coming days will see a bloody jihadist campaign ... in the capital of Sarkozy."

Let's hope that the voices of sanity have not come too late.

Load-Date: May 24, 2007

Yes, we know there's a war on ?; ?and we're trying to stop it

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

May 25, 2007 Friday

National Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A16

Length: 660 words

Byline: James Clark, National Post

Body

Canada's anti-war movement has been the subject of considerable discussion in the national press lately, drawing the particular ire of National Post columnist Barbara Kay. In a recent column ("Don't You Know There's a War On," May 16), she criticized the participation of Canadian delegates at an international peace conference in Cairo, and the relationship between progressives and some groups in the Middle East.

This year marked the five-year anniversary of the Cairo Conference. Held at the headquarters of Egypt's national union of journalists, the 2007 meeting attracted more than 2,000 delegates from the Middle East and around the world. Every section of civil society was present, including trade unionists, students, women's groups and pro-democracy campaigners.

Twenty activists comprised the Canadian delegation to this year's conference, representing a variety of organizations in the anti-war movement. Among the Canadian delegates were three Jewish activists, including a Holocaust survivor. They shared their experiences of anti-Semitism, expressed their support for Palestinian liberation and explained the difference between Zionism and Judaism. They were warmly received by the conference and spoke alongside activists of other faiths and political traditions who shared their opposition to war and occupation.

Some commentators -- including Ms. Kay -- have condemned the conference and its Canadian participants because groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas and Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood sent representatives.

Whether we like it or not, these groups are considered mainstream forces in the Middle East, and have millions of supporters. Hezbollah participates in Lebanon's national government and was recently in Cabinet. Hamas, the democratically elected government of the Palestinian National Authority, enjoys a larger parliamentary plurality than Stephen Harper does in Canada. The Muslim Brotherhood forms the largest opposition bloc in Egypt with 88 elected MPs.

We don't have to agree with everything these groups stand for -- and we don't. But it's not up to us to decide who represents the people of the Middle East. That's up to them.

History shows that dialogue with all players is the only path to peace.

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Recently, Norway's deputy foreign minister met with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, a leader of **Hamas**. Norway has recognized the Palestinian unity government and called on the European Union to end economic sanctions. So too have Members of the European Parliament.

During Apartheid, anti-racist campaigners who engaged the African National Congress were smeared and vilified. Nelson Mandela, then labelled a "terrorist," is today revered as an icon for peace, justice and equality.

Last week, Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams joined British Prime Minister Tony Blair as Northern Ireland convened its historic power-sharing government. Decades earlier, Gerry Adams was called a "terrorist" and banned from speaking on the BBC. But the British government eventually began talks with the Irish Republican Army, the first step of a process that has led to the peace celebrated today.

This debate matters for Canadians. Stephen Harper arrived in Afghanistan this week not long after the Afghan Senate voted to engage in direct talks with the Taliban. The Senate argued that the only way to end the violence in Afghanistan is through talks. When New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton made the same suggestion a year ago he was derided by Conservatives as "Taliban Jack."

It's not always popular to voice opposition to war or seek engagement with people we disagree with. But there's no other way to achieve a real and lasting peace.

Despite criticisms from the likes of Ms. Kay, we are hopeful. In Canada, the tide has already begun to turn against the war. We must be doing something right. - James Clark is an organizer with the Toronto Coalition to Stop the War. He participated in this year's Cairo Conference.

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King of Jordan condemns Israel's 'attack' on holy sites

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

February 7, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 369 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- Jordan's King Abdullah accused Israel yesterday of "an attack on our holy Muslim sites" by beginning excavation work near Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock and warned this was causing "a dramatic escalation" in tensions that could prevent the revival of Middle East peace talks between Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the United States.

Israeli archeologists vigorously denied the Dome of the Rock would be harmed, showing journalists repairs to a wooden foot bridge were 50 metres from the Dome, which is Islam's third holiest site and where Muslims believe Muhammad ascended to heaven. The bridge has been used by Jewish women going to pray at the Western Wall, which is Judaism's holiest site.

The Dome of the Rock, or the Temple Mount, as it is known by Jews, has long been a flashpoint for bitter disputes between Israel and the Palestinians.

It was a visit there in September 2000 by Ariel Sharon which sparked the second intefadeh, a violent Palestinian uprising that lasted several years.

Eleven Palestinian youths were arrested near the work site yesterday as hundreds of Israeli police cordoned off the area around the Dome of the Rock and refused to allow Muslims males under the age of 45 to enter the Al-Aqsa Mosque to pray. King Abdullah's strong words were considered significant because he is regarded as a moderate Arab leader and because by treaty with Israel, Jordan's Hashemite monarchy has been designated custodian of Jerusalem's Muslim holy sites.

The fresh controversy over the Dome of the Rock erupted as it was announced Israel Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice would meet on Feb. 19 to try to restart Middle East peace talks that have foundered for several years.

The Palestinian president, who leads Fatah, condemned the Israeli excavations in Jerusalem when he arrived in Islam's holiest city of Mecca yesterday for two days of crucial peace talks with Hamas' exiled leader, Khaled Meshal. The meeting called by Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah was aimed at ending a rising tide of violence by Fatah and Hamas factions in Gaza and at forming a national unity government that includes the two warring parties.

King of Jordan condemns Israel 's 'attack' on holy sites

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Female suicide bomber, 64, hits Israeli troops

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

November 24, 2006 Friday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 15

Length: 368 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip

Body

JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip (AP) -- A 64-year-old Palestinian grandmother blew herself up near Israeli troops sweeping through northern Gaza on Thursday, wounding two soldiers, and eight other Palestinians were killed in a day of clashes and rocket fire.

The militant **Hamas**, which is in charge of the Palestinian government, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack and identified the bomber as Fatma Omar An-Najar. Her relatives said she was 64 -- by far the oldest of the more than 100 Palestinian suicide bombers who have targeted Israelis over the past six years.

Israeli forces were moving through the Jebaliya refugee camp in northern Gaza on the second day of an operation to stem rocket fire from the coastal strip into southern Israel. They spotted a woman acting suspiciously, the military said. Soldiers threw a stun grenade, a weapon that makes a loud noise but causes no damage. The woman then set off explosives she was carrying, killing herself and slightly wounding two soldiers. At the compound where her extended family lives near Jebaliya camp, her oldest daughter Fatheya explained the bomber's motives. "They (Israelis) destroyed her house, they killed her grandson -- my son. Another grandson is in a wheelchair with an amputated leg," she said.

Female suicide bombers were a rarity during the first several years of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but that has gradually changed. The last suicide bombing, on Nov. 6, was also carried out by a woman in northern Gaza. But the past few weeks have seen an increase in militant activity by **women** in Gaza who have served as "human shields" defending the homes of militants that Israel has threatened to destroy.

Fatheya said she and her mother had taken part in rally at a Gaza mosque three weeks ago where **women** defied a cordon of heavily armed Israeli troops to create a diversion for besieged **Hamas** fighters to slip away. "She and I, we went to the mosque. We were looking for martyrdom," the daughter said.

Before setting out on her mission, An-Najar filmed the video testament customary for suicide bombers. A copy obtained by The Associated Press showed a petite woman wearing a white headscarf and black dress, toting an assault rifle.

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