

Date and Time: Friday, May 3, 2024 4:01:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223444909

Documents (100)

1. Hamas says death of 18 civilians will be avenged

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

2. <u>Egypt calls regional summit in scramble to isolate Hamas Arab allies keen to prevent Islamic radicals in Gaza from strengthening fundamentalists on their soil</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

3. NO ESCAPE ANALYSIS Will Hamas's success in freeing Alan Johnston cause the international community to re-evaluate its approach to the Gaza Strip's 'pariah' government? By Foreign Editor David Pratt

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

4. Hamas urges attacks A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

5. Israel releases Palestinian prisoners; Hamas decries move as ploy to divide and conquer



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

6. In Gaza, a killing spurs new violence The victim's relatives blamed Hamas, which denied a role. Four more died in ensuing clashes.

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

7. Five killed in Palestinian sewage flood: Hamas pins blame on cutoff of aid

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

8. No accord between Hamas, Abbas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

9._11-year-old radical is face of Hamas TV; In Gaza Strip, West Bank; Child Star Says She Would Be Proud To

Be A Martyr

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

10. <u>Fatah's last stand on the Gaza Strip; Fighters felt betrayed as leaders fled fight with Hamas; downfall opens avenue for Israel</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

11. <u>Israel 's next confrontation? Hamas is acquiring more weaponry and is training in Hezbollah-style tactics,</u> *Israeli officers say.*

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

12. <u>Palestinians urged to resume suicide bombings inside Israel : Hamas leader orders 'roaring reaction' to Israeli shelling that kills 19</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

13. <u>Middle East crisis: Hamas hints at talks as chaos reigns in divided Palestine: Hope that BBC 's Alan</u> <u>Johnston will be freed as Islamist leader tells his followers that kidnap 'is not in the national interest'</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

14. <u>International: Fatah on the run as Hamas wages battle for control of Gaza's streets: Palestinian 'unity' cabinet on verge of collapse: Islamists planning to seize presidential compound</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

15. <u>2 Palestinian women die while protecting gunmen 200 confronted Israeli troops to act as human shields for</u> Hamas fighters in Gaza City.

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

16. Israel rejects Hamas offer to halt attacks: Proposal required end to military operations in Gaza Strip

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

17. <u>Gaza crisis worsens as 16 killed in gun battles: Homes of senior Fatah members set on fire: Hamas calls</u> third ceasefire of week as death toll grows

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

18. <u>Hamas urges retaliation: Palestinian dead included 8 kids. Six-day Israeli action in northern Gaza failed to</u> stop rocket attacks

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

19. <u>Hamas fighters toss Fatah rival off roof; Three killed, 20 injured in deadly infighting among Palestinian</u> factions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

20. Catchy music and tips for the home give way to bloody images and calls for jihad on Hamas TV

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

21. 'Hamas TV' glorifies bomber; Incites violence; Video depicts young mother preparing to kill

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

22. HOW CAN THIS BE JUSTIFIED? HAMAS VOWS REVENGE AS ISRAELI ATTACK KILLS 18

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

23. Former New York Times Reporter Testifies in Trial of Men With Alleged Hamas Links

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

24. Family violence decried (folo) Hamas and Fatah reported close to deal on unity rule

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

25. ATTACKS ESCALATE AS PALESTINIANS FIGHT FOR POWER

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

26. Israel turns the heat up in Gaza Strip: 'They are only making us more stubborn,' Hamas legislator says as more targeted attacks ordered

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

27. Palestinians nearing civil war

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

28. Grenade hits Palestinian PM's home

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

29. Egypt arranging regional summit next week in show of support for Abbas, aide says

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

30. Israel to Transfer Funds From Taxes to Aid Abbas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

31. Israel will support Abbas with millions from taxes

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

32. Palestinian Truce Shaky, but Violence Ebbs

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

33. <u>Antiwar group backs working with Mideast radicals; Canadians come away from Cairo meeting urging</u> solidarity with Hezbollah, Hamas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

34. Palestinian leaders reach tentative deal on new unity government

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007



35. <u>U.S. lifts embargo Aid to pour in U.S. pledges millions to Abbas-led government. Peace talks? Bush hears Abbas' plea to cajole Israeli leader.</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

36. Rift between Palestinian groups deepens

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

37. Riven Palestinians reinforce physical divide

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

38. Israeli Army Strikes Cell in Northern Gaza as Palestinian Factional Fighting Persists

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

39. Unity Fractures As Palestinians Battle in Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

40. Jail bargain reflects Gaza's changing face

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

41. Gaza's deadly guardians

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

42. How Islamists drew strength from failures of old guard

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

43. Hijacking renews violence among Palestinian factions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

44. Bloodshed renews ceasefire pleas: Iranians reportedly arrested amid Palestinian strife

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

45. Palestinian PM's house bombed

Client/Matter: -None-



Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

46. Gaza City street battles intensify headline

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

47. Legacy of Terror

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

48. International: Middle East crisis: Erez crossing: Trapped families caught in Gaza firefight

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

49. Fatah leaves coalition as civil war looms; Bloodiest day in months leaves 24 more dead, 70 wounded in

Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

50. World must join battle with hate

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

51. Even this won't change Fatah; Despite humbling defeat, Abbas still runs criminal gang

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

52. Gaza tumbles toward civil war; Fighting spikes, unity gov't near collapse

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

53. Gaza gun battles fill emergency wards: Faction leaders agree to ceasefire -- last week's truce lasted two

<u>days</u>

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

54. Waiting for the Kiwi backlash A cruel response to Hamas extremism Dark underbelly of the nightclub scene

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

55. Hospitals targeted in Gaza slaughter

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

56. Trapped Gazans huddle at crossing

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

57. Palestinian factional fighting on the rise

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

58. Israelis release millions in tax funds to Palestinian government

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

59. Trapped families hope to flee Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

60. Waiting Until It's Safe

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

61. Mickey Mouse lookalike calls for Islam to 'lead world'; Israeli complaints prompt shelving of children's show

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

62. On Gaza's borders, anxiety mounts

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

63. POPE TO VISIT U.S. IN SPRING

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

64. Shortlived jail break for Gaza prisoners

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

65. ISRAELI STRIKE LANDS NEAR PALESTINIAN LEADER'S HOME

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

66. No looking back

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

67. Gazans Adjust to Power Shift as New Rulers Revel in Their Victory

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

68. Talks aim to secure release of Israeli soldiers in 'swap'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

69. Rice to visit Middle East

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

70. Gaza city erupts into violence

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

71. GAZA RESIDENTS HUDDLE INDOORS AS FIGHTING ENTERS FOURTH DAY

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

72. Grenade slams into PM's home

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

73. Palestinian premier blocked at border

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

74. Old women step forward as 'martyrs': A 70-year-old blew herself up in a Hamas attack. She may be just the first of many elderly recruits

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

75. Abbas election call raises civil war fear

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

76. Bombing wounds 2 Israelis Grandmother blows herself up in Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

77. Racist rodent axed

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

78. Chaos at Gaza crossing as Fatah forces flee

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

79. Israel is not the problem

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

80. Palestinian campuses show infighting's cost

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

81. Palestinian women rush to gunmen's aid: Two killed. Hamas broadcast appeal to help fight Israeli siege

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

82. Grandmother Blows Self Up in Suicide Attack on Israeli Forces

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

83. Woman, 57, fulfils 'martyr' wish: Grandmother blows herself up in response to Israeli 'massacre'

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

84. U.S., Israel Seek To Boost Abbas With Prisoner Swap

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

85. Nation & world

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

86. Sentences reduced for Quran study

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

87. Israel Presses Attacks in Gaza, Killing a Rocket Maker

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

88. *DIGEST*

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

89._Will Gaza, like Iraq, descend into civil war?

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

90. Israel to restore finance ties to Abbas

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

91. Radicals threaten to behead women

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

92. Terror cash case fails



Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

93. A Life of Unrest

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

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Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

94. Captured Israeli soldier in good health: Palestinians

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

95. 2 Killed in Second Day of Clashes Between Palestinian Factions

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

96. Israel evacuates refugees from Gaza

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

97. Israeli Shelling Kills 18 Gazans; Anger Boils Up

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

98. U.S. offers Palestinians aid, meetings

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

99. PM vows continued air strikes after Israeli man killed by rocket

Client/Matter: -None-Search Terms: Hamas

Search Type: Natural Language

Narrowed by:

Content Type Narrowed by

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

Sep 30, 2007

100. Hundreds in Gaza Strip seek safety in West Bank

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



Hamas says death of 18 civilians will be avenged

The Guardian - Final Edition November 9, 2006 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 1

Length: 407 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Beit Hanoun

Body

The leader of the Palestinian militant group <u>Hamas</u> called on his fighters yesterday to "activate resistance" hours after an Israeli artillery strike killed 18 civilians, mostly <u>women</u> and children, from a single family in Gaza.

Khaled Meshaal, who lives in exile in Damascus, promised retaliation after a wave of artillery shells landed before dawn on a residential street in Beit Hanoun. Several homes were hit, all belonging to one family.

The attack sparked international condemnation and came a day after the Israeli military ended a six-day operation in Beit Hanoun that claimed more than 50 lives. More than 350 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza by the Israeli military in the past five months. "Our condemnation will not be in words but in deeds," Mr Meshaal said. "All Palestinian groups are urged to activate resistance."

<u>Hamas</u> agreed a truce that began 18 months ago, but it expired at the end of last year. <u>Hamas</u> militants have since fired rockets into Israel, but the call to arms risks a return to suicide bombings.

Israel's military halted all artillery strikes into Gaza yesterday and said it had appointed a general to investigate the shelling. The military admitted that it had fired "preventative artillery" into Gaza yesterday aimed at "launch sites" from which rockets had been fired the day before. The military suggested there had been a targeting mistake. "Initial information shows the artillery fire was directed at a location distant from the one reportedly hit," it said in a statement.

Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, said: "Unfortunately, in the course of battle, regrettable incidents such as that which occurred this morning do happen." Margaret Beckett, the foreign secretary, said she was "gravely disturbed" by the deaths. "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," she said.

Alvaro de Soto, the UN's Middle East special coordinator, said he was "deeply shocked and appalled" by the shelling. The International Committee of the Red Cross said it was also "appalled"."

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, called the attack a "despicable crime." He said: "We tell the Israelis, you are not seeking peace at all . . . you must therefore bear all the consequences."

Israeli military operations continued in Gaza last night. An airstrike in Gaza City killed two militants.

Leader comment, page 34>

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

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Egypt calls regional summit in scramble to isolate Hamas; Arab allies keen to prevent Islamic radicals in Gaza from strengthening fundamentalists on their soil

The Toronto Star

June 22, 2007 Friday

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Section: WORLD AND COMMENT; Pg. AA01

Length: 378 words

Byline: Salah Nasrawi, Associated Press

Dateline: CAIRO

Body

Egypt moved forcefully yesterday to isolate <u>Hamas</u>, calling a regional summit next week including the Israelis and Palestinians - and shunning contacts with the militant group after its takeover of Gaza.

More than seeking peace with Israel, Egypt and other U.S. Arab allies are seeking to prevent the new power of Islamic radicals in Gaza from strengthening fundamentalists on their own soil.

They also fear Gaza will become a stronghold for Iranian influence on their doorsteps. Egypt in particular has much to lose. A strong *Hamas* ruling Gaza, on Egypt's border, could encourage the Muslim Brotherhood, the most powerful and popular political challenger to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's government. It could also foment Islamic militants that Egypt has battled for decades to put down.

Monday's summit in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheik aims to boost moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas by showing he can move ahead with the peace process with Israel despite the <u>Hamas</u> hold on Gaza. The summit will gather Abbas, Mubarak, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Jordan's King Abdullah II. The following day, Mubarak will meet with Saudi King Abdullah, seeking to unify an Arab front behind Abbas and against <u>Hamas</u>.

Abbas will call for a resumption of peace talks with Israel, arguing that only progress toward Palestinian statehood can serve as a true buffer against *Hamas*, said Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat.

"The most important thing to realize is that time is of the essence," Erekat said. "We need to deliver the end of occupation, a Palestinian state. If we don't have hope, <u>Hamas</u> will export despair to the people."

Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia have said the sole legitimate Palestinian government is the West Bank-based cabinet formed by Abbas, who dissolved the power-sharing government between his Fatah group and <u>Hamas</u> after Gaza's fall.

Egypt moved its embassy from Gaza to the West Bank, and Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit indicated Cairo was shunning *Hamas* officials.

Egypt calls regional summit in scramble to isolate Hamas Arab allies keen to prevent Islamic radicals in Gaza from strengthening fundamentalists on their soil

Meanwhile, about 100 Palestinians with foreign passports were evacuated from Gaza yesterday, including more than two dozen American Palestinians, mainly <u>women</u> and children, who were rushed out at the Erez border terminal from Gaza into Israel.

AP, AFP

Graphic

MOHAMMED SALEM reuters Palestinian boys with U.S. passports play inside a bus as they leave Gaza through the Erez crossing yesterday.

Load-Date: June 22, 2007

End of Document



NO ESCAPE; ANALYSIS; Will Hamas's success in freeing Alan Johnston cause the international community to re-evaluate its approach to the Gaza Strip's 'pariah' government? By Foreign Editor David Pratt

The Sunday Herald
July 8, 2007

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 41

Length: 1872 words

Byline: By Foreign Editor David Pratt

Highlight: <u>Hamas</u> and Israel army units are still fighting in the Gaza Strip Photograph: Mohammed Saber/EPA

Body

IT was business as usual in Gaza over the past few days - that all too familiar business of killing and funerals. No sooner had the euphoria over the release of BBC correspondent Alan Johnston reverberated from the dusty streets of Gaza City all the way to the lush green hills of Lochgoilhead, Argyll, than in its wake the rattle of gunfire and thump of explosions resonated as fighting resumed between <u>Hamas</u> gunmen and the Israeli army, leaving 11 Palestinians dead.

At the funeral in the tumbledown Bureij refugee camp, thousands of people marched in the streets and gunmen fired Kalashnikovs into the air, vowing revenge for the victims of the latest Israeli raid into the centre of this fiercely contested strip of land.

"This blood will only increase our determination to chase the enemy and to strike it and resist by all our might until the last drop of our blood, " *Hamas*'s armed wing said in a statement.

Even by Gaza's unpredictable standards, it has been a rollercoaster month ever since <u>Hamas</u> vanquished its Fatah rivals and seized control of the coastal strip.

As for Alan Johnston and his family, of course, the last four months can only have been what they themselves described as "a living nightmare".

While a collective sigh of relief at news of Johnston's release did the rounds both here in Scotland and across the globe, he doubtless would be the first to admit that good news from Gaza is a rare and invariably short-lived thing.

As the consummate professional observer of Gaza's complex and bitter conflict, he would also likely recognise that the political machinations that secured his freedom also starkly reveal the dramatic and potentially dangerous changes taking place in this, one of the most densely populated and politically volatile places on the planet.

For just as Johnston's kidnapping and captivity were a symptom of Gaza's seemingly interminable factional power struggles, so too was his freedom the result of a quantum shift in just who calls the shots these days across this

NO ESCAPE ANALYSIS Will Hamas's success in freeing Alan Johnston cause the international community to re-evaluate its approach to the Gaza Strip's 'pariah' gove....

beleaguered finger of land, which has spawned lawlessness as well as the toughest Palestinian resistance against Israeli military occupation and incursions.

However, as Alan Johnston made his welcome return to his family home in Lochgoilhead yesterday, questions remained as to just how that political and military endgame between <u>Hamas</u> and his kidnappers played out in those last tense days and hours before Johnston again tasted freedom.

MOREOVER, where does the success of Johnston's safe return leave <u>Hamas</u>, a government democratically elected by the vast majority of Palestinians and which promises to bring law and order to Gaza, yet remains a pariah terrorist regime to Israel, the United States and some other Western nations?

Much of the latest test of <u>Hamas</u>'s standing came as darkness fell last Tuesday, and gunmen from its 6000-strong Executive Force and Izziddin al-Qassam Brigades military wing, took key rooftop positions overlooking the stronghold of the Dughmush clan in the Sabra district of Gaza City.

Headed by its chief, Mumtaz Dughmush, the large, heavily armed family leads the Jaish al-Islam (Army of Islam), the little-known group that had been holding Johnston since he was bundled into a car by its masked gunmen in March.

"The clocks have begun ticking toward the release of Alan Johnston, " said <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Ghazi Hamad. "The operation of the interior ministry Executive Forces has started, and they are tightening the siege on the people involved in his kidnap."

Mumtaz, his brother Mu'taz and one of his top aides, Ahmed Mathloum, were also all wanted by <u>Hamas</u> for their involvement in the killing of *Hamas* operatives over the past two years.

Last week, as <u>Hamas</u> upped the ante on the Dughmush men, Mathloum, who is known by his nickname, Khattab al-Makdissi, was seized by their militiamen at a checkpoint.

In response, at around one o'clock on Monday morning, members of the Army of Islam raided a house near the al-Salam mosque in al-Sabra neighbourhood and kidnapped 10 *Hamas*-affiliated college students before gunbattles erupted between the two sides.

According to Ahmed Bahr, a top <u>Hamas</u> official in the strip, Mumtaz Dughmush finally decided to release Johnston when he realised that <u>Hamas</u> was about to respond using the full might of its considerable paramilitary force.

"On Tuesday night, Mumtaz realised that the game was over when our forces surrounded his house in the Sabra neighbourhood, " he said.

Bahr added that Mumtaz had "asked for a fatwa from a sheikh stating that foreigners must be protected when visiting Muslims".

It was, in effect, the face-saving opt-out clause the al-Qaeda-inspired kidnappers of Johnston were looking for.

Meanwhile, Johnston could only sit out the remaining tense days and hours of his captivity. After his release, he recalled how he had twice been moved as it slowly dawned on his kidnappers that <u>Hamas</u> was now in complete control of Gaza.

"I know <u>Hamas</u> security forces did a lot to make their presence felt, " said Johnston. "I'm pretty sure if <u>Hamas</u> hadn't come in and stuck the heat on in a big way, I'd still be in that room, " he commented later at what BBC Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen described as not so much a press conference as more a "classic piece of reportage", after Johnston eloquently detailed his story to fellow reporters.

But even as a gaunt Johnston was recounting his 114 days as a hostage to journalists in Jerusalem, back in Gaza, *Hamas* and the Army of Islam were wrangling over their own interpretations of how events had played out.

NO ESCAPE ANALYSIS Will Hamas's success in freeing Alan Johnston cause the international community to re-evaluate its approach to the Gaza Strip's 'pariah' gove....

According to the Dughmush line, a deal had been struck with <u>Hamas</u> that would allow the clan's Army of Islam group to be recognised as a legitimate Palestinian faction in the Gaza Strip, and be allowed to keep their weapons.

One clan member, speaking to the Jerusalem Post, claimed that the five-point agreement with <u>Hamas</u> recognised the Army of Islam as "the weapon of mujahidin [holy warriors] against Jews, crusaders and apostates".

He said the deal also banned <u>Hamas</u> and the Army of Islam from attacking each other and that any future disputes should be resolved peacefully.

The same clan member also insisted that the Army of Islam decided to release Johnston "so as not to give an excuse to the crusaders to dispatch international troops to the Gaza Strip".

All of this is disputed by <u>Hamas</u>, who insist the group has nothing to do with Islam. One senior <u>Hamas</u> official in Gaza even went as far as to describe the Army of Islam as "nothing but a group of gangsters operating under the cover of Islam".

"When its members kidnapped the British reporter, they demanded dollars-2 million and a plot of land from the Palestinian Authority, " he said. "But when <u>Hamas</u> came to power, the gang knew that they would never get anything out of us."

HOW much of this is political point-scoring by <u>Hamas</u> against both the Army of Islam and <u>Hamas</u>'s main rival, Fatah, and how much is the truth, is difficult to ascertain. Not surprisingly, <u>Hamas</u> leaders in Gaza are trumpeting Johnston's release as heralding a new era of law and order in the strip.

Mahmoud Zahar, another senior <u>Hamas</u> official, said the release was a clear message. "We will not allow illegal actions against anyone. We are going to confiscate weapons in the hands of clans used for personal interests." Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and his Fatah party, still smarting from their defeat in Gaza at the hand of **Hamas**, are less than convinced.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, a senior aide to President Abbas, said the Army of Islam and <u>Hamas</u> were allies and had coordinated the kidnapping. "I think that this was staged by <u>Hamas</u> to appear as if it respects international law, " he said

"We're watching a movie, where the thieves in Gaza fall out and one of them claims to be honest and brave, and the other is the bad guy, but this *Hamas* game fools no one, "Rabbo said.

Following the <u>Hamas</u> takeover of Gaza last month, President Abbas dismissed the government headed by <u>Hamas</u> prime minister Ismail Haniyeh, and appointed an emergency government, which operates in the West Bank.

Since then <u>Hamas</u> has refused to recognise the new government, creating a situation in which Gaza and the West Bank are now governed by two separate Palestinian bodies.

Fatah's recent backers, Israel - while welcoming Johnston's release - failed to see moves to free the journalist as any significant change in *Hamas* policy worthy of recognition.

While the BBC is seen by some Israelis as being pro-Palestinian in its reporting of the conflict in the West Bank and Gaza, one of the more disquieting things in the wake of Johnston's release was to read comments on the websites of some Israeli newspapers, where writers went as far as to suggest that Johnston's freedom had done little more than hand *Hamas* a propaganda coup.

Back in Gaza itself, meanwhile, the Israeli army was getting on with business as usual, as aircraft, tanks and bulldozers were all deployed in operations on Thursday as Israeli soldiers pushed into Gaza in response to <u>Hamas</u> rocket squads. Across the strip, <u>Hamas</u>'s takeover has already left ordinary people at the mercy of a catastrophic Israeli military and economic stranglehold.

NO ESCAPE ANALYSIS Will Hamas's success in freeing Alan Johnston cause the international community to re-evaluate its approach to the Gaza Strip's 'pariah' gove....

According to a report by Gisha, the Israeli human rights agency, 85-per cent of Gaza residents are now dependent on humanitarian aid, this in one of the most densely populated places on the planet.

"Israel is attempting to achieve political objectives by exerting pressure on 1.4 million <u>women</u>, men and children, whose suffering is to bring out the desired change - the overthrow of <u>Hamas</u>, " pointed out Sari Bashi, Gisha's director.

Gaza's industry - or what is left of it - is also on the point of collapse, with 75-per cent of its factories unable to function after Israeli blockades on imports and exports. On Friday, Oxfam too warned that thousands of refugees across Gaza will face imminent cuts in water and sewage services if more fuel is not provided in the coming days and weeks.

FACED with widespread fuel shortages, the Coastal Municipality Water Utility (CMWU) in Gaza was forced to halve the water supply on Wednesday from eight hours a day to four, affecting roughly 65,000 people in Gaza's biggest refugee camp, Jabaliya.

These economic closures are backed by the international community, which is continuing to boycott <u>Hamas</u> despite it apparent willingness to open negotiations, adhere to ceasefires, and give assurances that it now also wants to end the captivity of Gilad Shalit, an Israeli soldier snatched by Palestinian militants from a base inside Israel a year ago and who is still being held captive in Gaza.

"Gaza is safe, Gaza is clean, Gaza is green, " said Ahmed Yousuf, an aide to <u>Hamas</u> prime minister Ismail Haniyeh a few days ago at the time of Johnston's release, in a reference to the green colour that symbolises <u>Hamas</u>.

Israel - and much of the international community, it seems - is still far from convinced that <u>Hamas</u> has changed its political hue or mended its ways.

Alan Johnston's liberty is welcome good news from a region so often full of bad tidings. However, for most ordinary Palestinians in Gaza held hostage by an outside world unwilling or unconvinced of <u>Hamas</u>'s assurances, their own sense of freedom remains as elusive as ever.

Load-Date: July 12, 2007

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Hamas urges attacks; A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.

The Philadelphia Inquirer November 9, 2006 Thursday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 785 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux and Rushdi abu Alouf, Los Angeles Times

Body

<u>Hamas</u> leaders called yesterday for renewed attacks inside Israel after Israeli artillery shells tore into a residential neighborhood here, killing 18 civilians, including five <u>women</u> and eight children.

Angry demonstrations erupted across the Gaza Strip after the killings, the highest civilian death toll from a single incident on either side of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in more than three years. Thousands of Palestinians burned tires and demanded revenge, chanting: "Death to Israel! Death to America!"

The predawn shelling and its aftermath marked a potentially perilous turn in the long-stalemated conflict and raised new risks for the United States, as *Hamas*' military wing called for striking U.S. targets as well.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert voiced sorrow over the incident, in which some victims died in their beds, and others perished as they fled into the street. Defense Minister Amir Peretz ordered a halt to shelling in Gaza, where the army had been targeting Palestinian fighters in a week-old offensive, until an investigation of the incident concludes.

A White House statement said the United States was "deeply saddened by the injuries and loss of life," and called on all parties to "act with care and restraint so as to avoid any harm to innocent civilians."

An Israeli army spokesman said artillery guns had been aimed at a site from which a Palestinian cell had launched four rockets into the Israeli city of Ashkelon, seven miles away. Israeli television said investigators were looking into a possible flaw in the system that guided the Israeli shells.

Seven shells landed on Hamad Street here, far from their apparent target, blowing large holes in three apartment buildings. Thirteen of the dead belonged to the extended Athamna family, which occupied one of the buildings.

As weeping neighbors gathered on the shattered block and children combed rubble for shrapnel, witnesses described a scene of desperation and panic after the shelling, which blew some of the victims to pieces.

Hamas urges attacks A truce is scrapped after Israeli shelling kills 18 civilians.

"We saw smoke coming out of one building and ran inside with a stretcher," said ambulance driver Yousri Almasri, who, with a medic, was the first outsider on the scene. "We found ourselves walking in blood and stepping over pieces of bodies."

Riddled with shrapnel wounds, Asma Athamna, 14, recalled scrambling into a narrow alley outside her home with other members of her family, only to see her mother and older sister cut down.

"We were afraid of death inside the house, but death took my mother and sister outside," she told reporters from her bed at Kamal Adwan Hospital in nearby Beit Lahiya.

In another bed, Saad Athamna, 52, screamed: "I want to die! I want to die! I lost everything." Hospital officials said his 80-year-old mother, his wife, and five of their children, ages 4 to 14, were killed.

The civilian toll was the highest in any single attack of the Israel-Palestinian conflict since October 2003, when a Palestinian suicide bomber blew herself up in a beachfront restaurant in Haifa, killing 19 other people.

Khaled Mashaal, the Syria-based political leader of <u>Hamas</u>, declared an end to the Islamic group's self-declared truce with Israel. His call for "a roaring reaction so that we avenge all those victims" was echoed by Nizar Rayan and other *Hamas* leaders in Gaza.

"Our martyrs are going to sacrifice their lives in the depths of our occupied land," Rayan told a large crowd outside the hospital in Beit Lahiya. "They will strike in Jaffa, in Haifa, inside Ashdod," he said, naming Israeli cities.

Although <u>Hamas</u>' military wing launches Kassam rockets from Gaza almost daily, unimpeded by the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government, the movement has not carried out a known attack on Israeli soil since August 2005.

In a separate threat, <u>Hamas'</u> military wing said it held the United States, as Israel's ally, partly responsible for the killings in Beit Hanoun and urged Muslims around the world "to teach the American enemy tough lessons." Ghazi Hamad, a spokesman for the Palestinian government, said the movement had no intention of attacking U.S. targets.

Israel's army has been drawn increasingly into Gaza, before and since the inconclusive end of its summer war against Hezbollah militiamen in southern Lebanon. Israel says the rocket attacks from Gaza are unprovoked, because the government withdrew its settlers and military outposts from the coastal territory last year.

The army began periodic incursions into Gaza in June to root out rocket-launching cells, halt weapons smuggling from Egypt and search for one of its captured soldiers. Yesterday's shelling brought the death toll in the heaviest week of fighting to 47 Palestinian fighters, 33 civilians and one Israeli soldier.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006

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<u>Israel releases Palestinian prisoners; Hamas decries move as ploy to divide</u> and conquer

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)

July 21, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A5

Length: 489 words

Byline: Louise Roug, Los Angeles Times

Dateline: RAMALLAH, West Bank

Body

The older couple found a place among the crowd and peered through the fence at an Israeli checkpoint. They had been waiting for four years.

On Friday, Israel released their son and 254 other prisoners in an effort to prop up beleaguered Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and his emergency government here in Ramallah.

As gathered Palestinians chanted their support, Abbas later addressed the former prisoners and their relatives from the steps of the presidential palace in Ramallah.

"This is just the beginning," said Abbas. "Our work must continue until every prisoner returns home."

None of the released Palestinians, which included 11 minors and six <u>women</u>, had been convicted of directly attacking Israelis, and most were at the end of their prison terms, according to Israeli officials.

The fate of about 10,000 Palestinians still held in Israeli prisons is one of the key areas of contention between Israel and the Palestinians, and this pardon has been hotly debated in recent days. In Israel, some politicians argued that freeing prisoners could threaten the country's security. The Palestinians also were conflicted about the amnesty, which almost singularly benefited those loyal to Abbas' Fatah faction while ignoring other prisoners.

On Friday, <u>Hamas</u> officials dismissed the release, the first of its kind in more than three years, as an Israeli ploy to divide and conquer.

"We warn against so-called goodwill gestures because they are traps placed for us on the road, aimed to increase the split of our national unity," said Ismael Haniyeh, a top *Hamas* leader, to reporters in the Gaza Strip.

Abbas last month dumped Haniyeh as prime minister and fired his government after <u>Hamas</u> fighters seized control of Gaza. Haniyeh, however, has refused to accept the termination of his administration and continues to govern in the coastal strip. Fatah remains in control of the West Bank.

<u>Hamas</u> won the Palestinian parliamentary elections in 2005. But Israel, the U.S. and some European countries are trying to marginalize the Islamic party, which they consider a terrorist organization.

Israel releases Palestinian prisoners; Hamas decries move as ploy to divide and conquer

"I'm in favour of strengthening the moderates in the Palestinian Authority in ways that do not pose an unreasonable risk," said Israeli Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz of the Kadima party on Israeli radio this week. "I believe that this release constitutes a threat."

Trying to bolster Abbas, Israel this week granted clemency to scores of wanted gunmen affiliated with Fatah who renounced violence against Israel and turned in their weapons.

But many Palestinians remain wary of Israel's motives or argue that the measures are not wide-reaching enough.

"Israel tries to use the release for more division between the Palestinians," said Khalida Jarrar, a Palestinian lawmaker from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The deputy secretary of her party, Abdel Raheem Malouh, 61, was one of the most prominent of the prisoners released Friday.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Nayef Hashlamoun, Reuters; Freed Palestinian, Maysoun Abu Aisheh, right, is hugged by her mother on her arrival at the family house in the West Bank city of Hebron on Friday.;

Load-Date: July 21, 2007

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In Gaza, a killing spurs new violence; The victim's relatives blamed Hamas, which denied a role. Four more died in ensuing clashes.

The Philadelphia Inquirer January 4, 2007 Thursday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A06

Length: 477 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux and Rushdi Abu Alouf, Los Angeles Times

Body

A militiaman standing on the roof of his in-laws' home was shot dead yesterday in a disputed incident that led to the worst day of clashes between Palestinian factions since they agreed to a truce two weeks ago. Four other people died in the violence in the Gaza Strip.

The renewed fighting raised concerns that neither Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, leader of Fatah, nor Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, who heads the <u>Hamas</u> government, is able or willing to stop their security services and militias from plunging the Palestinians into wider conflict.

Rival gunmen poured into the streets of the town of Beit Lahiya after the Fatah-affiliated militiaman, Ala Mohammad Inaya, 25, died from a bullet to the head. Ensuing clashes left a 22-year-old **female** bystander dead and 17 other people, mostly combatants, wounded.

<u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said the militiaman was killed by accident from a gun fired at close range. But the dead man's family said his brother-in-law, the only other person on the roof, was unarmed. The family and Fatah officials blamed the daytime killing on an unseen <u>Hamas</u> sniper.

Storming a house

The violence spread to the southern city of Khan Yunis with the abduction of the local deputy chief of Fatah's Preventive Security Service police.

Members of the force met resistance while storming a house where they believed their colleague was being held, a Fatah statement said, and one officer was wounded. The car rushing him to a hospital was attacked by the Executive Force, a <u>Hamas</u> paramilitary police unit, killing three Fatah officers. <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah accused each other of shooting first.

In a separate incident, armed men abducted two guards of a Preventive Security Service colonel in an attack on his convoy in the town of Jabaliya.

Page 2 of 2

In Gaza, a killing spurs new violence The victim's relatives blamed Hamas, which denied a role. Four more died in ensuing clashes.

Street battles

The factions have fought intermittent street battles since last spring when <u>Hamas</u>, victorious in elections, took over the Palestinian Authority government, long dominated by Fatah.

Seventeen people were killed in December after Abbas said he would call elections more than two years ahead of schedule to try to unseat <u>Hamas</u>, the extremist Iranian-backed Islamist movement that resists his efforts to restart peace negotiations with Israel.

A third faction, Islamic Jihad, intervened last night night, trying to restore calm in Khan Yunis. A statement by the group said <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah had agreed to withdraw all gunmen from the streets, leaving the city's security in the hands of the local police. But witnesses said later that neither group appeared to be complying.

Various Palestinian security services, meanwhile, searched a third day for photographer Jaime Razuri, 50, who works for Agence France-Presse. The Peruvian was seized Monday by several gunmen in Gaza City.

In a statement, AFP demanded Razuri's release, saying he requires regular medication for a heart ailment.

Load-Date: January 4, 2007

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Five killed in Palestinian sewage flood: Hamas pins blame on cutoff of aid

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

March 28, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. C12

Length: 488 words

Byline: Ibrahim Barzak, The Associated Press

Dateline: UMM NASER, Gaza Strip

Body

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

A local official blamed shoddy infrastructure in Umm Naser, a town of 3,000. <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum blamed the "sanctions against Palestinians, including Gaza and the West Bank" for the condition of Gaza's infrastructure.

Two <u>women</u> 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 <u>Hamas</u> 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.

Five killed in Palestinian sewage flood: Hamas pins blame on cutoff of aid

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., Canada and the EU consider *Hamas* a terrorist group.

"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," he added. "But it was stopped after ... troubles began."

The Israeli army offered humanitarian assistance to help clean up the spill. There was no word on whether the offer had been accepted.

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 45 hectares, 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 among flooded houses after a cesspool embankment collapsed yesterday in the village of Umm Naser, in the northern Gaza Strip. The earthen embankment suddenly collapsed, spewing a river of sewage and mud that killed five people and forced residents to flee.;

Load-Date: March 28, 2007

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No accord between Hamas, Abbas

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

November 7, 2006 Tuesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 14

Length: 317 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) -- The Palestinian president and prime minister, heading rival movements, on Monday failed again to agree on a joint government that might lead to lifting Western sanctions that have bankrupted their administration -- but they planned to keep trying.

President Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> met in Gaza for more than two hours. But officials said the talks ended with no accord on a national unity government made up of independent experts. Both sides said talks would continue Tuesday; they would not say what issues remain open.

Mustafa Barghouti, an independent politician playing a key role in the talks, called the meeting "fruitful." He said, "There was agreement on some issues, but some issues still need to be discussed."

The talks came as fighting in northern Gaza heated up on the sixth day of an Israeli offensive. At least seven Palestinians were killed, including a suicide bomber.

Early Tuesday, Israeli forces pulled out of the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun before daybreak Tuesday, the military said. The forces took up new positions inside the Gaza Strip but outside the town. Residents reported troops and tanks withdrawing from the town overnight.

Islamic Jihad released a video of the bomber, identified as Mirvat Masoud, after she blew herself up, wounding an Israeli soldier. "My dear mother, I ask you to remain strong and forgive me, and God willing, we will meet in heaven," she said on the video. Only a few of the more than 100 Palestinian suicide bombers in the past six years were **women**.

An Israeli missile aimed at a group of militants landed near a Palestinian kindergarten, killing a teenage boy, critically wounding a teacher and seriously wounding eight children, doctors said.

The army said an air strike in the same area targeted four militants coming to collect launchers used to fire rockets into Israel.

Load-Date: November 7, 2006



11-year-old radical is face of Hamas TV; In Gaza Strip, West Bank; Child Star Says She Would Be Proud To Be A Martyr

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

August 15, 2007 Wednesday

National Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 850 words

Byline: Dion Nissenbaum, McClatchy Newspapers

Dateline: GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP

Body

GAZA CITY, GAZA STRIP - Saraa Barhoum picked at the buttons on her pink bell-bottom jeans as she twisted on a chair inside the bustling new <u>Hamas</u> television headquarters. The afternoon light bounced off the sparkly outlines of butterflies on her frilly top, and a colourful hijab framed her 11-year-old face.

Saraa wants to be a doctor. If she can't, the young star of <u>Hamas</u> television's best-known children's show said, she'd be proud to become a martyr. Saraa says little Jewish girls should be forced from their homes in Israel so that Palestinians can return to their land.

With the show's producer helpfully offering written tips during an interview, Saraa didn't get into how she hopes to die for her cause, be it suicide bombing, fighting the Israeli military or some other way. She carefully sidestepped any suggestion that she's subtly calling for the destruction of Israel.

"Israel says that we are terrorists," Saraa said minutes before an interview with her was interrupted by an errant Israeli air strike that slammed into an apartment building on the adjacent block. "But they are the ones that must stop their attacks against us and our kids."

Saraa is the sweet face of Tomorrow's Pioneers, a weekly, hour-long <u>Hamas</u> television children's show best known for bringing the world a militant Mickey Mouse look-alike and then having him killed off by an Israeli interrogator.

With her jarring mix of innocent charm and militant rhetoric, Saraa is at the centre of the Islamist group's increasingly sophisticated campaign to become the dominant force in Palestinian politics.

Since it went on the air last year in the Gaza Strip, the <u>Hamas</u>-funded al-Aqsa television has gained momentum and expanded its audience to include the West Bank.

Taking a lead from Hezbollah's al-Manar television station in Beirut, <u>Hamas</u> is using al-Aqsa to promote its agenda and challenge its rivals, in this case Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and his fractured Fatah allies.

11-year-old radical is face of Hamas TV; In Gaza Strip, West Bank; Child Star Says She Would Be Proud To Be A Martyr

During its decisive June military showdown with Fatah in Gaza, <u>Hamas</u> used its television station to broadcast footage of Fatah leaders joking with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other Bush administration officials. The message was clear: Fatah is in bed with the United States.

The station, which operates with a licence from the Palestinian Authority, also features religious lessons, cartoons, advice shows and music videos. One video hailed a **female** suicide bomber whose young daughter vows to follow her mother's example.

Tomorrow's Pioneers sparked an international furor in April when it began featuring Farfour, the Mickey Mouse look-alike who sounded more like Iran's firebrand President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad than a Disney character.

Mustafa Barghouti, then serving as the Palestinian Authority's information minister, called the show a "mistaken approach" to helping Palestinians and tried unsuccessfully to force the show off the year.

The Israeli government and activists who monitor Palestinian programming accused <u>Hamas</u> of poisoning the minds of young children with the show.

After two months, Farfour was beaten to death on the show by an Israeli interrogator. Nahoul, a larger-than-life bee, is now carrying his message.

"A lot of people in Palestine have died as martyrs, and lots of Palestinians hope to be martyrs," Saraa said of Farfour's demise. "This is one of the ends."

Asked if she hoped one day to be a martyr, Saraa instinctively nodded her head.

"Of course," Saraa said. "It's something to be proud of. Every Palestinian citizen hopes to be a martyr."

The show has provided new fodder for Israeli activists, who say that Saraa is the true face of <u>Hamas</u>, an extremist group that's using an innocent front to conceal its real agenda.

<u>Hamas</u> television officials defend the show, saying it's designed to help young children connect with their country and their God.

On the show, Saraa offers moral lessons to viewers and urges them to do what they can to fight Israeli occupation. After some prodding in an interview, Saraa offered a personal message for Israeli girls her age.

"They have to leave," she said. "This is our country. They kicked us out and stole our happiness. This is a natural result."

Within minutes, an explosion hit the building, rattling windows and sending Saraa and the staff rushing outside. At first, no one was sure whether it was an accident or an Israeli air strike. Then, it became clear that the blast was caused by an Israeli missile that slammed into an empty bedroom on the top floor of a three-storey apartment building.

Standing outside the <u>Hamas</u> building with her producer protectively putting his arm around her shoulders, Saraa looked pensive and anxious. <u>Hamas</u> camera crews and an ambulance rushed down the block. Saraa kept quiet and gazed down the street. The coached revolutionary rhetoric disappeared. Instead, she looked like any frightened young girl caught up in events beyond her control.

Then, after it was clear that no one had been killed in the air strike, Saraa and her producer headed back upstairs to prepare for the next episode of Tomorrow's Pioneers.

Graphic

11-year-old radical is face of Hamas TV; In Gaza Strip, West Bank; Child Star Says She Would Be Proud To Be A Martyr

Color Photo: Dion Nissenbaum, McT; Saraa Barhoum is the star of the *Hamas* station's children's show.;

Load-Date: August 15, 2007



<u>Fatah's last stand on the Gaza Strip; Fighters felt betrayed as leaders fled</u> fight with Hamas; downfall opens avenue for Israel

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

June 21, 2007 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. B8

Length: 948 words

Byline: Dion Nissenbaum, McClatchy Newspapers

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - As they gave up compound after compound to advancing <u>Hamas</u> forces, weary Fatah fighters loyal to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas fell back toward the seaside presidential compound in Gaza to make their last stand.

They set up .50-calibre machine guns and unloaded crates of ammunition, certain that it would be their last stand.

"This is all there is for us," said a special forces officer who called himself Abu Hassan as he oversaw the stacking of ammunition. "We will not surrender. They will execute us."

But there was no last stand. Instead, Fatah leaders fled the Gaza Strip by boat and on foot, leaving lower-level fighters feeling betrayed.

In five days of fighting, Fatah never put up a real fight. The question is why not.

In interviews with McClatchy Newspapers during and after the fighting, Fatah foot soldiers said they felt abandoned as they realized that there'd be no counterattack, not even a last-ditch defence.

Some of them thought incompetent political leaders had done them in. But this land has long been fertile soil for conspiracy theories, and others wondered whether Abbas had deliberately ceded the Gaza Strip to <u>Hamas</u> in an attempt to isolate the radical Islamic group and consolidate his power in the much larger West Bank.

"There was total frustration and disappointment," said one Abbas security officer who was among the last to abandon the presidential compound on Thursday night, June 14, and asked to be identified only as A.R. because of fear of retaliation. "We felt like there was a conspiracy to hand over Gaza to *Hamas*."

Whether it was conspiracy or collapse, Fatah's downfall in Gaza has created an unexpected opportunity for Israel, the United States and others to re-establish full relations with Abbas and the pro-Western emergency cabinet he's installed to replace the elected, *Hamas*-dominated Palestinian government.

Fatah's last stand on the Gaza Strip; Fighters felt betrayed as leaders fled fight with Hamas; downfall opens avenue for Israel

The outside world has moved quickly to bolster Abbas. The United States announced that it would lift the financial embargo that had starved the Palestinian Authority since <u>Hamas</u> won elections in January 2006. Israel agreed to release Palestinian tax revenue it's impounded.

But the story of Fatah's final hours in Gaza is a reminder of how tenuous Abbas's position may be. If he becomes too cosy with Israel, he can be accused of betraying the Palestinian cause.

Angry Fatah fighters could view their sense of betrayal as reason to turn on Abbas, or at least temper their support for him.

And the rout could be repeated if Fatah's weaknesses that were so apparent in Gaza are duplicated in the West Bank.

Fatah's fighters in Gaza were members of Abbas's presidential guard, supposedly the Palestinian Authority's elite. They'd vowed to give their lives to defend Abbas and his secular and conciliatory strategies.

By Thursday afternoon, there was a strong sense among the embattled soldiers that they were bracing for a final standoff. *Hamas* had taken position after position, including Fatah's security headquarters and its intelligence offices. Fatah gunmen retreated to the protected presidential compound overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

They were tense and anxious. They traded stories about <u>Hamas</u> executing Fatah fighters and using innocent <u>women</u> as human shields. Dazed fighters with bloody bandages stood nearby.

As he smoked cigarettes and watched the preparations, Abu Hassan said he and his men would repel <u>Hamas</u> or die trying. He boasted that there were more than 3,000 fighters ready to defend the compound. If so, they were well hidden.

Gen. Khildoun Hijou emerged from a Jeep in his olive green uniform and tried to give the young soldiers a pep talk.

"Be strong," he said.

Gun battles blaze

As the last Fatah strongholds fell, gun battles blazed in the streets. Fatah fighters in the presidential stronghold staged hit-and-run missions to keep *Hamas* at bay.

Inside, frantic mothers arrived in cars and spirited their young sons away from the fighting. At best, there were 1,000 soldiers left inside.

Among them was Abu Mohammed, a 26-year-old presidential guard who complained that Fatah leaders waited too long to mount an effective counter-assault.

"In the beginning of the clashes, whenever anyone wanted to shoot, they got two or three clips at the most," said Abu Mohammed.

"When we asked for more, they said they didn't have any. They only brought out the weapons very late because the rest of the soldiers had run away."

As the sun set over the Mediterranean, the forces in the presidential compound had dwindled to about 300 elite holdouts. Fatah leaders told them they were going to escape. Some commandeered fishing boats from the nearby port and fled south to Egypt. Others quietly snuck down the beach.

With the top leadership on the run, more soldiers laid down their weapons and fled. One of the last to leave was Morad, a 23-year-old police officer who said the Fatah forces would have fought to the death if they'd been given the training, weapons and support the United States had long promised, but never fully provided.

Page 3 of 3

Fatah's last stand on the Gaza Strip; Fighters felt betrayed as leaders fled fight with Hamas; downfall opens avenue for Israel

"There was a political game and we paid the price for it," said Morad. "We were betrayed by Fatah and the Palestinian Authority."

By 10 p.m., the shooting had died down. Civilians started returning to the streets. Celebratory <u>Hamas</u> gunfire replaced the sounds of battle. As <u>Hamas</u> fighters took control of the presidential office, the last Fatah fighters melted into the darkness.

Now, most are in hiding as they wait to see what *Hamas* rule in Gaza will mean for Fatah members.

"It's a nightmare," said Mohammed, whose presidential guard brother is in hiding. "They didn't believe until now this was happening. This is a nightmare. They feel that they are cowards."

Graphic

Photo: Reuters; A Palestinian militant brandishes an automatic rifle during the funeral of a fellow militant from an armed wing of President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction in the West Bank village of Kfar Dahn near Jenin on Wednesday.;

Photo: Journal Stock; (Mahmoud) Abbas;

Load-Date: June 21, 2007



<u>Israel's next confrontation?</u>; <u>Hamas is acquiring more weaponry and is</u> training in Hezbollah-style tactics, Israeli officers say.

The Philadelphia Inquirer October 22, 2006 Sunday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

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Byline: Ned Warwick, Inquirer Staff Writer

Body

While Israel licks its wounds from its flawed war in Lebanon last summer and as nine commissions investigate the different ways the campaign went awry, Gaza, at the other end of the country, appears at risk of becoming the next major flash point for Israel.

The militant group <u>Hamas</u>, according to the Israeli military and intelligence services, has smuggled large amounts of explosives, and new and more lethal weaponry into Gaza. It is also busy training in Hezbollah-style tactics and building defensive positions similar to what were used so effectively in southern Lebanon against the Israeli Defense Force, officials in the IDF and intelligence services said.

After Israel did little to deter Hezbollah in southern Lebanon from building into a potent force with intricate defensive systems before the outbreak of violence last summer, it is in no mood to let that happen in Gaza.

"We will not agree for the Gaza Strip to become southern Lebanon," Defense Minister Amir Peretz told the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee last week. "We have learned the lessons well."

But how to respond?

"It's a very difficult scenario," said Hirsh Goodman, a senior research associate at the Institute for National Security Studies. "On one hand, Israel is loath to go in with armor forces because we are going to sustain losses... but the flow of arms into such a tinderbox is not good."

Last week, the Israeli military mounted several forays into northern Gaza to try to quell the Qassam rocket attacks that continue to plague Israeli towns a short distance across the border. But, for the first time since Israel left Gaza in the summer of 2005, it also sent troops back to Gaza's border with Egypt. There, along what is called the Philadelphia Corridor, outside Gaza's southern perimeter, the soldiers found a number of tunnels used for weapons smuggling into Gaza.

Among the weapons and explosives being smuggled into Gaza, the Israeli military said, were Russian-made antitank rockets similar to the ones used so lethally by Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Israel 's next confrontation? Hamas is acquiring more weaponry and is training in Hezbollah-style tactics, Israeli officers say.

"<u>Hamas</u> is arming, and it is certainly preparing itself for a different [type of] engagement with Israel," Brig. Gen. Yossi Baidatz, from the IDF Intelligence Branch, told a Knesset committee last week.

Hamas denies it is building up its arsenal and preparing for a showdown with Israel.

"We are simply trying to protect ourselves and our <u>women</u> and children from the occupying force Israel," <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said.

"That is all."

But the Israeli media are reporting that a showdown between Israel and <u>Hamas</u> is inevitable. The defense correspondent for the newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth wrote in an analysis: "The incidents these past few days in the Gaza Strip are just the preface to the big bang. Israel is marching headlong, with its eyes wide open and a clear mind, to a head-on clash with the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian Authority."

Ephraim Kam, a former Israeli senior intelligence officer, said the weapons buildup in Gaza began almost as soon as Israel disengaged from the territory. But it was the fighting in southern Lebanon that exposed a level of sophistication by a guerrilla group that Israel had not experienced before.

"Now the concern is the militants are trying to build the same system in Gaza with the help of Hezbollah, Syria and Iran," Kam said, "and that is going to pose a real threat to Israel."

Until now, <u>Hamas</u> has been regarded as nowhere near as capable a fighting force as Hezbollah. Israeli soldiers returning from the fighting in Lebanon were impressed with Hezbollah's discipline, tactics and tenacity. In comparison, Israeli soldiers, who have fought in southern Lebanon and in Gaza, said <u>Hamas</u> fighters usually ran at the first sign of real firepower.

Several experts interviewed said <u>Hamas</u>, despite being a Sunni group, had established ties to Iran and was receiving money and training help from that predominantly Shiite nation.

"<u>Hamas</u> has been evolving for years," said Hirsh Goodman of the Institute for National Security Studies. "Many of its forces were expelled [from Gaza] in the 1990s after a series of bus bombings, and they all ended up in a camp in Lebanon" where they had developed connections with Iran.

"The common thread running from Lebanon to Gaza is Iran," said Dore Gold, a principal foreign-policy adviser to former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and now president of Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, an independent think tank. "It is in Iran's interest to replicate what happened in southern Lebanon in Gaza."

The buildup of weapons and well-trained instructors in Gaza is of such a magnitude, Gold said, "Gaza can be a springboard for war against Israel in the same way as was southern Lebanon."

Not all agree with that assessment.

Boaz Ganor, the executive director of Israel's International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism, said the threat of a southern Lebanon-like confrontation in Gaza is exaggerated.

In Gaza, he said, the terrain is not as conducive to guerrilla fighting; Israel's intelligence is better; Israel has more control of the land; and, unlike in southern Lebanon, not everyone on Gaza would support such a cause.

"It would be so simplistic for the terrorists in Gaza to think that what happened in southern Lebanon could happen in Gaza; they could be literally dead wrong," Ganor said.

Contact staff writer Ned Warwick at 215-854-2405 or foreign @phillynews.com.

Israel 's next confrontation? Hamas is acquiring more weaponry and is training in Hezbollah-style tactics, Israeli officers say.

Load-Date: October 22, 2006



<u>Palestinians urged to resume suicide bombings inside Israel: Hamas leader</u> orders 'roaring reaction' to Israeli shelling that kills 19

The Vancouver Sun (British Columbia)

November 9, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A15

Length: 537 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- <u>Hamas</u> called on Palestinians Wednesday to resume suicide bombings inside Israel after shells from Israeli tanks killed 19 Palestinians -- including eight children and six <u>women</u> from the same family -- and wounded at least 40 others.

The incident occurred in a town in the Gaza Strip that Israel said had been used as a launch site for rockets fired into the Jewish state.

The Palestinian response to Wednesday's deaths in the northern town of Beit Hanoun would be "by deed not words," vowed Khaled Mashal, leader of <u>Hamas</u>'s armed wing, speaking in Damascus. "There must be a roaring reaction so that we avenge all those victims."

In another potentially ominous development, Mashal blamed the attack on the United States and said it should be taught some "hard lessons" because it supported Israel. Because of the likelihood of retaliatory strikes, Israeli security forces were placed on high alert.

The Israeli commander responsible for Gaza said it was possible "there was a malfunction in one of our targeting devices" and that this caused the shells to mistakenly land about 500 metres away from where they should have.

The pre-dawn barrage was fired because "it was estimated [that] during the morning hours that Palestinians will attempt to fire Qassams [rockets]," Maj.-Gen. Yoav Galant said. Such "preventive artillery fire," is sometimes used by Israeli forces against open areas that might be used by Palestinian rocket launchers.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed regret for the incident and offered immediate emergency medical aid to the survivors of the attack. Defence Minister Amir Peretz ordered an immediate halt to artillery attacks in the Gaza Strip and ordered a senior army officer to investigate whether human error or a malfunction was responsible.

Other members of the Olmert government, which has been under intense pressure to stop the rocket attacks, echoed Foreign Minister Tzipi Tivni who said "Israel has no desire to harm innocent people, but only to defend its citizens. Unfortunately, in the course of battle regrettable incidents such as that which occurred this morning do happen."

Palestinians urged to resume suicide bombings inside Israel : Hamas leader orders 'roaring reaction' to Israeli shelling that kills 19

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called it "a black day ... a horrible, ugly massacre."

Another casualty of the attack on Beit Hanoun were emergency negotiations to replace the existing <u>Hamas</u> government with a coalition government that might be more acceptable to the West, which cut off aid to the Palestinian government when <u>Hamas</u> won a parliamentary majority earlier this year.

It was not clear whether the coalition talks between Abbas, who represents Fatah, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of *Hamas*, would resume.

Israel had withdrawn most of its troops from Beit Hanoun Tuesday morning after a six-day operation that had been designed to stop rocket attacks. About 60 Palestinians and an Israeli soldier died during the operation.

Nevertheless, the Israeli actions have done nothing to stop the rocket attacks. Another 21 rockets were fired from Gaza after Wednesday's tragedy in Beit Hanoun, Israeli Army Radio reported.

Ten other Palestinians including several members of <u>Hamas</u> and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade were killed by Israeli forces elsewhere in Gaza and the West Bank Wednesday.

Graphic

Photo: Khalil Hamra, Associated Press; A seriously injured Palestinian boy is carried into hospital in the northern Gaza town of Beit Lahiya on Wednesday.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006



Middle East crisis: Hamas hints at talks as chaos reigns in divided Palestine: Hope that BBC's Alan Johnston will be freed as Islamist leader tells his followers that kidnap 'is not in the national interest'

The Guardian - Final Edition
June 16, 2007 Saturday

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Section: GUARDIAN HOME PAGES; Pg. 4

Length: 786 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem and Hazem Balousha, Gaza City and Conal Urguhart, Ramallah

Body

Jubilant <u>Hamas</u> militants cemented their domination over Gaza yesterday but appeared to make overtures to Fatah opponents after a week of intense fighting had effectively broken Palestine in two.

Ismail Haniyeh, <u>Hamas</u> leader in Gaza, called for talks with the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, leader of Fatah, and urged calm from his gunmen after they had routed Fatah rivals and looted Fatah offices and homes in the Gaza Strip. <u>Hamas</u> also released 10 top Fatah officials captured in five days of clashes that killed more than 100 people.

Mr Haniyeh also demanded the release of Alan Johnston, the BBC correspondent kidnapped in Gaza more than three months ago. Hopes grew last night after a statement by *Hamas*'s armed wing that it was talking to his captors and had "begun practical steps to secure his release".

In Damascus, <u>Hamas</u> leader Khaled Meshaal said he was in contact with <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza to secure the release of Johnston. Mr Meshaal said: "I have urged our brothers in Gaza to double their efforts. I am confident that those holding Alan Johnston will realise that keeping him captive doesn't serve the national interest."

An official involved in the talks, speaking on condition of anonymity because of their sensitivity, said the captors pledged to release Johnston within 24 hours.

A BBC spokeswoman said: "We are aware of the reports, but have not received any firm confirmation of Alan's situation." She added: "We continue to work with everyone involved to try to effect Alan's safe release."

Mr Haniyeh, sacked as government chief on Thursday as the <u>Hamas</u> revolt in Gaza climaxed, insisted he remained the legitimate prime minister on the basis of elections last year won by <u>Hamas</u>. "No internal formula in the Palestinian territories will hold without national agreement and without respecting the legitimacy of the election," he said.

Fifty miles away in his West Bank seat of power, Mr Abbas was defiant to the movement that has demolished his authority in Gaza, ignoring Mr Haniyeh's claim to office and naming a replacement, Salam Fayyad, a technocrat respected in the west.

Middle East crisis: Hamas hints at talks as chaos reigns in divided Palestine: Hope that BBC 's Alan Johnston will be freed as Islamist leader tells his follow....

<u>Hamas</u> denounced the move as a political coup, but it has yet to indicate how it will exercise its new power. It is not even clear how much of this week's violence was supported by Mr Haniyeh. All crossings out of Gaza into Israel and Egypt remain closed and the Egyptian diplomatic mission in Gaza pulled out yesterday.

Under a state of emergency imposed by Mr Abbas a new government could last for 30 days - it would then need parliamentary approval to continue; or Mr Abbas could appoint another prime minister and cabinet for another 30 days. This theoretically could continue for months.

Western governments, including the US and the EU, pledged support for Mr Abbas, speaking of him as a moderate. Some officials hinted that Israel might unfreeze tax revenues worth hundreds of millions of dollars withheld from the Palestinians.

"The fact that President Abbas has fired the <u>Hamas</u> government is a very positive move in our opinion, and makes it easier to deal with and help the moderates," said a spokeswoman for prime minister Ehud Olmert. Jordan also backed the president, as Arab foreign ministers met in Cairo to discuss the crisis.

Mr Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, now has no way of exercising authority in Gaza. Images of gunmen rifling his offices demonstrated his emasculation - one picked up his phone and joked he was calling Condoleezza Rice, US secretary of state, the Associated Press reported. "Hello, Rice?" he said. "Here we are in Abu Mazen's office. Say hello to Abu for me."

Thousands gathered at a rally in Gaza City in support of <u>Hamas</u>. Most approved of Fatah's defeat, but many were concerned. "I worry at the economy and freedoms under <u>Hamas</u> control," said Mohammad Thaher, 29, who owns a pizza restaurant. "I'm worried they might impose Islamic restrictions on <u>women</u>'s dress, close coffee shops and so on."

In Ramallah meanwhile, Mr Abbas's supporters put on a show of force yesterday to demonstrate that Fatah and the Palestinian Authority still control the West Bank. On Thursday night all over the West Bank <u>Hamas</u> members were arrested, and their offices looted and set alight.

Ziad Abu Ein, a Fatah leader in Ramallah and a close ally of the jailed Fatah figure Marwan Barghouti, predicted that anti-<u>Hamas</u> forces in Gaza would regroup.

"What we have witnessed is a fascist, military coup. <u>Hamas</u> may have taken a few government buildings but Fatah and the Palestine Liberation Organisation still has the people in Gaza," he said. "In a few days there will be a new uprising in Gaza when people discover the truth of <u>Hamas</u>. There will be a big fight."

Naomi Klein, page 34>=

Leader comment, page 36>=

Load-Date: June 16, 2007



International: Fatah on the run as Hamas wages battle for control of Gaza's streets: Palestinian 'unity' cabinet on verge of collapse: Islamists planning to seize presidential compound

The Guardian - Final Edition
June 14, 2007 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 18

Length: 635 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem and Ian Black

Body

<u>Hamas</u> fighters launched another wave of fierce attacks on their Fatah rivals yesterday, plunging the Gaza Strip closer towards civil war, in what appeared to be a carefully coordinated effort to seize control on the streets. Gunmen from <u>Hamas</u> and its rival faction Fatah fought heavy battles in the north and south of the strip, with the Islamist movement repeatedly gaining the upper hand.

<u>Hamas</u> fighters seized security posts that provide control of two major roads running north to south through Gaza and took control of Khan Yunis, a town in the south. Last night they began attacking several security posts in Gaza City.

At least 33 people were killed, including several civilians, among them two workers for the UN Relief and Works Agency. Dozens more were injured, including two other UN staff. In the past four days of fighting at least 65 people have died and there appears to be little sign of an end to the conflict.

"This is madness, the madness that is going on in Gaza now," said Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president and Fatah leader, who remains in the West Bank. Mr Abbas spoke by telephone to Khaled Meshal, the head of <u>Hamas</u>'s political bureau in Damascus, but they failed to agree a ceasefire.

In a broadcast on a <u>Hamas</u> radio station, the Islamist movement said it was preparing an offensive to seize Mr Abbas' presidential compound in Gaza City and the nearby national security headquarters. <u>Hamas</u> warned Fatah forces in northern Gaza to give up their weapons before Friday evening, while Fatah commanders told their forces to stay and fight.

At one stage yesterday several hundred people gathered in Gaza City to protest against the violence. <u>Hamas</u> gunmen tried to scatter the crowd by firing into the air, while elsewhere in the city snipers took up positions on several tower blocks.

This week's fighting is the latest episode in a worsening power struggle between <u>Hamas</u>, which won elections last year, and Fatah. For more than six months the two have fought on the streets of Gaza, violating dozens of ceasefires and effectively tearing up a political deal in February that produced the coalition government.

There are growing calls for the deployment of an international peacekeeping force to the small, overcrowded and fraught Gaza Strip. Javier Solana, the EU foreign policy chief, said the European Union would consider sending

International: Fatah on the run as Hamas wages battle for control of Gaza's streets: Palestinian 'unity' cabinet on verge of collapse: Islamists planning to sei....

troops if an international force was established. The Italian foreign minister, Massimo D'Alema, said he supported the idea and Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, has already raised the issue.

On the ground in Gaza yesterday the fighting appeared to be driving the national unity government towards collapse. *Hamas* fighters were able to take the town of Khan Yunis after a bomb destroyed a tunnel underneath a Fatah security headquarters. At least one man was killed and eight injured in the blast. Fatah forces retreated further south to the border town of Rafah and at least 40 Fatah gunmen were reported to have fled into Egypt. "Khan Yunis is finished, but we are still holding on in Rafah," said Ziad Sarafandi, a senior Fatah security official.

Near Gaza City several hundred men, <u>women</u> and children from the Bakr clan, allied to Fatah, surrendered and walked with raised arms into a nearby mosque. The clan, like many others in Gaza, has its own armed force of around 200 men.

The UN refugee agency warned that food deliveries and medical care were at risk. "We are extremely concerned for the plight of the 1 million refugees who depend on UNRWA's services," said John Ging, director of the agency's Gaza operation. "However we cannot deliver food and medical services in the crossfire."

In the West Bank Fatah gunmen in Nablus surrounded a pro-Hamas television company and attacked its offices.

Leader comment, page 34 >=

guardian.co.uk/palestinians >=

Load-Date: June 14, 2007



<u>2 Palestinian women die while protecting gunmen; 200 confronted Israeli</u> troops to act as human shields for Hamas fighters in Gaza City.

The Philadelphia Inquirer
November 5, 2006 Sunday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A04

Length: 567 words

Byline: Richard Boudreaux and Rushdi abu Alouf, Los Angeles Times

Body

About 200 veiled Palestinian <u>women</u> broke through an Israeli troop and tank cordon around a mosque to serve as human shields for dozens of armed militants Friday.

The <u>Hamas</u> fighters, some dressed in <u>women</u>'s clothing, escaped, but two of the <u>women</u> were killed by Israeli fire, and 17 more wounded, on one of the deadliest days of fighting in the coastal territory this year.

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

An unarmed 17-year-old boy and a <u>Hamas</u> fighter also were killed in Beit Hanoun Friday, bringing the death toll in the three-day-old operation to 13 Palestinian fighters, seven civilians and one Israeli soldier.

With Israelis occupying most of the town, the militants had taken refuge Thursday in Nasir Mosque and exchanged fire with the Israelis throughout the day.

After a frantic night of organizing, coordinated by cell phone with the gunmen in the mosque, the <u>women</u> marched Friday morning from the neighboring 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 <u>women</u> during their flight.

"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 <u>Hamas</u>, 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 *women* volunteers.

2 Palestinian women die while protecting gunmen 200 confronted Israeli troops to act as human shields for Hamas fighters in Gaza City.

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

The lead group of <u>women</u> approached the besieged mosque on foot, shouting at the Israelis to leave Gaza. Israeli soldiers turned from the mosque and opened fire. One woman, Ibtesam Masoud, 42, died at the scene and another, who was not identified, died in a hospital several hours later, Palestinian medical officials said.

An Israeli army spokesman said soldiers had spotted two male militants hiding among the <u>women</u> 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 <u>women</u> entered the mosque and guided the militants out.

Abu Ubaida, a *Hamas* spokesman, said all the fighters escaped unharmed, many by way of a hole connecting the mosque to an adjacent house.

"It was a very complicated operation, but our fighters managed to survive and get out of town," Ubaida said.

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

Load-Date: November 5, 2006



Israel rejects Hamas offer to halt attacks: Proposal required end to military operations in Gaza Strip

Ottawa Citizen November 25, 2006 Saturday Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A11

Length: 582 words

Byline: Sarah El Deeb, The Associated Press

Dateline: JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip

Body

JEBALIYA, Gaza Strip - The Palestinian prime minister said yesterday that militants were prepared to stop firing rockets at Israel if it would halt all military action in Palestinian territories. Israel rejected the offer, saying it would respond positively only to a total truce.

Similar proposals in the past have failed to curb fighting, and a spokesman for the ruling <u>Hamas</u> group quickly stepped back from the ceasefire talk, which came as fighting between militants and Israeli troops in Gaza claimed the lives of a 10-year-old Palestinian boy and a militant filming the clashes.

A third Palestinian died yesterday of wounds sustained in earlier violence. It wasn't immediately known whether he was a militant or civilian.

Israeli launched a military campaign in Gaza five months ago in an unsuccessful attempt to curb militant rocket fire on Israeli border communities.

Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> said armed factions had agreed Thursday to halt rocket fire in exchange for a complete cessation of Israeli military operations in Gaza and the West Bank.

"The ball now is in the Israeli court," Mr. Haniyeh said. "It (Israel) must stop its aggression and escalation against the Palestinian people, then there will be no problem according to what the factions agreed in their last meeting."

After meeting with faction leaders again last night, Mr. Haniyeh urged the Israelis "to respect this positive readiness expressed by the Palestinian resistance factions."

And government spokesman Ghazi Hamad suggested that a broader ceasefire was possible if Israel were to take up the militants' offer.

"After that, we (the Palestinians) will talk about a comprehensive truce," Mr. Hamad said.

But Miri Eisin, a spokeswoman for Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, said the offer to trade a partial ceasefire for a suspension of all Israeli military operations in Palestinian territories was "ludicrous" and "a media stunt."

Israel rejects Hamas offer to halt attacks: Proposal required end to military operations in Gaza Strip

"Israel would respond very positively to the idea of a complete ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, which is what we hoped for in September 2005 when we left every inch of the Gaza Strip," Ms. Eisin said. "If the Palestinian factions have a proposal which is supposed to bring about the complete stopping of fire from the Gaza Strip, Israel would be very happy to stop all, all -- and I'm going to say it again -- all fire from the Gaza Strip."

A <u>Hamas</u> spokesman in Gaza, Ismail Radwan, watered down Mr. Haniyeh's talk of a ceasefire, saying the Palestinian factions had agreed to "alter their strategies of resistance" if Israel halted fire.

<u>Hamas'</u> political chief, Khaled Mashaal, was in Cairo yesterday for talks with Egyptian mediators on the national unity government, but no breakthrough was reported.

In northern Gaza, hundreds gathered to bury a grandmother who blew herself up a day earlier as Israeli forces moved through the Jebaliya refugee camp.

Mourners shouting "God is great" draped her simple wooden coffin with a green <u>Hamas</u> flag yesterday before driving it off to a nearby cemetery.

"I knew she wanted martyrdom. She was brave. But I'm still surprised that she did it," said one of her 38 grandchildren, 13-year-old Leila.

Fatma al-Najar was by far the oldest of more than 100 Palestinian suicide bombers who have attacked Israelis over the past six years, killing hundreds.

<u>Female</u> suicide bombers were a rarity during the first several years of the current conflict, but have become more common over the years as <u>women</u> become more involved in the Palestinian struggle.

Graphic

Photo: Limor Edrey, AFP/Getty Images; Israeli troops arrive at a military staging area near Kibbutz Mefalsim in the Gaza Strip. A spokeswoman for Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the offer of a partial ceasefire was 'ludicrous' and 'a media stunt.'

Load-Date: November 25, 2006



Gaza crisis worsens as 16 killed in gun battles: Homes of senior Fatah members set on fire: Hamas calls third ceasefire of week as death toll grows

The Guardian - Final Edition
May 17, 2007 Thursday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 22

Length: 538 words

Byline: Rory McCarthy, Jerusalem

Body

Gaza slid deeper into a factional war yesterday as another 16 people died in gun battles between rival armed groups.

Palestinians held rallies in Ramallah, in the West Bank, and in Gaza City protesting against the violence and calling for a halt to a wave of killing that has claimed 41 lives in the past four days. But in Gaza at least eight people in the demonstration were wounded when shooting broke out around them, scattering the crowd.

Streets in Gaza were deserted and shops and schools were closed throughout the day. On street corners small groups of armed men, often in balaclavas, took up positions and searched anyone walking or driving past. Ambulances were fired on, and in one case a <u>female</u> nurse was shot in the head. Several high-rise apartment buildings that are home to senior figures from the Fatah movement were set on fire, trapping people in their homes.

Before dawn, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen attacked the home of the most senior Fatah security chief in Gaza, Rashid Abu Shbak, and killed four of his bodyguards. Mr Shbak and his family were not in the house. In a second incident a truck carrying five detained <u>Hamas</u> gunmen and two Fatah security officers was attacked and all inside were killed. The attack was apparently mistakenly launched by <u>Hamas</u>.

An Israeli military helicopter fired at a target in Rafah, at the southern end of the Gaza Strip, killing four members of the <u>Hamas</u> Executive Force and injuring another 18. The strike, on what the military called a "<u>Hamas</u> terror command centre", appeared to be in retaliation for a wave of makeshift Qassam rockets that were fired from northern Gaza at the Israeli town of Sderot on Tuesday evening and yesterday morning. At least two Israeli <u>women</u> were seriously injured by rocket strikes, while others suffered lesser injuries.

Last night <u>Hamas</u> announced it would begin observing a unilateral ceasefire in Gaza, although ceasefires announced on Monday and Tuesday failed to hold.

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president and Fatah leader, also called for a ceasefire. He cancelled a trip to Jordan and was reportedly planning to travel to Gaza today to seek an end to the violence. Some suggested he should impose a state of emergency, under which he could effectively appoint his own temporary government. However, there is no guarantee this would stop the fighting. So far Fatah forces, although larger in number than **Hamas**, appear to have come off worst.

Gaza crisis worsens as 16 killed in gun battles: Homes of senior Fatah members set on fire: Hamas calls third ceasefire of week as death toll grows

Palestinian officials said they wanted to keep together the coalition government, established in March, which was supposed to have halted an earlier spate of violence and the slide towards civil war.

"If this national unity government falls apart this will be the end of the Palestinian Authority," said Mustafa Barghouti, the Palestinian information minister.

"What is happening in Gaza endangers not only the unity government but the Palestinian social fabric, the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian strategy as a whole," said negotiator Saeb Erekat.

Israel said it would not get drawn into the conflict. Some Israelis have called for a reinvasion of Gaza, but after criticism of the handling of last year's war in Lebanon, Israel's leaders appear reluctant.

Karma Nabulsi, page 32>=

guardian.co.uk/palestinians >=

Load-Date: May 17, 2007



Hamas urges retaliation: Palestinian dead included 8 kids. Six-day Israeli action in northern Gaza failed to stop rocket attacks

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 9, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A16

Length: 509 words

Byline: MATTHEW FISHER, CanWest News service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

<u>Hamas</u> called on Palestinians yesterday to resume suicide bombings inside Israel after shells from Israeli tanks killed 19 Palestinians - including eight children and six <u>women</u> from the same family - and wounded at least 40 others.

The incident occurred in Beit Hanoun, the town in the northern Gaza Strip that Israel said had been used as a launch site for rockets fired into Israel.

The Palestinian response would be "by deed not words," vowed Khaled Mashal, the leader of <u>Hamas</u>'s armed wing, speaking in Damascus where he is in exile. "There must be a roaring reaction so that we avenge all those victims."

Mashaal said the group would no longer honour a February 2005 truce and urged other militant groups to join the struggle.

Mashal also blamed the attack on the United States and said it should be taught some "hard lessons" because it supported Israel. Because of the likelihood of retaliatory strikes, Israeli forces were placed on high alert.

The Israeli commander responsible for Gaza said it was possible "there was a malfunction in one of our targeting devices" and that this caused the shells to mistakenly land about 500 metres away from where they should have.

The pre-dawn barrage was fired because "it was estimated (that) during the morning hours that Palestinians will attempt to fire Qassams," which are rockets, Maj.-Gen. Yoav Galant said. Such "preventive artillery fire" is sometimes used by Israeli forces against open areas that might be used by Palestinian rocket launchers to discourage them from going there.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed regret for the incident and offered immediate emergency medical aid to the survivors of the attack. Defence Minister Amir Peretz ordered an immediate halt to artillery attacks in the Gaza Strip and ordered a senior army officer to investigate whether human error or a malfunction was responsible.

Hamas urges retaliation: Palestinian dead included 8 kids. Six-day Israeli action in northern Gaza failed to stop rocket attacks

Other members of the Olmert government, which has been under intense pressure to stop the rocket attacks by anxious Israelis, echoed Foreign Minister Tzipi Tivni, who said: "Israel has no desire to harm innocent people, but only to defend its citizens. Unfortunately, in the course of battle regrettable incidents ... do happen."

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called it "a black day ... a horrible, ugly massacre."

Another casualty of the attack on Beit Hanoun were emergency negotiations to replace the existing <u>Hamas</u> government with a coalition government that might be more acceptable to the West, which cut off aid to the Palestinian government when <u>Hamas</u> won a parliamentary majority this year.

It was not clear whether the coalition talks between Fatah and *Hamas* would resume.

Israel had withdrawn most of its troops from Beit Hanoun Tuesday after a six-day operation that had been designed to stop rocket attacks. About 60 Palestinians and an Israeli soldier died during that operation.

Nevertheless, the Israeli actions have done nothing to stop the rocket attacks. Twenty-one rockets were fired from Gaza after yesterday's tragedy in Beit Hanoun, Israeli Army Radio reported.

Load-Date: November 9, 2006



Hamas fighters toss Fatah rival off roof; Three killed, 20 injured in deadly infighting among Palestinian factions

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)

June 11, 2007 Monday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A4

Length: 382 words

Byline: Agence France-Presse

Dateline: GAZA CITY

Body

GAZA CITY - A member of the Palestinian Fatah movement was thrown off the roof of an 18-storey building on Sunday amid a new spate of deadly clashes between rival factions across Gaza, as Israel vowed to continue its strikes against militants.

Mohammed Suwerki was kidnapped near the seafront in Gaza moments before he was flung to his death from the roof of a building by fighters loyal to the Islamist <u>Hamas</u> movement, which has been locked for months in a power struggle with president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah movement.

Three <u>Hamas</u> members were killed and some 20 people were injured in sporadic gun battles on Sunday between rival factions in the town of Rafah and Gaza City, where militants erected dozens of roadblocks and tension remained high.

The Palestinian internecine violence resumed last Thursday after three weeks of relative calm following a May 19 ceasefire deal with Egyptian mediators, drawing a line under a previous spate of clashes between Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> militants in which more than 50 people died.

The factional fighting came in the midst of a new Israeli air and ground operation in the impoverished coastal strip that was launched on May 16 in response to an increase in rocket fire from the territory after a six-month truce.

The day after Palestinian militants launched the first cross-border raid in nearly a year, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert vowed to continue to hit Gaza.

"Our operations in Gaza will continue as long as the rocket fire and the terror attacks continue," Olmert said at the weekly cabinet meeting.

He did not say if Israeli military strikes in Gaza would increase after militants breached a border fence using a jeep and attacked an army post on the other side in an apparent bid to abduct an Israeli soldier.

The post was unmanned at the time, but troops sent to the scene shot one militant dead while three others made it back inside Gaza.

Hamas fighters toss Fatah rival off roof; Three killed, 20 injured in deadly infighting among Palestinian factions

The attack near the Kissufim crossing was carried out jointly by the radical Islamic Jihad and Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a group loosely linked to president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah party.

It was the first cross-border raid since a June 25, 2006 operation in which militants tunneled out of Gaza and attacked an army post, killing two soldiers and seizing a third, Corporal Gilad Shalit, who remains in captivity.

Graphic

Photo: Reuters; INTERNAL DESTRUCTION: Two <u>women</u> return to what's left of their home, destroyed during Palestinian factional battles in the Gaza Strip on Sunday.;

Load-Date: June 11, 2007



Catchy music and tips for the home give way to bloody images and calls for iihad on Hamas TV

The Sunday Telegraph (LONDON)

April 1, 2007 Sunday

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Section: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL; Pg. 32

Length: 764 words

Byline: CAROLYNNE WHEELER in Ramallah, West Bank

Body

THE MUSIC video begins innocently enough, with a smiling young girl leaving her studies for a day at the beach with her family.

Before long, though, it takes a dark turn as sugar-coated pop images give way to shots of rescue workers carrying bodies off the sand, blood-soaked stretchers in a hospital operating room and painful close-ups of dead children wrapped in bloody sheets.

These violent scenes, accompanied by calls to resist the Israeli occupation, are being beamed into homes across the Middle East courtesy of al-Aqsa Television, the new Palestinian satellite channel, better known to its growing army of viewers as "*Hamas* TV". Bankrolled by *Hamas*'s leader-in-exile Khaled Meshaal, the rise of the network is causing alarm among educated, secular Palestinians, fearful that the station's message of Islamic extremism is helping to brainwash a potential television audience of three million Palestinians - in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Formerly an inconsequential private station in Gaza, founded to assist <u>Hamas</u>'s election campaign last year, the network has expanded rapidly, adding a West Bank office, a smattering of foreign correspondents and, most important, the subscription of two big Middle Eastern satellite networks.

With its slick design, catchy music and mix of news, religious lessons and advice for housewives, it is competing against popular networks such as al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya - and it is gaining ground.

"We want to send a message of people under occupation to the world. And we want to do it in a professional manner," said Mohammed Shtaiwi, the director of al-Aqsa's West Bank office in Ramallah.

The network operates largely in secrecy, its managers reluctant to speak to foreign journalists. The office is unmarked, buried inside another media building. Factional violence is one concern, but the greatest fear is an Israeli missile attack.

They refuse to talk about their funding, though clearly there is money to spare. Though the Gaza headquarters is said to be a two-room operation with just 10 employees, sources in the Palestinian media say al-Aqsa relies on volunteers, private donations and suitcases of cash, sent by Meshaal and smuggled through tunnels from Egypt.

Mr Shtaiwi insists that it broadcasts a range of opinions - the new Palestinian Authority information minister Mustafa Barghouti, a politician from the secular Third Way movement is a frequent guest. But programmes also include strident religious lessons from bearded sheikhs in red keffiyah scarves, advice from headscarved <u>women</u> on dealing with polygamy, newscasts that refer to "Zionist aggression" and commercials that entreat viewers to resist Israeli occupation, using shots of masked men with guns and Qassam rockets.

A music video, based on the suicide bomber, Reem Riyashi, which included a young actress playing the bomber's daughter picking up sticks of dynamite and pledging to follow in her mother's footsteps, drew heavy criticism from Israeli media-watch groups.

The messages alarm the moderate and secular Palestinian intelligentsia, who say it is a disturbing milestone in the rise of Islamist forces since <u>Hamas</u> won parliamentary elections just over a year ago. In Gaza, Islamist militants have attacked internet cafés and pharmacies stocking contraceptives. Even in the West Bank, street violence and attacks on media centres and government offices are becoming more frequent.

Iyad Barghouti, the director of the Ramallah Human Rights Centre, fears that al-Aqsa will only encourage violence. "It provides information and coverage in a religious and racist manner. Its message addresses emotions and most Palestinians are ready to listen to such a message."

Partly in response to this rising force, a new political party, Wasatia (Moderation), was launched last week. "We as a silent majority, rather than remain silent, should become vocal, because these crises have affected our lives," said Mohammed Dajani, an al-Quds University political scientist and author who has drawn about 100 members to his movement.

"If al-Aqsa is targeting international audiences, this will be a very bad message - showing masked people, firing Qassams, firing guns," said Nashat Aqrash, a media studies professor who was an adviser to <u>Hamas</u> during last year's election campaign.

But faithful viewers dismiss such warnings. "It talks about us. It talks about our suffering," said Hala Adwani, 40, a housewife who watches al-Aqsa every evening and most afternoons.

"This television is not bringing something new here," she said. "This is the reality we are living."

Load-Date: April 1, 2007



'Hamas TV' glorifies bomber; Incites violence; Video depicts young mother preparing to kill

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

April 28, 2007 Saturday

National Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. A21

Length: 1181 words

Byline: Carolynne Wheeler, The Daily Telegraph, with files from news services

Dateline: RAMALLAH, West Bank

Body

RAMALLAH, West Bank - A music video based on the suicide bomber Reem Riyashi -- which includes a young actress playing the bomber's young daughter picking up sticks of dynamite and pledging to follow in her mother's footsteps -- is being screened on a <u>Hamas</u>-controlled television station as part of its propaganda war against Israel.

Another video shows a smiling young girl leaving her studies for a day at the beach with her family. Before long, though, events take a dark turn as sugar-coated pop images give way to shots of rescue workers carrying bodies off the sand, blood-soaked stretchers in a hospital operating room and painful close-ups of dead children wrapped in bloody sheets.

These violent scenes, accompanied by calls to resist the Israeli occupation, are being beamed into homes across the Middle East courtesy of the new Palestinian satellite channel al-Aqsa TV, better known to its growing army of viewers as "*Hamas* TV."

It is part of a trend that sees Middle Eastern television stations such as al-Jazeera or al- Arabiya screen videos of executions carried out by hardline Islamic terrorists such as al-Qaeda. In a recent video from the Taliban in Afghanistan, a 12-year-old boy wearing a camouflage jacket and a white headband uses a knife to behead a blindfolded man accused of being a foreign spy.

Bankrolled by <u>Hamas</u>'s leaderin- exile Khaled Meshaal, the rise of the al-Aqsa network is causing alarm among educated secular Palestinians, fearful the station's message of Islamic extremism is helping to brainwash a potential television audience of three million Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Formerly an inconsequential private station in Gaza founded to assist <u>Hamas</u>'s election campaign last year, the network has expanded rapidly, adding a West Bank office, a few foreign correspondents and, most important, the subscription of two big Middle Eastern satellite networks. With its slick design, catchy music and mix of news, religious lessons and advice for housewives, it is competing against popular networks such as al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya, and is gaining ground.

"We want to send a message of people under occupation to the world. And we want to do it in a professional manner," said Mohammed Shtaiwi, the director of al-Aqsa's West Bank office in Ramallah.

'Hamas TV' glorifies bomber; Incites violence; Video depicts young mother preparing to kill

Managers refuse to talk about their funding, though clearly there is money to spare. Though the Gaza headquarters is said to be a two-room operation with just 10 employees, sources in the Palestinian media say al-Aqsa relies on volunteers, private donations and suitcases of cash sent by Mr. Meshaal and smuggled through tunnels from Egypt.

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But programs include strident religious lessons from bearded sheiks in red keffiyehs, advice from headscarved <u>women</u> on dealing with polygamy, newscasts that refer to "Zionist aggression" and commercials that entreat viewers to resist Israeli occupation, using shots of masked men with guns and Qassam rockets.

There is also the suicide bomber video. In the 2 ½-minute music video being shown on al-Aqsa TV, a child actress plays Duha, the six-year-old daughter of Reem Riyashi, a 22-year-old woman from Gaza who blew herself up outside a joint Israeli-Palestinian industrial zone in January, 2004, killing four Israelis.

She was the first Palestinian woman to kill herself in this way. Days before her death, she posed for the camera, holding an AK-47 assault rifle in one arm and in the other Ubaydah, her year-old son, whose tiny fingers are grasping a bomb. (The video can be viewed on YouTube at http://youtube.com/watch?v=cqHUdwePfbM.)

The video shows the woman preparing for her mission and putting the children to bed while a high woman's voice sings:

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

As the music continues, the mother leaves, watched sadly by the girl.

Later, a television anchor announces a suicide bombing and Duha realizes the dead woman was her mother.

At the end of the video, as the girl opens a drawer to disclose another stick of dynamite, the soundtrack makes it clear she intends to follow her mother's example some day:

"Send greetings to our Messenger [Muhammad] and tell him: 'Duha loves you.'

My love will not be [merely] words.

I am following Mommy in her steps."

The messages alarm the moderate and secular Palestinian intelligentsia, who say it is a disturbing milestone in the rise of Islamist forces since *Hamas* won parliamentary elections just over a year ago.

In Gaza, Islamist terrorists have attacked Internet cafes and pharmacies stocking contraceptives. Even in the West Bank, street violence and attacks on media centres and government offices are becoming more frequent.

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"If al-Aqsa is targeting international audiences, this will be a very bad message, showing masked people, firing Qassams, firing guns," said Nashat Aqrash, a media studies professor who was an advisor to <u>Hamas</u> during last year's election campaign.

But faithful viewers dismiss such warnings.

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'Hamas TV' glorifies bomber; Incites violence; Video depicts young mother preparing to kill

"This television is not bringing something new here. This is the reality we are living."

NATIONALPOST.COM

Find a link to the suicide bomber music video under Online Extras on our home page.

- - -

MUSIC VIDEO CHRONICLES REAL-LIFE SUICIDE BOMBER

The text of the song that Duha, Reem's daughter, sings to her mother in the video dramatization.

(Daughter sees mother preparing explosives sticks) Mommy, what are you carrying in your arms instead of me?

(Mother turns to hide bomb) A toy or a present for me?... Mommy Reem! Why did you put on your veil? Are you going out, Mommy?... Come back quickly, Mommy I can't sleep without you, unless you tell me and Ubaydah [her brother] a bedtime story.

(Daughter sees mother's picture and news story about bombing on television) My mother, my mother, Me and Ubaydah are awake and waiting for you to come to put us to sleep. Me and Ubaydah, oh Mommy, still need you to wipe our tears ... 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, and may you be flawless for Jerusalem.

Me and Ubaydah wish we were there with you.

(Images of her mother's grave and the graves of other terrorists)

Send greetings to our Messenger [Muhammad] and tell him: 'Duha loves you.' My love will not be [merely] words. I am following Mommy in her steps.

(Finds explosives that mother left in her drawer, picks up stick of explosives)

Oh Mommy, oh Mommy.

Source: Palestinian Media Watch

Graphic

Black & White

Photo:; (See hardcopy for Photo Description); Black & White

Photo:; (See hardcopy for Photo Description); Black & White

Photo:; (See hardcopy for Photo Description); Black & White

Photo:; (See hardcopy for Photo Description); Black & White

Photo:; (See hardcopy for Photo Description);

Load-Date: April 28, 2007



HOW CAN THIS BE JUSTIFIED?; HAMAS VOWS REVENGE AS ISRAELI ATTACK KILLS 18

The Mirror

November 9, 2006 Thursday

Eire Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 27

Length: 387 words

Byline: BY JON CLEMENTS

Body

AN anguished Palestinian mother cradles her badly injured baby boy after an Israeli tank assault which killed at least 18 men, <u>women</u> and children.

The early morning shelling of homes in northern Gaza, which also left more than 60 civilians injured, sparked furious condemnation worldwide.

<u>Hamas</u> vowed revenge. Speaking in Damascus exiled leader Khaled Meshal said: "Our response will be by deeds not words. There must be a roaring reaction so that we can avenge all those victims."

And Ghazi Hamad, spokesman for Palestine's *Hamas*-led government, added: "Israel should be wiped from the face of the Earth. It's an animal state that recognises no human worth. It's a cancer that should be eradicated."

Seven children and four <u>women</u> were among those killed in Beit Hanoun when shells ripped through seven houses in the town and caused carnage in the streets. Witness Asma al-Athamna, 14, who suffered shrapnel wounds, said: "We were awoken by shells hitting the house of my uncle next door.

"Then our windows were blasted away. We fled only to be hunted outside. The shells killed my mother and sister and wounded all my siblings."

Resident Rahwi Hamad, 35, added: "We took dismembered bodies from the houses. We saw legs, hands, parts of heads stuck to the wall, it was disgusting. There was a stench of blood and flesh."

Attaf Hamad, 22, said: "We saw legs, we saw heads, we saw hands scattered in the street. I saw people coming out of a house covered in blood. I screamed to wake up the neighbours."

HOW CAN THIS BE JUSTIFIED? HAMAS VOWS REVENGE AS ISRAELI ATTACK KILLS 18

To halt missile attacks on its territory, Israel had launched a week-long offensive on the town which killed more than 60 Palestinians and an Israeli soldier.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office said he "voiced regret" over the civilian deaths. An inquiry has been ordered but officials refused to comment on reports the tanks had missed their target by half a mile.

Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas denounced the action as "a horrible and ugly massacre" and it was also condemned by the European Commission, Italy, France and Jordan.

British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said: "It's hard to see what this action was meant to achieve and how it can be justified."

Gunmen later opened fire at the European Union office in Gaza City and youths threw stones at the building in apparent retaliation.

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Graphic

GRIEF: Woman by house and Meshal yesterday Pictures: REUTERS/AFP

Load-Date: November 9, 2006



Former New York Times Reporter Testifies in Trial of Men With Alleged Hamas Links

New York Sun (Archive) November 14, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NATIONAL; Pg. 5

Length: 1355 words

Byline: JOSH GERSTEIN -, Staff Reporter of the Sun

Dateline: CHICAGO

Body

A former New York Times reporter who was jailed for nearly three months after refusing to testify in a CIA leak investigation, Judith Miller, spent more than two hours on the stand yesterday as a key prosecution witness in a federal trial of two men accused of conspiring with a Palestinian Arab terrorist group, *Hamas*.

Ms. Miller's testimony centered on her unusual role in the 1993 interrogation of a former Chicago-area used-car dealer, Muhammad Salah, at an Israeli prison in the West Bank. The veteran journalist said she arranged to witness the interrogation through contacts at the office of the Israeli prime minister at the time, Yitzhak Rabin, whom she described as a friend.

Ms. Miller said she expected special access to the high-security facility, but got a bit more than she bargained for when the Israeli interrogator asked her to propose questions to be put to Mr. Salah.

"He asked me what I wanted Mr. Salah to talk about. I was a little taken aback," Ms. Miller said in response to questions from a federal prosecutor, Carrie Hamilton. "I had concerns about being directly or indirectly involved in an interrogation. I just wanted to witness one. I didn't want to be part of direct questioning."

Ms. Miller said she offered a general suggestion that Mr. Salah be asked to confirm the Israelis' claims that he had admitted to knowledge of *Hamas*'s political structure and its fund-raising operations in America.

Mr. Salah's alleged admissions of a role in <u>Hamas</u>'s financial affairs led to him spending almost five years in an Israeli jail before he was deported to America in 1997. Those admissions also form the crux of the evidence in the Chicago case, where Mr. Salah and a former Howard University professor, Abdelhaleem Ashqar, are charged with racketeering conspiracy and obstruction of justice.

Ms. Miller was a strong witness for the prosecution, undercutting Mr. Salah's defense that he was tortured and only admitted to the *Hamas* activities after more than two weeks of nearly relentless questioning and sleep depravation. She said Mr. Salah, whom she saw on an audiovisual feed from an adjacent room at the prison, gave no indication he'd been abused.

"I saw no signs of him being tortured or mistreated during the time that I was there and witnessing his behavior," Ms. Miller said. Mr. Salah "was almost goading him about how <u>Hamas</u> was getting the better of the Israelis. He

Former New York Times Reporter Testifies in Trial of Men With Alleged Hamas Links

seemed very relaxed and at ease. ... He seemed to take pride in the fact that <u>Hamas</u> had been able to regroup again and again."

On cross-examination, defense attorneys pointed up some discrepancies in Ms. Miller's accounts of the episode and attempted to paint her as a shill for the Israeli government.

In a February 17, 1993, story on the front page of the Times, Ms. Miller discussed the evidence against Mr. Salah but did not disclose that she visited the prison or saw the suspect via a video link. She did offer readers uncanny detail about the interrogation, describing it as taking place at "a T-shaped Formica table." However, she attributed her account to Israeli officials and documents they provided.

When a lawyer for Mr. Salah, Michael Deutsch, suggested that Ms. Miller agreed to "cover up" her visit to the interrogation center so that her readers would not learn of it, the longtime Times journalist took umbrage. "I did not 'cover up' the fact. I did not disclose it," she said. "We often in journalism do not disclose specific sources of information presented as long as they do not contradict the information presented."

Ms. Miller said she needed some corroboration of the Israeli claims about Mr. Salah and that her editors agreed the prison visit offered that, even if it could not be shared with readers.

Supporters of Messrs. Salah and Ashqar, including about two dozen <u>women</u> in headscarves who sat in the courtroom gallery, seemed deeply skeptical of Ms. Miller's veracity. When the journalist said she could not remember the name of the editor who signed off on the ground rules for the prison visit, the Muslim <u>women</u> tittered audibly, drawing a stare from the judge, Amy St. Eve.

Under prosecution questioning, Ms. Miller testified that she sought to bring a translator for the Times to the prison, but the Israelis, who said no outsider had ever been allowed at the site before, refused. She said she reluctantly relied on an Israeli government translator to recount the interrogation, which took place mostly in Arabic.

On cross-examination, Mr. Deutsch asked Ms. Miller about a radio interview she did in 1998 in which she said she tape-recorded the interrogation and had it independently translated. The journalist said yesterday that she didn't remember having taped the session.

As Mr. Deutsch continued, his questions became more speculative, asking Ms. Miller at one point whether she had ever acted as an "asset" for the Israeli intelligence service known as the Mossad.

"No, sir," Ms. Miller said with an exasperated laugh.

Mr. Deutsch also made reference to the veteran journalist's departure from the Times last year after 28 years on staff. The defense attorney suggested Ms. Miller was dismissed because she parroted the Bush administration line about Iraq and weapons of mass destruction.

"That's not why I left the New York Times," Ms. Miller said, without elaborating.

Ms. Miller eventually disclosed her visit to the interrogation center, describing it in a book she published in 1996, "God Has Ninety-Nine Names." In the book, she acknowledged the role of Rabin's office and that she was given the opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Salah through an interrogator. That made her "deeply uncomfortable," Ms. Miller wrote. "Where was the line between journalism and participating in an official inquiry, and, for all I knew, torture?"

Asked to explain her inclusion of the interrogation in her book, Ms. Miller said circumstances had changed. "Mr. Rabin was dead and since Mr. Salah had been convicted ... I thought an appropriate amount of time had passed so I would not be interfering in an ongoing investigation," she said.

Ms. Miller's testimony yesterday marked the third time she has crossed paths with the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, Patrick Fitzgerald, or his aides.

Former New York Times Reporter Testifies in Trial of Men With Alleged Hamas Links

The Chicago prosecutor, who cut his teeth on terrorism cases in New York, was selected by the Justice Department to oversee the CIA leak investigation that resulted in Ms. Miller's jailing last summer for contempt. She is likely to be called as a witness next year at the trial of a former White House aide charged with obstructing that probe, I. Lewis Libby.

In a separate and ongoing legal clash that may be headed for the Supreme Court, Mr. Fitzgerald is seeking to obtain Ms. Miller's telephone records as part of an investigation into who leaked advance word of federal raids against Islamic charities in 2001.

An instructor on journalism ethics, Kelly McBride of the Poynter Institute, said she was troubled by the decision to omit Ms. Miller's secret visit to the jail from the Times article. "Any time you're given special access as a reporter to something that a member of the public normally would not gain access to, you've got to find a way to reveal the nature of that reporting to the audience," Ms. McBride said.

The Times did not respond to a request for comment for this article. Ms. Miller also declined to discuss her involvement in the <u>Hamas</u> case with reporters yesterday. However, in response to a question from The New York Sun, she said her appearance was not voluntary. "I was subpoenaed," she said.

A professor of press law at the University of Minnesota, Jane Kirtley, said it would probably have been futile for Ms. Miller to attempt to resist testifying. However, Ms. Kirtley said the unusual entree the reporter received and her courtroom testimony could increase the perception that reporters are working hand in hand with government officials.

"Journalists working in this part of the world really need to make it clear they're not part of the government," Ms. Kirtley said. "It's a cautionary tale of how engaging in this kind of newsgathering can eventually come back to haunt you."

Load-Date: November 14, 2006



<u>Family violence decried (folo); Hamas and Fatah reported close to deal on</u> unity rule

The International Herald Tribune November 7, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 289 words

Body

Discriminatory laws, traditional practices and a severe shortage of emergency shelters combine to perpetuate violence against <u>women</u> by their family members and intimate partners in the Palestinian territories, according to a report to be issued on Tuesday by Human Rights Watch, a New York-based watchdog group, The New York Times reported.

The report, based on interviews over the past year with victims, the police, social workers and officials of the Palestinian Authority, says that while there is "increasing recognition of the problem" of violence against <u>women</u> and girls among the authorities, "little action has been taken to seriously address these abuses." In fact, the report says, "there is some evidence that the level of violence is getting worse while the remedies available to the victims are being further eroded."

There is a significant lack of comprehensive data on the scale of violence, the report concedes, but it notes that studies and statistics compiled by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and <u>women</u>'s groups, many of them aided from abroad, "record high levels of violence perpetrated by family members and intimate partners, aggravated during times of political violence."

The offenses include domestic violence, rape, incest, child abuse and violent responses to so-called "honor crimes," like adultery, that embarrass the clan, family or community.

A co-author of the report, Lucy Mair, said difficulties created by the current political situation, including travel restrictions and a cut-off of Western budget support and other funds to a Palestinian Authority led by <u>Hamas</u>, "has led to the deterioration of existing institutions, erodes available remedies and makes the situation worse."

Load-Date: November 7, 2006



The New York Times

June 13, 2007 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1381 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER and ISABEL KERSHNER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza

City.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, June 12

Body

Gunmen of rival Palestinian factions <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah sharply escalated their fight for supremacy on Tuesday, with <u>Hamas</u> taking over much of the northern Gaza Strip in what is beginning to look increasingly like a civil war.

Five days of revenge attacks on individuals -- including executions, kneecappings and even tossing handcuffed prisoners off tall apartment towers -- on Tuesday turned into something larger and more organized: attacks on symbols of power and the deployment of military units. About 25 Palestinians were killed and more than 100 wounded, Palestinian medics said.

In one <u>Hamas</u> attack on a Fatah security headquarters in northern Gaza near Jabaliya Camp, at least 21 Palestinians were reported killed and another 60 wounded, said Moaweya Hassanein of the Palestinian Health Ministry.

After a senior Fatah leader in northern Gaza, Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, was killed Monday, Fatah's elite Presidential Guards, who are being trained by the United States and its allies, fired rocket-propelled grenades at the house of Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, of *Hamas*, in the Shati refugee camp near Gaza City.

An hour later, <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing fired four mortar shells at the presidential office compound of Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah, who is in the West Bank, a Fatah spokesman, Tawfiq Abu Khoussa, said in a telephone interview.

"Hamas is seeking a military coup against the Palestinian Authority," he said.

<u>Hamas</u> made a similar accusation against Fatah. <u>Hamas</u>, which has an Islamist ideology, demanded that security forces loyal to Fatah, the more nationalist and secular movement, abandon their positions in northern and central Gaza.

Fatah's leaders said Tuesday night that they would suspend participation in the unity government with <u>Hamas</u>, which began in March, until the fighting ends.

That agreement to govern jointly, negotiated under Saudi auspices, put Fatah ministers into a <u>Hamas</u>-led government in an effort to secure renewed international aid and recognition and to stop what was already serious fighting between the two factions.

But the new government has failed to achieve either goal, and it appeared to many in Gaza that the gunmen were not listening to their political leaders. Mr. Abbas is under increasing pressure to abandon the unity government he championed and to try once again to order new elections, which <u>Hamas</u> has said it will oppose by any means.

The head of the Egyptian mediation team, Lt. Col. Burhan Hamad, said neither side responded to his call on Tuesday to hold truce talks. "It seems they don't want to come," said Colonel Hamad, who has brokered several brief cease-fires between the two. "We must make them ashamed of themselves. They have killed all hope. They have killed the future."

He said neither side had the weaponry required to produce "a decisive victory."

Talal Okal, a Gazan political scientist, described what could be coming. "Tonight, we may find ourselves at the beginning of a civil war," he said. "If Abbas decides to move his security forces onto the attack, and not to only defend, we'll find ourselves in a much wider cycle."

Fatah forces were ordered Tuesday evening to defend their positions and counter "a coup against the president and against the Palestinian Authority and national unity government."

The streets of Gazan cities were once again empty of pedestrians and cars. People ventured out to buy food, but only to the next building, and parents kept children out of school.

At Shifa Hospital in Gaza, which <u>Hamas</u> gunmen patrolled, bodies of four <u>Hamas</u> fighters lay on the floor of the emergency room, including Muhammad al-Mqeir, 25. His closest friend called him a martyr, even though he was killed by another Palestinian, from Fatah. "They are not Palestinians, they are lost people," the friend said of Fatah. Doctors said that the emergency room was overloaded and that the hospital was running short of blood.

After warning Fatah, <u>Hamas</u> attacked a Fatah-affiliated security headquarters in Gaza City, and declared northern Gaza "a closed military zone."

An estimated 200 <u>Hamas</u> fighters surrounded Fatah security headquarters there, firing mortar shells and grenades at the compound, where some 500 security officers were positioned. The headquarters fell to <u>Hamas</u>. <u>Hamas</u> gunmen also exchanged fire with Fatah forces at the southern security headquarters in the town of Khan Yunis. There, the two sides fought a gun battle near a hospital. Fifteen children attending a kindergarten in the line of fire were rushed into the hospital, which is financed largely by European donations.

Angering <u>Hamas</u>, Fatah militants abducted and killed the nephew of Abdel Aziz Rantisi, the <u>Hamas</u> leader assassinated by Israel in April 2004.

<u>Hamas</u> gunmen attacked the home of a Fatah security official with mortars and grenades, killing his 14-year-old son and three <u>women</u> inside, security officials said. Other Fatah gunmen stormed the house of a <u>Hamas</u> lawmaker and burned it down.

Fatah forces also attacked the headquarters, in Gaza, of <u>Hamas</u>'s television station, Al Aksa TV, and began to broadcast Fatah songs, but <u>Hamas</u> said later that it had repelled the attack.

In the West Bank, where Fatah is stronger and the Israeli occupation forces keep <u>Hamas</u> fighters underground, the Fatah Presidential Guards took over the Ramallah offices of Al Aksa TV and confiscated equipment.

Also in the West Bank, Fatah men kidnapped a deputy minister from <u>Hamas</u>, one of the few <u>Hamas</u> cabinet members and legislators not already in Israeli military jails, part of Israel's effort to keep pressure on <u>Hamas</u>.

Since Monday morning, at least 43 Palestinians have died in the renewed fighting. More than 50 had died in the previous outburst last month that ended in a brief cease-fire mediated by the Egyptians.

A <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, Fawzi Barhoum, accused Fatah, in alliance with Israel and the United States, of trying to destroy <u>Hamas</u> and overturn the results of elections held in January 2006, in which <u>Hamas</u> won a legislative majority.

"They crossed all the red lines," he said of Fatah after the second straight day that Prime Minister Haniya's house was fired upon.

Sami Abu Zuhri, another <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, said: "Those we sit with from Fatah have no control on the ground. These groups have relations with the U.S. administration and Israel." <u>Hamas</u> says it believes that Mr. Abbas's aide, Muhammad Dahlan, is controlling the Fatah forces, and Mr. Zuhri said, "It's an international and regional plan aiming to eliminate <u>Hamas</u>."

Israeli officials are debating whether Fatah can stand up to <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza. They say they have been asked by Washington recently to approve another shipment of armored vehicles, weapons and ammunition to the Presidential Guards. But a senior Israeli official said Israel was worried that the weaponry would just be seized by <u>Hamas</u>, as much of the last shipment was.

"Hamas now has two million bullets intended for Fatah," he said.

Israeli officials are explicit privately about their intention to damage <u>Hamas</u> and its military infrastructure in Gaza and try to give Fatah a boost at the same time. Israel, in retaliation for rocket fire into Israel from Gaza, has been bombing the buildings and facilities of <u>Hamas</u>'s Executive Force, a parallel police force in Gaza, that has not been firing rockets. Israeli officials argue, however, that the Executive Force and the <u>Hamas</u> military wing "share a command headquarters."

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which deals with the 70 percent of Gaza's 1.5 million people who are refugees or their descendants, said its ability to provide needed aid had been severely hampered by the fighting. Three of its 5 food distribution centers and 7 of its 18 health clinics were forced to close Tuesday, said its Gaza director, John Ging.

"The violence is compounding an already dreadful humanitarian situation," he said, with 80 percent of the refugee population already dependent on aid.

Mr. Okal, who is now on the board of trustees of the Fatah-affiliated Azhar University in Gaza, said he would oppose Fatah's pulling out of elected institutions, but added that he was not optimistic about Gaza. "We are heading toward a collapse -- of both the political system and society," he said.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: The charred home of Jamal Abu al-Jediyan in northern Gaza. Mr. Jediyan, part of the Fatah leadership, was killed Monday by *Hamas* fighters. (Photo by Mahmud Hams/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)(pg. A1)

<u>Hamas</u> fighters in Nusairat, in the Gaza Strip, defended a national security headquarters they had seized from Fatah yesterday. (Photo by Abid Katib/Getty Images)(pg. A8) Chart: "A Collapsing Coalition" <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah agreed to form a Palestinian unity government in Februrary, but they remain engaged in a bitter power struggle. Feb. 8 Leaders of the two main Palestinian parties, <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, decide to form a government of national unity. The new government is intended to halt internal violence and break the international boycott of the <u>Hamas</u> government. March 17 The Palestinian Legislature ratifies the new government, which was delayed by disagreements over filling important posts, including interior minister. April 25 <u>Hamas</u> fires rockets and mortar

shells from the Gaza Strip into Israel. <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing says the cease-fire that began in November is over, though more moderate <u>Hamas</u> politicians call for it to continue. May 11 Violence between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah escalates. May 14 The Palestinian interior minister, a compromise candidate approved by Fatah and <u>Hamas</u>, resigns. His resignation and renewed clashes are viewed as signs that the government may collapse. May 22 After factional fighting kills more than 50 Palestinians in two weeks, the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, meets with Prime Minister Ismail Haniya of <u>Hamas</u> to try to secure a cease-fire. June 11 Fighting intensifies. Gunmen fire at Mr. Haniya's home and mortar shells hit Mr. Abbas's Gaza office. June 12 Both <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah accuse the other of attempting a coup. (pg. A8)

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



<u>Israel turns the heat up in Gaza Strip: 'They are only making us more stubborn,' Hamas legislator says as more targeted attacks ordered</u>

Ottawa Citizen

November 23, 2006 Thursday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A8

Length: 740 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, The Ottawa Citizen; with files from The Associated Press and Agence France-Presse

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - Israel moved yesterday to raise the tempo of military operations in Gaza, sending troops and tanks into two Gaza towns, and is drawing up plans for a full-scale offensive.

Gaza militants fired at least six rockets at Israel yesterday, including one in the town of Sderot that hit an elementary school entrance, the army said. No injuries were reported.

Top Israeli ministers ordered intensified action to stop rocket barrages on southern Israel, including targeting militants and "operational actions against <u>Hamas</u> institutions in the Gaza Strip," according to a government statement after the high-level cabinet meeting. Officials said that meant attacks on buildings. Israel has already taken those measures in the past with limited results.

In addition to approving more targeted attacks on Palestinians believed responsible for the rocket attacks, the government is considering the activation of several divisions of army reserves that might combine with regular army units to effectively split Gaza into two or three separate zones and impose martial law in parts of the territory, according to Israel Radio.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's government and the public remained split between conservatives and terrorized Israelis living near Gaza -- who have been clamouring for immediate, massive military intervention -- and moderates who continue to favour a more measured approach, including talks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Despite the near constant presence of Israeli armoured and infantry units near where the rockets have been launched from Gaza -- and with a surveillance balloon tethered overhead -- the Israeli Defence Force has failed to prevent more than 1,000 rockets from being fired into Israel during the past year.

"Launching rockets is an act of war and we get quite a few declarations of war every day," said Benjamin Prober, who works in the Israeli town Sderot, which has borne the brunt of the rocket barrages for more than two years. "But what is equally clear is that force by our side does not work either."

Israel turns the heat up in Gaza Strip: 'They are only making us more stubborn,' Hamas legislator says as more targeted attacks ordered

According to Israeli media reports, Mr. Olmert told the cabinet meeting that he only expected "a significant halt" to rocket attacks from Gaza. The prime minister argued it would not be reasonable to expect a total cessation of such attacks because the IDF and the Shin Bet internal security service had advised him this was impossible to achieve.

"Even if we have a military operation that is very successful, whatever that means, you won't stop the violence," Yossi Beilin, leader of the left-wing Meretz party, told a gathering of foreign journalists yesterday. "There is only one solution and that is a ceasefire as soon as possible."

In the northern Gaza Strip, Israeli snipers positioned themselves on more than a dozen rooftops in the towns of Beit Hanoun and Jebaliya as ground troops fanned out, Palestinian security officials said. Three teenage Palestinian girls were wounded by Israeli gunfire outside a school in Beit Hanoun, hospital and security officials said.

Militants, led by gunmen from the ruling <u>Hamas</u> faction's military wing, faced off against troops in both towns with landmines, anti-tank missiles and rocket-propelled grenades, security officials said. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded, the military said.

Soldiers took over the home of <u>Hamas</u> legislator Jamila Shanti, who earlier in the month helped organize a <u>women</u>'s demonstration that let dozens of militants escape an Israeli siege on a Beit Hanoun mosque, Ms. Shanti said.

She was not in the house in Jebaliya at the time.

A bulldozer chipped away at the walls of the two-storey structure so troops could enter, according to relatives inside the house and neighbours. Once inside, they locked about 15 members of Ms. Shanti's family, including five children, into a single room and threw furniture and clothes out of windows, she said.

"They are only making us more stubborn," she said. "We will resist with our last drop of blood."

Along with stepping up its offensive, the Israeli cabinet also decided to continue diplomatic efforts and co-operation with Egypt and the world community, to "confront the strengthening of terrorist forces" in the Gaza Strip and prevent weapons smuggling.

More than 300 Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers have died in Gaza since Israel launched an offensive in late June aimed at countering rocket attacks and recovering a soldier seized by *Hamas* militants.

Load-Date: November 23, 2006



Palestinians nearing civil war

The International Herald Tribune
June 13, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1 Length: 1113 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger and Isabel Kershner - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza City.

*

Fighters from <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, ignoring pleas from Egypt and from the Palestinian president, sharply escalated their battle for supremacy in Gaza on Tuesday, with <u>Hamas</u> taking over much of the northern Gaza Strip.

Both sides accused the other of attempting a coup in what increasingly began to look like a civil war.

<u>Hamas</u> demanded that security forces loyal to the rival Fatah movement abandon their positions in northern and central Gaza, while Fatah's leaders met in the West Bank to decide whether to pull out of the national unity government and even the legislature in protest.

The unity government, negotiated in March under Saudi auspices, put Fatah ministers into a <u>Hamas</u>-led government in an effort to secure renewed international aid and recognition and to stop already serious fighting between the two factions.

But the new government has failed to achieve either goal, and it appeared to many in Gaza that the gunmen were not listening to their political leaders. The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, is considered to be under increasing pressure to abandon the unity government he championed and once again try to order new elections, which *Hamas* has said it will oppose by any means.

"Tonight we may find ourselves at the beginning of a civil war," said Talal Okal, a political scientist in Gaza. "It's not a civil war yet, but it is going in that direction. Maybe today or tomorrow. If Abbas decides to move his security forces onto the attack, and not to only defend, we'll find ourselves in a much wider cycle."

Five days of revenge attacks, which have included executions, knee-cappings and even tossing handcuffed prisoners off apartment towers, on Tuesday turned into something more serious and organized: attacks on symbols of power and the deployment of military units.

Early Tuesday morning, a day after a senior Fatah leader in northern Gaza, Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, was killed, Fatah's elite Presidential Guards, who are being trained by the United States and its allies, fired rocket-propelled

Palestinians nearing civil war

grenades at the house of the most senior <u>Hamas</u> member of the Palestinian government, Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, in the Shati refugee camp near Gaza City.

An hour later, <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing fired four mortar shells at the presidential office compound of Abbas, who is in the West Bank, a Fatah spokesman, Tawfiq Abu Khoussa, said in a telephone interview.

"Hamas is seeking a military coup against the Palestinian Authority," he said.

After its warning to Fatah, <u>Hamas</u> then attacked a Fatah-affiliated security headquarters in Gaza City, and declared northern Gaza "a closed military zone."

An estimated 200 <u>Hamas</u> fighters surrounded Fatah security headquarters in northern Gaza, firing mortar shells and grenades at the compound, where about 500 security officers were positioned.

<u>Hamas</u> gunmen also exchanged fire with Fatah forces at the southern security headquarters in the southern town of Khan Yunis. There, the two sides fought a gun battle near a hospital. Fifteen children attending a kindergarten in the line of fire were rushed into the hospital, which is financed largely by European donations.

Fatah militants abducted and killed the nephew of Abdel Aziz Rantisi, a *Hamas* leader who was assassinated by Israel in April 2004.

<u>Hamas</u> gunmen attacked the home of a Fatah security official with mortars and grenades, killing his 14-year-old son and three <u>women</u> inside, security officials said. Other Fatah gunmen stormed the house of a <u>Hamas</u> lawmaker and burned it down.

Also in the West Bank, Fatah men kidnapped a deputy minister belonging to <u>Hamas</u>, one of the few <u>Hamas</u> cabinet members and legislators not already in Israeli military jails, part of Israel's effort to keep pressure on <u>Hamas</u>.

At least four Palestinians were killed Tuesday in the fighting. Since Monday morning, at least 18 have died in the renewed fighting, after more than 50 had died in the previous outburst last month that ended in a brief cease-fire mediated by the Egyptians.

Abbas called for a cease-fire and said that he condemned those "who are harming the blessed Mecca agreement and who are pushing the homeland toward the furnace of ugly civil war."

A <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, Fawzi Barhoum, made a parallel accusation, charging Fatah, in alliance with Israel and the United States, with trying to destroy <u>Hamas</u> and overturn the results of democratic elections in January 2006, in which **Hamas** won a legislative majority.

"They crossed all the red lines," he said of Fatah after the second straight day that Haniya's house was fired upon.

Sami Abu Zuhri, a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, said: "Those we sit with from Fatah have no control on the ground. These groups have relations with the U.S. administration and Israel."

<u>Hamas</u> believes that an Abbas aide, Muhammad Dahlan, is controlling the Fatah forces, and Zuhri said: "It's an international and regional plan aiming to eliminate <u>Hamas</u>."

The head of the Egyptian mediation team, Lieutenant Colonel Burhan Hamad, said neither side had responded to his call to hold truce talks Tuesday.

He said that neither side had the weaponry required to produce "a decisive victory."

Israeli officials are debating whether Fatah can stand up to <u>Hamas</u> in Gaza. They say they have been asked by Washington in recent weeks to approve another shipment of armored vehicles, weapons and ammunition to the Presidential Guard. But a senior Israeli official familiar with the discussion said that Israel was worried that the weaponry would be seized by <u>Hamas</u>, as much of the last shipment was.

Palestinians nearing civil war

"Hamas now has two million bullets intended for Fatah," he said.

Privately, Israeli officials are explicit about their intention to damage <u>Hamas</u> and its military infrastructure in Gaza and try to bolster Fatah at the same time. Israel, in retaliating for rocket fire into Israel from Gaza, has been bombing the buildings and facilities of <u>Hamas</u>'s Executive Force, a parallel police force in Gaza, that has not been firing rockets. Israeli officials argue, however, that the Executive Force and the <u>Hamas</u> military wing "share a command headquarters."

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which deals with the 70 percent of Gaza's 1.5 million people who are refugees or their descendants, said that its ability to provide needed aid had been severely hampered by the fighting. Three of its five food distribution centers and seven of its 18 health clinics were forced to close on Tuesday, said its Gaza director, John Ging.

Okal, the Gaza political scientist, said, "We are heading toward a collapse - of both the political system and society."

"And the chaos will in any event continue."

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



Grenade hits Palestinian PM's home

Guardian.com June 12, 2007

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theguardian

Length: 448 words

Highlight: Prime Minister Ismail Haniya escapes unharmed in attack on Gaza home as factional fighting continues.

Body

A rocket-propelled grenade today struck the home of Palestinian prime minister Ismail Haniyeh, in what his supporters called an attempted assassination by Fatah militants.

<u>Hamas</u> officials said Mr Haniyeh's house was damaged but his family was not harmed, as factional fighting continued for a fourth day.

Earlier, four mortar shells hit the Gaza City compound of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, but the head of the Fatah faction was in the West Bank at the time.

Palestinian security officials said no one was hurt in the incident.

The attacks came amid a new intensity in fighting between *Hamas* and Fatah, after several weeks of quiet.

At least 18 people have been killed in the past two days, some in street executions, others in shootouts that turned hospitals into battlegrounds.

Both groups used the internet and text messaging to call for the execution of the other side's military and political leaders. *Hamas* and Fatah have described the fighting as all-out civil war.

The violence has left more than 80 people dead since mid-May, most of them militants.

Mr Haniyeh's house is located in the Shati refugee camp, on the outskirts of Gaza City.

His son, Abdel Salam, said a grenade hit the side of the house while the family was inside. No one was hurt, he said.

A *Hamas* website described the incident as an assassination attempt.

<u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum accused Fatah of targeting Palestinian institutions to bring down <u>Hamas</u>. "They [Fatah] crossed all the red lines," he said.

Elsewhere, <u>Hamas</u> officials said Fatah gunmen kidnapped a member of its military wing and executed him in the street.

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The dead man was identified as the cousin of Abdel Aziz Rantisi, a *Hamas* leader assassinated by Israel in 2004.

Meanwhile, security officials said <u>Hamas</u> gunmen attacked the home of a senior Fatah official with mortars and grenades, killing his 14-year-old son and three <u>women</u> in the house.

Other Fatah gunmen stormed the house of a *Hamas* lawmaker and burned it to the ground.

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah gunmen later shot at each other at a hospital in the southern Gaza town of Khan Younis.

Hamas controlled the roof of the European Hospital and Fatah-allied security forces took up positions nearby.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, an aide to Mr Abbas, said no end to the violence was in sight.

"You can see for yourself there's no taste for a cease-fire right now," he said.

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah have been locked in a violent power struggle since <u>Hamas</u> won elections in January, 2006, ending four decades of Fatah rule.

<u>Hamas</u> brought Fatah into its government in March in an effort to quell the internal strife, but the fighting reignited in mid-May over an unresolved dispute over who controls the powerful security forces.

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Egypt arranging regional summit next week in show of support for Abbas, aide says

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

June 21, 2007 Thursday

Copyright 2007 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 1060 words

Byline: Associated Press

Body

RAMALLAH, West Bank -- Closing ranks against <u>Hamas</u>, Egypt's president invited Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders to a peace summit, officials said Thursday, the biggest show of support yet by moderate Arab states for beleaguered Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The meeting will take place Monday in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, said Israeli government spokeswoman Miri Eisin. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has invited Abbas, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Jordan's King Abdullah II. Jordan confirmed Abdullah would attend.

Abbas will call for a resumption of peace talks with Israel, arguing that only progress toward Palestinian statehood can serve as a true buffer against <u>Hamas</u>, which took control of Gaza by force last week, Abbas aide Saeb Erekat said.

"The most important thing to realize is that time is of the essence," Erekat said. "We need to deliver the end of occupation, a Palestinian state. If we don't have hope, *Hamas* will export despair to the people."

As immediate steps, Abbas will ask Israel to remove West Bank checkpoints that disrupt daily life and trade, and to transfer hundreds of millions of dollars in Palestinian tax funds Israel froze after *Hamas* came to power last year.

In Washington, Olmert said he would propose to his Cabinet on Sunday that it unlock frozen funds, thought he did not say how much money he thought Israel should free. Israel is holding about \$550 million in tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinians.

Despite the talk about peace, however, the <u>Hamas</u> takeover has dealt a setback to statehood efforts, with the Islamic militants in charge of Gaza and Abbas in charge of the West Bank.

Gaza militants fired nine rockets at the Israeli town of Sderot on Wednesday, slightly injuring one person. Hours earlier, Israeli troops backed by tanks and armored vehicles fatally shot four militants.

Mahmoud Zahar, the man widely believed to be leading Gaza's new <u>Hamas</u> rulers, said his group would be open to a cease-fire with Israel if the army halted its activities there and in the West Bank. He said <u>Hamas</u> was capable of halting the frequent rocket attacks from Gaza. "But nobody will be the protector of the Israeli border," he told The Associated Press.

In the West Bank, the Palestine Liberation Organization threw its full support behind Abbas' decisions to dissolve the *Hamas*-led government and form a new, Fatah-led Cabinet.

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<u>Hamas</u> is not a member of the PLO, which is dominated by Abbas' Fatah movement. Although largely inactive in recent years, the PLO considers itself the sole representative of the Palestinian people, and can bestow legitimacy or take it away.

Technically, the Palestinian legislature would have to approve the emergency government after a month. However, it is controlled by *Hamas* and has been paralyzed for months, following Israel's arrest of most *Hamas* legislators.

The PLO backing, which was to be approved procedurally later in the day, in effect sidelines the parliament.

<u>Hamas</u> spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri dismissed the PLO's decisions as "illegal and illegitimate," and he scoffed at the central council's call for presidential and legislative elections once <u>Hamas</u> relinquished military control of Gaza.

A poll published Thursday showed 75 percent of Palestinians favor early elections.

If new presidential elections were to be held, 49 percent said they would vote for Abbas and 42 percent would vote for his political rival, deposed Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of *Hamas*, the survey said.

Seventy percent said the chances of getting a Palestinian state in the next five years are dim.

The poll by the independent Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research was conducted during and after the <u>Hamas</u> takeover of Gaza last week. It was conducted among 1,270 respondents in the West Bank and Gaza and had an error margin of 3 percentage points.

In a televised speech Wednesday evening, Abbas lashed out at <u>Hamas</u>, branding them "murderous terrorists" with whom he would have no dealings. It marked the first time since <u>Hamas</u>' takeover of Gaza that Abbas laid out his case before the Palestinian people.

Abbas described in detail what he said was a <u>Hamas</u> attempt to assassinate him. He said he obtained footage of <u>Hamas</u> members dragging large amounts of explosives through a tunnel they had dug under Gaza's main road -- the one he takes to his office -- and saying "this is for Abu Mazen," his nickname. He said he sent the tape to **Hamas**' supreme leader, Khaled Mashaal, and to Arab leaders to illustrate **Hamas** intentions.

He said *Hamas* was trying to build an "empire of darkness" in Gaza.

Abu Zuhri hotly rejected Abbas' statements. "What he said was disgusting and not appropriate for the Palestinian president," he said. "The president has harmed himself with his words."

At least 2,000 <u>Hamas</u> supporters took to the streets in Gaza City, denouncing Abbas as an agent of Israel and the United States. "Abbas, Abbas, the (Gaza) strip is all <u>Hamas</u>," the crowd chanted.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah, <u>Hamas</u> officials claimed that Palestinian security stormed the house of <u>Hamas</u> leader Hassan Yossef, questioned his sons for three hours and confiscated computer and documents. Yossef is in an Israeli jail.

In another development, 35 Gazans who had been stuck at the main Gaza-Israel passenger crossing for several days were sent to Egypt via Israel late Wednesday, an Israeli army spokeswoman said.

Among those who left were gunmen from Abbas' Fatah movement, their wives and children.

Seventy had been authorized to leave, but half decided to stay in Gaza after discovering they were to go to Egypt rather than the West Bank, the spokeswoman said.

Earlier Wednesday, Israel took in several of the sick and wounded in the crowd.

Hundreds of men, <u>women</u> and children rushed to the crossing after the <u>Hamas</u> takeover, among them Fatah loyalists who feared they'd be harmed by **Hamas**, despite the militants' offer of amnesty. By Thursday, the passage,

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rank with the stench of urine and garbage, was nearly empty after it became clear that a mass exit to the West Bank was not approved.

The army spokeswoman said Palestinian dual nationals and foreigners working in Gaza were being allowed to pass through Israel on Thursday for other points. By midday, 60 Palestinian-Americans had left Gaza for Jordan, and eight World Bank employees also left the strip, she said.

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Israel to Transfer Funds From Taxes to Aid Abbas

The New York Times

June 25, 2007 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

Length: 1201 words

Byline: By ISABEL KERSHNER **Dateline:** JERUSALEM, June 24

Body

Israel on Sunday agreed to transfer hundreds of millions of dollars of Palestinian tax revenues to the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, in an effort to support his new emergency government after the Muslim militants of <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza 10 days ago.

More gestures of Israeli and international support are expected Monday, when Egypt will be the host of a meeting between Mr. Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel. The aim is to strengthen Mr. Abbas's rule in what is generally regarded as the pro-Fatah West Bank.

But the depth of Fatah support in the West Bank is far from clear. Only a year and a half ago, <u>Hamas</u> swept local elections in several major West Bank towns and in many of the villages, and it gained wide support in parliamentary elections of 2006.

In Nablus, for example, where Fatah militancy is widespread, <u>Hamas</u> won 13 of 15 local council seats. In El Bireh, adjacent to Ramallah, <u>Hamas</u> won 9 of 15, and in Qalqilya, it won all 15.

Analysts say the <u>Hamas</u> victories were at least partly protest votes against rampant corruption in Fatah, but the problems remain unresolved, and some Fatah officials acknowledge that efforts to prop up Mr. Abbas and Fatah may fail.

"The feeling in Fatah now is 'To be or not to be,' " Radwan Abu Ayyash, the Palestinian Authority's deputy minister of culture, said by telephone from Ramallah, the administrative capital in the West Bank. "The West Bank is our last stronghold. But nobody would guarantee Fatah victory if it doesn't reform itself."

Immediately after the <u>Hamas</u> conquest of Gaza, Mr. Abbas became uncharacteristically assertive, firing the previous unity government led by Ismail Haniya of <u>Hamas</u>. Then angry Fatah gunmen took to the streets around the West Bankfor revenge.

The most intense campaign got under way in Nablus, one of the largest and most important cities of the West Bank, with a population of more than 100,000. Mahdi Maraka, 30, a local leader of the Fatah-affiliated Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades militia in a Nablus refugee camp, Al Ein, said he had "read between the lines" after Mr. Abbas

Israel to Transfer Funds From Taxes to Aid Abbas

declared a state of emergency. He sent his men rampaging through the city, looting and burning offices and institutions affiliated with *Hamas* and threatening and kidnapping its representatives.

A week later, Mr. Maraka was in downtown Nablus checking on his father, who owns a bathroom fixture store. With a rifle slung across his shoulder, and flanked by half a dozen armed guards, some of them masked, Mr. Maraka, who says he is wanted by Israel, perched among his father's stock of toilet bowls and basins and gave a leisurely interview.

Fatah officials say that unless men like Mr. Maraka are reined in, the West Bank may be doomed.

"We'll only be able to command the respect of the people if we succeed in getting rid of the armed thugs," said Nasser Jumaa, a former Aksa chief and now a Fatah legislator. But he said Mr. Abbas "still has no clear plan" for creating order in Fatah and for confronting *Hamas*.

In the January 2006 parliamentary elections, <u>Hamas</u> took 74 of the 132 seats. That was not only because of voter anger at Fatah corruption but because deep rivalries within Fatah led to multiple candidates and a split vote in many districts. Those rivalries still exist.

There seems little immediate chance of a <u>Hamas</u> rout in the West Bank like there was in Gaza, but that is at least partly because unlike Gaza, the West Bank remains under Israeli military occupation. Most of the prominent <u>Hamas</u> legislators and politicians from the West Bank are in Israeli jails, and the rest are lying low, trying to evade arrest by the security forces of Fatah.

"No one in the West Bank dares to say they are from <u>Hamas</u> now," Mr. Abu Ayyash said. "They have all disappeared."

Still, while less powerful than in Gaza, nobody doubts that <u>Hamas</u> forces exist. The Aksa Martyrs Brigades in Nablus have circulated a list of 32 wanted men who Mr. Maraka said were "<u>Hamas</u> leaders trying to plan for a coup."

Mr. Jumaa, the Fatah legislator, said <u>Hamas</u> had driven the price of weapons up in the West Bank by 100 percent or more over the past three years. "They have money from Iran," he said. And although Israeli forces enter Nablus almost every night looking for wanted men, Mr. Jumaa said, <u>Hamas</u> never engages them. Instead, he said, "they are saving their bullets for us."

Mr. Abu Ayyash said Mr. Abbas was ready to use "all means" to suppress <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank, "whether democratic or not."

The actions of the Aksa militiamen, which were more concentrated in Nablus but also occurred in other areas of the West Bank, may be one example of that. Though Fatah leaders protested the deeds, nothing was done to stop them.

One target was the Judhur Center for Culture and Arts in Nablus. It was founded 10 years ago by Khulud Masri, a Nablus council member who is affiliated with <u>Hamas</u>. Officials of the center, whose name means "roots," say it was set up to promote <u>women</u>'s development "in the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic tradition."

The night after the <u>Hamas</u> takeover of Gaza, two cars of armed, masked Fatah gunmen came and looted the place, then burned it. Elsewhere in the city, Ms. Masri's personal office was raided and burned.

Ms. Masri, 38, was elected to the Nablus City Council on <u>Hamas</u>'s Change and Reform list. The <u>Hamas</u>-affiliated mayor, who owns the Mercedes dealership in town, and his two deputies were recently arrested by Israel, charged with belonging to <u>Hamas</u>. Ms. Masri became acting deputy mayor.

But last week, Ms. Masri said, 10 Fatah gunmen stormed the City Hall and ordered her to leave. She said they had threatened that if she did not, "tomorrow will bring something different." She did not go back.

Israel to Transfer Funds From Taxes to Aid Abbas

Dozens of other Islamic and <u>Hamas</u> educational and charitable institutions have been attacked. While Israel has long asserted that many of those organizations serve as fronts for financing and recruiting terrorists, Ms. Masri maintains that it is the poor people who benefited from them, and who will suffer. About 200 <u>women</u> participated in her center's activities, including cooking and making handicrafts as an extra source of income.

"People are cursing the militants; they are mad at them," she said.

Yet in the current atmosphere, even Ms. Masri is afraid to identify explicitly with <u>Hamas</u>. "I am an Islamist," she said. "Maybe I'll be supportive."

Back among the bathroom fixtures, Mr. Maraka said he thought that it was his men who had raided Ms. Masri's office and center. He definitely remembers being in the City Hall. "We changed the mayor of Nablus from <u>Hamas</u> to Fatah," he said.

But while he was talking, he received two calls on his cellphone from informants warning him that he and another Aksa Brigades leader from Al Ein were on a *Hamas* hit list. "Now I'm hunted by Israel and by *Hamas*," he said.

Walking out into the street, he nervously flicked a switchblade open and closed before speeding off in a beat-up car.

Map: Nablus has been a center of the strife between Fatah and *Hamas*.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: Mahdi Maraka, foreground, leads fighters at a Nablus refugee camp.

Khulud Masri, in foreground, at the Judhur Center for Culture and Arts in Nablus on Friday, a week after Fatah gunmen looted and burned it. (Photographs by Rina Castelnuovo for The New York Times)

Load-Date: June 25, 2007



Israel will support Abbas with millions from taxes

Yukon News (Yukon)
June 25, 2007 Monday
Final Edition

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Section: INTERNATIONAL; Pg. 10

Length: 1200 words

Byline: Isabel Kershner, New York Times Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

On Sunday, Israel agreed to transfer hundreds of millions of dollars of Palestinian tax revenues to the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, in an effort to support his new emergency government after the Islamic militants of <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza 10 days ago.

More gestures of Israeli and international support are expected Monday, when Egypt will be the host of a meeting between Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel.

The aim is to strengthen Abbas' rule in what is generally regarded as the pro-Fatah West Bank.

But the depth of Fatah support in the West Bank is far from clear. Only a year and a half ago, <u>Hamas</u> swept local elections in several major West Bank towns and in many of the villages, and it gained wide support in the parliamentary elections of 2006 as well.

In Nablus, for example, where Fatah militancy is widespread, *Hamas* won 13 out of 15 local council seats.

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Analysts say the <u>Hamas</u> victories were at least partly protest votes against rampant corruption in Fatah, but the problems remain unresolved, and some Fatah officials acknowledge that without serious correction, efforts to prop up Abbas and Fatah may fail.

"The feeling in Fatah now is 'To be or not to be," Radwan Abu Ayyash, the Palestinian Authority's deputy minister of culture, said by telephone from Ramallah, the administrative capital in the West Bank. "The West Bank is our last stronghold. But nobody would guarantee Fatah victory if it doesn't reform itself."

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Then angry Fatah gunmen took to the streets around the West Bank, to take their revenge.

The most intense campaign got under way in Nablus, one of the largest and most important cities of the West Bank, with a population of more than 100,000.

Mahdi Maraka, 30, a local leader of the Fatah-affiliated Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades militia in a Nablus refugee camp, Al Ein, said he had "read between the lines" after Abbas declared a state of emergency.

He sent his men rampaging through the city, looting and burning offices and institutions affiliated with <u>Hamas</u> and threatening and kidnapping its representatives.

A week later, Maraka was in downtown Nablus checking on his father, who owns a bathroom fixture store.

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But he added that Abbas "still has no clear plan" -- not for creating order in Fatah, nor for confronting Hamas.

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Most of the prominent <u>Hamas</u> legislators and politicians from the West Bank are in Israeli jails, and the rest are lying low, trying to evade a new sweep of arrests by the security forces of Fatah.

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Still, while less powerful than in Gaza, nobody doubts that *Hamas* forces exist.

The Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Nablus have circulated a list of 32 wanted men who Maraka said were "*Hamas* leaders trying to plan for a coup."

Many of them, he said, were members of the Executive Force, a West Bank version of the <u>Hamas</u> police militia in Gaza that was set up to counter the Fatah-dominated official security apparatuses there.

Jumaa, the Fatah legislator, said that <u>Hamas</u> had driven the price of weapons up in the West Bank by 100 per cent or more over the past three years.

"They have money from Iran," he said. And although Israeli forces enter Nablus almost every night looking for wanted men, Jumaa said, *Hamas* never engages them. Instead, he said, "they are saving their bullets for us."

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The actions of the Aqsa militiamen, which were more concentrated in Nablus but also occurred in other areas of the West Bank, may be one example of that. Though Fatah leaders protested the deeds, nothing was done to stop them.

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It was founded 10 years ago by Khulud Masri, a Nablus council member who is affiliated with *Hamas*.

Officials of the centre, whose name means "roots," say it was set up to promote <u>women</u>'s development "in the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic tradition."

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Elsewhere in the city, Masri's personal office was raided and burned, and her laptop computer, scanner and fax machine were all stolen.

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Graphic

Photo: Rina Castelnuovo, The New York Times; GUN DIPLOMACY... Members of the Al-Aqsa Brigades, loyal to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Fatah, drive down a street in Ramallah.;

Load-Date: June 25, 2007



Palestinian Truce Shaky, but Violence Ebbs

The New York Times

December 23, 2006 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 11

Length: 841 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: GAZA, Dec. 22

Body

There were outbursts of violence among Palestinians belonging to the <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah factions in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Friday, three days into a shaky truce, but the death toll was lower than earlier in the week, politicians spoke of calm and the streets were generally quiet. Those who walked them, however, were watchful and nervous.

Before dawn on Friday, there was an intense gun battle here in Gaza City near the home of the <u>Hamas</u> foreign minister, Mahmoud Zahar, with up to 1,000 rounds fired and a few rocket-propelled grenades fired.

The cause was not political; the clash was, instead, a more traditional one set off by a large clan, or hamulla, seeking revenge, according to the combatants. The Dagmush clan, important in Gaza City and less involved in politics than in various commercial concerns, abducted a <u>Hamas</u> fighter after two gun-carrying clan members were killed by <u>Hamas</u> earlier in the week, apparently because the <u>Hamas</u> fighters thought the men were Fatah fighters coming to attack them.

In the gun battle on Friday, one <u>Hamas</u> fighter was kidnapped, <u>Hamas</u> said, and one man, Ayman Jirjawi, was killed. Neighbors insisted that the dead man was an innocent bystander unconnected with any armed group, but <u>Hamas</u> later claimed that he was one of their own. Mr. Jirjawi's funeral march, however, was modest -- purely civilian and bearing no insignia of any armed group.

There was a more politically motivated clash in the northern West Bank town of Nablus on Friday, when security forces and militants loyal to the Fatah faction of the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, fired on a few thousand <u>Hamas</u> marchers trying to hold a rally celebrating their group's founding. At least nine people were wounded, but there were no deaths, according to Palestinian and Western news agencies.

Palestinians in Nablus who are loyal to Fatah said that <u>Hamas</u> fighters had been more visible in the city recently despite the presence of Israeli troops. <u>Hamas</u> is trying to organize a West Bank branch of the Executive Force, a police force in Gaza under the command of the **Hamas** interior minister, Said Siam.

In general, <u>Hamas</u> is weaker in the West Bank than in Gaza, and because of the Israeli military occupation, <u>Hamas</u> members keep a much lower profile and do not carry weapons openly the way that the Fatah-dominated security forces do.

Palestinian Truce Shaky, but Violence Ebbs

Military clashes between the groups peaked Monday and Tuesday, after Mr. Abbas called for early presidential and parliamentary elections in an attempt to unseat the <u>Hamas</u>-led government and bring together one that would be more acceptable to the West, which has stopped direct financing to the Palestinian Authority.

<u>Hamas</u> rejected early parliamentary elections, saying that it had won a majority in free voting in January, and that Mr. Abbas was attempting a coup.

But the violence this week drove the politicians to try to quiet the clashes and to pull most armed men from the street. Mr. Abbas said in an interview with an Arabic newspaper published Friday that he remained open to negotiations with <u>Hamas</u> on a unity government that could make early elections unnecessary.

The <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, Ismail Haniya, said here in a sermon that <u>Hamas</u> wanted a national unity government, but not one that bowed to American or Israeli agendas. "We are ready to begin discussions on a unity government on the basis of Palestinian conditions," he said.

His political adviser, Ahmed Yousef, said in an interview, however, that negotiations could not begin where they broke off, deadlocked on ministerial portfolios, in particular finance. "I think we have to go back to square one now and start negotiating a change in the whole course of the discussion," he said.

Mr. Abbas, known as Abu Mazen, would have to move closer to <u>Hamas</u>'s conception of a political platform, whether the result pleased the United States or not, Mr. Yousef said. "Instead of being in two camps, we want to be in one camp, stronger in the eyes of the United States and the world," he said. "If we can show Abu Mazen and Ismail Haniya hand-in-hand, I think the Americans would have to have a more even-handed policy instead of trying to divide us."

There would be no early parliamentary elections, Mr. Yousef said.

Rocket fire from Gaza into Israel also continued this week. Six Qassam rockets were fired at Israel on Thursday, and five were fired Friday, wounding one Israeli in Sderot, according to the Israeli Army.

The attacks Thursday caused no Israeli injuries, but one rocket fell short of the border and landed in Beit Hanun, wounding three Palestinian children, Palestinian medics said.

There have been close to 50 rockets fired from Gaza since a Nov. 26 truce with Israel, the army said. The Palestinians promised to stop all rocket fire and the Israelis stopped all military activities in Gaza. <u>Hamas</u> insists it has not fired rockets, but other groups like Islamic Jihad say they are responding to Israeli military actions in the West Bank, which was not a part of the truce.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: Palestinian <u>women</u> were waving <u>Hamas</u> flags as a gun battle between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah militants broke out yesterday at a rally in Nablus. (Photo by Alaa Badarneh/European Pressphoto Agency)

Load-Date: December 23, 2006



Antiwar group backs working with Mideast radicals; Canadians come away from Cairo meeting urging solidarity with Hezbollah, Hamas

Ottawa Citizen May 9, 2007 Wednesday Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 1058 words

Byline: Don Butler, The Ottawa Citizen

Body

Canadian activists who attended a controversial conference in Cairo are calling on antiwar campaigners to show increased solidarity with Mideast "resistance movements," including Hezbollah and *Hamas*.

According to an audio clip obtained yesterday by the Citizen, the activists issued the call at a public meeting April 27 in Toronto at which Canadian delegates reported on their experiences at the March 29 to April 1 Cairo Conference.

The focus of the conference was to forge an international alliance against "imperialism and Zionism." Twenty Canadians attended, mostly from Canadian antiwar groups.

The participants included representatives -- some quite senior -- of four Islamist groups listed as terrorist organizations by the Canadian government, including *Hamas* and Hezbollah.

In an interview, David Harris, a terrorism expert and former chief of strategic planning for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), said it was "absolutely extraordinary" that antiwar groups would align themselves with radical Islamic groups.

"At the very least, people associated with the organizations connected with this should feel mortified and horrified," he said.

The 90-minute meeting on April 27 at the Steelworkers' Hall on Cecil Street in downtown Toronto was chaired by James Clark of the Toronto Coalition to Stop the War, who was one of the delegates at the Cairo meeting. Seven other delegates also presented reports.

According to the audio recording, several talked about how "resistance movements" in the Middle East are keen to improve relations with antiwar and leftist groups in the West.

"What we saw in Cairo were the first signs that a world movement is beginning to come together," Suzanne Rice, one of the Canadian delegates, told the gathering.

A number of speakers urged audience members to sign up for next year's Cairo conference so an even larger Canadian delegation could attend.

Antiwar group backs working with Mideast radicals; Canadians come away from Cairo meeting urging solidarity with Hezbollah. Hamas

"We have to forge a more solid and more united anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist movement here to be able to have something to show our brothers and sisters when we get back," said one speaker.

Ali Mallah, who represented the Canadian Arab Federation, the Canadian Union of Public Employees and two antiwar groups, said Canadian delegates "made a very important contribution" in Cairo.

"We didn't agree with everything and we didn't disagree with many things," he said.

There were debates about resistance at the conference, Mr. Mallah said, adding: "When we hear about Islamist resistance, let's try to put ourselves where they are and try to see if from their point of view."

He said the question of Israel was "very difficult," because Middle Eastern groups reject its right to exist. "But there is no rejection of Judaism or Christianity, which we don't hear much about here."

Mr. Mallah said officials from Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood told delegates they do not view religion, nationality or ideology as a barrier to co-operation with other activist groups, "as long as they agree on opposing the war, striving for peace and most importantly, standing up against imperialism and occupation."

But Mr. Harris, who directs the International and Terrorist Intelligence Program at INSIGNIS Strategic Research Inc. in Ottawa, said such statements are part of a disinformation campaign designed to dupe western activists.

"To the extent that their audience and any of us are gullible enough to actually believe that, then perhaps we deserve the consequences," Mr. Harris said.

In fact, he said, radical Islam constitutes "one of the most imperialistic supremacist movements known to history. These groups want to eliminate our way of life."

Mr. Harris said there was "something surprising about self-styled progressive peace and human rights operatives justifying cuddling with <u>women</u>-stoning, gay-killing, limb-amputating medieval throwbacks."

He said activists who deal with groups like <u>Hamas</u> and Hezbollah shouldn't be surprised if they come under scrutiny from Canadian security services.

"If you're going to start playing in those big leagues of international terror, you've got to expect that the defensive of Canada and other Western countries will begin to take an adverse interest in you," Mr. Harris said.

But John Riddell, a longtime activist who was part of the Canadian delegation in Cairo, told the Toronto audience that casting militant Islamists as the enemy is just Canadian government spin.

"It's the Harper government that says that Hezbollah and <u>Hamas</u> are officially terrorists," he said. "They want to intimidate us so we do not link up with the enemy.

"That's not how we see it. The goal of us who work for peace has always been to cut across the battle lines in a world alliance."

That isn't easy, he acknowledged, because of "the political barriers that exist in our country and the psychological barriers that go along with them."

Still, Mr. Riddell quoted a Hezbollah leader who declared that thanks to the Cairo Conference, "the world is more beautiful, more promising for us. And tomorrow is for us, not for imperialism."

Sid Lacombe, co-ordinator of the Canadian Peace Alliance, said the connection at the conference between groups in the Middle East and Western activists was "incredibly important.

"The nature of imperialism over the last number of decades has meant that these divisions between Western activists and activists in the Middle East have been quite huge," he said.

Antiwar group backs working with Mideast radicals; Canadians come away from Cairo meeting urging solidarity with Hezbollah, Hamas

"It's been very, very difficult for us to get past it. But it's the importance of the Cairo Conference that we're able to do this."

Mr. Lacombe was one of several Canadian delegates who travelled to Beirut following the conference to view the devastation Israeli bombing caused during last year's war with Hezbollah.

He said the Israeli attacks have only strengthen Hezbollah and broadened its base of popular support.

"The resistance movements are absolutely phenomenal at doing development work," he said. "They're doing any number of educational campaigns, and they're doing this work to try to support themselves and to try to free themselves from the kind of violence that's being unleashed on them constantly.

"To be able to see what the movements there are going through and to be able to meet with them is quite phenomenal," he said, adding that he hopes a "much, much larger delegation" of Canadian activists will attend the 2008 Cairo Conference.

Load-Date: May 10, 2007



Palestinian leaders reach tentative deal on new unity government

The Telegraph-Journal (New Brunswick)

November 7, 2006 Tuesday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A7

Length: 284 words

Byline: Diaa Hadid Associated Press

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas travelled to Gaza on Monday for negotiations with <u>Hamas</u> to put what he hoped will be the finishing touches on a national unity government made up of independent experts.

The movement toward a deal came as fighting in northern Gaza heated up on the sixth day of an Israeli offensive. At least seven Palestinians were killed, including a *female* suicide bomber.

Abbas, a moderate, has been urging <u>Hamas</u>, which controls most government functions, to join his Fatah movement in a coalition to end international sanctions. Abbas began a meeting in Gaza City with the Palestinian prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u>, after nightfall Monday.

A <u>Hamas</u> website and Palestinian officials said the new prime minister would be current Health Minister Bassem Naim, a *Hamas* activist.

The platform of the emerging government, however, is vague about the key international demand of recognizing Israel.

Negotiators and officials in <u>Hamas</u>, which has repeatedly rejected the international conditions since winning legislative elections in January, said an agreement on forming a government was imminent.

"We are getting closer and closer toward a deal. Without having a strong opportunity for this deal, Abu Mazen would not have come," said Mustafa Barghouti, an independent legislator involved in the negotiations. Abbas is also known as Abu Mazen.

Under the emerging plan, the <u>Hamas</u> cabinet and prime minister would step down and be replaced by a team of experts in hopes of ending the western boycott, imposed when <u>Hamas</u> came to power in March.

However, top <u>Hamas</u> leaders have yet to decide whether to accept the plan, and similar negotiations have broken down before.

Load-Date: January 8, 2007



<u>U.S. lifts embargo Aid to pour in U.S. pledges millions to Abbas-led</u> government. Peace talks? Bush hears Abbas' plea to cajole Israeli leader.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

June 19, 2007 Tuesday

THIRD EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 628 words

Byline: By Glenn Kessler The Washington Post

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

The United States lifted on Monday its embargo on direct aid to the Palestinian government, joining the European Union and other countries in a swift demonstration of support for President Mahmoud Abbas in his struggle against the militant group *Hamas*.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said she had called Salam Fayyad, the new prime minister named this week by Abbas, to tell him that she was ending the economic and diplomatic bans imposed after <u>Hamas</u>' unexpected victory in legislative elections last year.

"We want to work with his government and support his efforts to enforce the rule of law and to ensure a better life for the Palestinian people," she said.

In Luxembourg, EU foreign ministers said they also were prepared to end the 15-month embargo on direct financial aid to the Palestinian government.

"The signal is that we support 100 percent, politically and financially, Abbas and his transition government," said Luxembourg's foreign minister, Jean Asselborn.

Abbas dismissed the <u>Hamas</u>-dominated government after <u>Hamas</u> seized the Gaza Strip from security forces loyal to Abbas.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert arrived in Washington on Monday and will meet with President George W. Bush today.

In a phone conversation with Bush on Monday, Abbas urged him to encourage Israel to begin peace talks with his new government as soon as possible.

Rice said that up to \$86 million - much of which had been earmarked to bolster Abbas' security forces against <u>Hamas</u> - will be redirected in consultation with Congress to assist the Palestinian government in providing essential services.

U.S. lifts embargo Aid to pour in U.S. pledges millions to Abbas-led government. Peace talks? Bush hears Abbas' plea to cajole Israeli leader.

<u>Hamas</u> won the 2006 elections largely on its reputation for efficiency in providing social services and a reputation for incorruptibility, in contrast to that of Abbas' Fatah party, which has long dominated Palestinian politics.

The international aid boycott, intended to isolate <u>Hamas</u>, stirred resentment among many Palestinians, even those who did not support <u>Hamas</u>. Humanitarian aid, however, continued to flow, including under a European program that paid the salaries of health care and other essential workers.

Rice said \$40 million more will be contributed to the U.N. agency that assists Palestinian refugees in Gaza.

"Through its actions, <u>Hamas</u> sought to divide the Palestinian nation," Rice said. "We reject that. It is the position of the United States that there is one Palestinian people and there should be one Palestinian state."

Rice gave no indication how the evolving U.S. policy would restore Abbas' power over Gaza.

Neither <u>Hamas</u> nor Fatah appeared ready to give ground Monday. Fatah leaders said the former <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, should acknowledge Abbas' order dismissing the unity government that the Islamic party once led.

"Haniyeh has only one way out of this," said Qaddura Faris, a former Fatah government minister in the West Bank. "He has to obey the president's order and apologize on behalf of *Hamas*."

<u>Hamas</u> leaders in Gaza, meanwhile, refused to accept Abbas' decision to dissolve the government, which followed five days of fighting that left the strip entirely in the hands of <u>Hamas</u>.

"I think we are the only legitimate government because we received our support from the Palestinian people," said Mahmoud al-Zahar, a <u>Hamas</u> leader and former foreign minister in its government. "The others received their legitimacy from the enemy."

About 400 Palestinians, many of them <u>women</u> and children, gathered on the Gaza side of the Erez crossing into Israel on Monday seeking a way out of the strip. Around twilight, gunfire erupted, and at least one Palestinian was killed. Witnesses said <u>Hamas</u> gunmen, now in charge of the crossing, opened fire with assault rifles to control the crowd.

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Notes

Palestinian power switch

Graphic

PHOTO

PHOTO - (A Palestinian woman weeps as she sits with her family as they wait to cross to the Israeli side at the Erez Crossing, in the northern Gaza Strip, Monday, June 18, 2007.) PHOTO - (Newly-appointed Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayad, left, and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, center, pause during a swearing in

U.S. lifts embargo Aid to pour in U.S. pledges millions to Abbas-led government. Peace talks? Bush hears Abbas' plea to cajole Israeli leader.

ceremony for the new government at Abbas headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah, Sunday, June 17, 2007.)

Load-Date: June 26, 2007



Rift between Palestinian groups deepens

The Irish Times

July 16, 2007 Monday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 8

Length: 1279 words

Body

MIDDLE EAST: The PM's adviser tells Michael Jansen in Gaza the Irish in particular understand the struggle of the Palestinian people.

<u>Hamas</u> yesterday castigated Fatah's military wing for handing in weapons and renouncing resistance to Israeli occupation in exchange for an amnesty of 178 wanted fighters in the movement's military wing, al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades.

<u>Hamas</u> also rejected the reappointment by President Abbas on Saturday of Salam Fayyad to head an interim government. Ahmad Bahar, acting speaker of the Palestinian parliament, who is from <u>Hamas</u>, convened the legislature to invalidate the move, but Israel's detention of a majority of <u>Hamas</u> members and a boycott by Fatah ensured that only 30 of the 132 members attended.

The legislative council last achieved a quorum in March to confirm the national unity *Hamas*-Fatah coalition.

Shawan Jabarin, head of al-Haq - Law in the Service of Man - ruled that "legally speaking, any government should get parliamentary approval before being sworn in . . . Abbas is playing around with the constitution".

The rift between the rival movements is being exacerbated by the actions of Israel and the international community. Dr Ahmed Yousef, political adviser of dismissed prime minister Ismail Haniyeh, said *Hamas* is taking very seriously Israel's latest threat to assassinate him, particularly since "there are people in Ramallah who want to see him eliminated" because "[Mr Haniyeh] can rally the Palestinian people behind him".

Speaking at the prime minister's office in central Gaza City, Mr Yousef said Mr Haniyeh's antagonists understand that he is a "charismatic" personality to whom people become "easily attached". A death threat has hung over him before, but "this time it is more serious".

Nevertheless, it was business as usual at the prime ministry. A handful of black-clad armed members of <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing, the Izzedin al-Qassam brigades, constituted the security detail. Cars of employees were parked in a roped-off part of the street. Several <u>women</u> in headscarves and long coats were waiting to present petitions to Mr Haniyeh, who makes himself available to people and attends public prayers on Fridays.

Dr Yousef began his career as a mechanical engineer but then earned a master's degree in journalism at Columbia University in New York before studying for a PhD in political science.

Rift between Palestinian groups deepens

He is the author of 28 books, most in Arabic, and recently contributed articles on <u>Hamas</u>'s political positions to leading US and British newspapers. In spite of many years in the US, he continues to carry a Palestinian travel document. "I refuse to lose my identity. I am a proud Palestinian."

He dismissed the accusation levelled by Mr Abbas that <u>Hamas</u> is harbouring al-Qaeda in Gaza. The "ideology and practice of <u>Hamas</u> are totally different from [those] of al-Qaeda", said Dr Yousef. Thousands of Gazans flock to the beach these days, he said, and this shows that "the culture of <u>Hamas</u>" is not the repressive conservatism of al-Qaeda or the Afghan Taliban.

"Also, we never attacked any foreign interests . . . because all the time we concentrate on resistance to the occupation. I think the people in Ramallah are trying to associate <u>Hamas</u> with al-Qaeda to mobilise the Americans, the Israelis and some Europeans to stand behind [Abbas and Fatah] and to encourage western intervention here in Gaza."

Some of these players believe <u>Hamas</u> is a "terrorist organisation and want to act against it as part of the war on terrorism." He said, however, that Europeans are "more balanced" than the US and Israel and observed that positive statements from the European Parliament indicate it wants to engage with <u>Hamas</u> and to promote dialogue between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah.

In spite of the harsh stance Mr Abbas is taking against <u>Hamas</u>, the movement continues to respect his "legitimacy" as the elected president of the Palestinians and is ready to reconcile. "Everything can easily be fixed" through dialogue. "We are ready to co-operate with the Arab League, Egyptians and Saudis who want to mediate. Most of the Arab countries do not like to see the Palestinians divided."

He insisted that <u>Hamas</u> does "not have any problem with the majority of Fatah, the problems are with those people who have foreign agendas like the Dahlan group and others who have their own interests" to pursue.

Muhammad Dahlan was the former head of Preventive Security in Gaza who attempted to crush <u>Hamas</u> in the mid-90s.

Dr Yousef said anti-<u>Hamas</u> groups in Fatah "do not like to see <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah working hand-in-hand". But he observed that "Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> represent 80 per cent of the Palestinian people so one group cannot be isolated or distanced from the other. They must work together to strengthen the Palestinian cause".

Commenting on Ramallah's decision to tell police and civil servants in Gaza they will lose their salaries if they go to work while <u>Hamas</u> is in charge, he said: "This is a way to get people to exert pressure on <u>Hamas</u>." But he did not think it would succeed. Many people who work in these services must be counted as "hidden unemployment" because they are on the payroll without working.

"There may be 500 on the list but only 50 are doing their jobs . . . Before <u>Hamas</u> took over in Gaza, the security service had 40,000 but you don't need more than about 4,000 to control Gaza. With this number we will be able to cleanse Gaza of all those people who create trouble and chaos. <u>Hamas</u>'s executive force [police], some 4,000 to 5,000-strong, is sufficient."

He said there are no checkpoints from Beit Hanoun in the north to Rafah in the south. People leaving their homes no longer have to fear they will be "stalked and targeted. There are no gunmen [in the streets], except law enforcement".

Dr Yousef said <u>Hamas</u> will reactivate the established civil court system and make certain it is operating properly so no one can take the law into their own hands or evade punishment, as was the case before. "Now justice will prevail." The movement is also trying to reconcile feuding families responsible for much of the violence in the Gaza Strip.

He praised Irishman John Ging, who is head of Gaza operations of the UN Relief and Works Agency which provides relief to 1.1 million of the 1.5 million Palestinian residents of the Strip. Dr Yousef said: "When I listened to him the first time, I understood he is someone who is very knowledgeable" about the Palestinian situation. "He has

Rift between Palestinian groups deepens

a better understanding of our struggle than anybody else. Then I figured out he must be Irish . . . Irish people know because we have a similar struggle, a very similar story . . . We are learning from their experience on how to come to negotiations, how to deal with Israel."

Mr Ging has repeatedly warned that if Israel does not open the major crossing into Gaza, the agency will not be able to provide the volume of food and medical supplies needed to sustain Gaza.

"Unfortunately that's true, said Dr Yousef. "If they continue to put restrictions [on goods entering the strip], this will become a way to starve the Palestinian people to death, another way to pressure the Palestinians . . . But I do believe that since Israel has the moral and political responsibility for the Palestinians [in Gaza] because we are still under occupation, it will be a big blow to Israeli face if Palestinians cry from hunger.

"We are people who have been living in refugee camps for more than 60 years, so we are accustomed to a hard life. We can accommodate ourselves with the minimum food available.

"Our dignity and our struggle for self-determination mean we can endure more hardship. So, we will defy all kinds of pressure they will exert on us."

Load-Date: July 16, 2007



Riven Palestinians reinforce physical divide

The Irish Times

June 15, 2007 Friday

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Section: OPINION; Opinion; Pg. 20

Length: 707 words

Body

<u>Hamas</u>, with its fundamentalist Islamist agenda, has seized control of the Gaza Strip and split it from Fatah-controlled West Bank, writes Michael Jansen

As <u>Hamas</u> fighters consolidated their grip on the Gaza Strip yesterday, Islam Shahawan, spokesman for the movement's military wing told <u>Hamas</u> radio that "the past era has ended and will not return. The era of justice and Islamic rule has arrived."

<u>Hamas</u> hardliners intend to reign irrespective of what happens in the West Bank, which is under control of Palestinian Authority president Mahmoud Abbas's secular Fatah.

Islam's reference to "justice" was significant. After the establishment of the Fatah-run Palestinian Authority in 1994, its preventive security agency, led by Muhammad Dahlan, brutally crushed <u>Hamas</u>. The seizure of the agency's headquarters in Gaza City and execution of captured officers was harsh retribution for past treatment of *Hamas*.

<u>Hamas</u> refers to Dahlan and his agencies as a "treacherous stream in the Fatah movement", accusing it of collaborating with Israel and the US to subvert the Palestinian struggle.

Fatah claims that equally "subversive" hardliners in <u>Hamas</u> are trying to take over Gaza and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the umbrella grouping created by Fatah and other secular groups.

As the fighting in Gaza escalated, Mr Dahlan, the president's security adviser, was in Cairo receiving medical treatment rather than in the Strip, where he normally resides. He travelled to Ramallah yesterday, too late to be of use. Fatah units based in Gaza complain that their leaders are not in the strip, are detached from events there and offer no support.

Fatah, in spite of numerical superiority, is up against better-armed, better-trained, better-disciplined and more highly motivated *Hamas* fighters whose political leaders and military commanders are in Gaza.

They have prepared for a clash ever since Fatah refused to share power with <u>Hamas</u>, undermining the <u>Hamas</u> government formed in March 2006 and the national unity government set up this March. Fatah has been bolstered by the Quartet - comprised of the US, UN, EU and Russia - which led an economic boycott. This policy was castigated by Alvaro De Soto, the former UN regional envoy, who said sanctions have had "devastating consequences" for the Palestinians.

Riven Palestinians reinforce physical divide

Gaza has felt the effect of sanctions far more than the West Bank. In Gaza, 800,000 of 1.4 million residents depend on food aid. Unemployment is soaring. Trade has been stifled because farmers and manufacturers cannot import material they need or export produce and goods because Israel has besieged the strip. While Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> have tried to mitigate the effect of sanctions by employing young men in their militias, Fatah has gone for quantity, recruiting thousands in rabble units, while **Hamas** has opted for quality, establishing an effective force of 9,000.

Gaza has always been quite different from the West Bank. It is more conservative, devout, poor and more likely to accept an "Islamic" government. The strip's traditional ties have been with Egypt, which ruled Gaza from 1948 until 1967. Gazans speak Arabic with an Egyptian lilt. Gazan men wear the Egyptian caftan and most <u>women</u> cover their heads. Most <u>Hamas</u> leaders are either doctors or engineers educated at Egyptian universities where they became associated with the Muslim Brotherhood.

The West Bank, ruled by Jordan from 1948-1967, is more secular and open to western influences.

Located in the Palestinian heartland and with a population of 2.4 million, the West Bank is also the senior partner in the Palestinian Authority. During the brief period when there was freedom of movement between the two territories, many Gazan men travelled to the West Bank in search of jobs and found they were not welcome.

If Gaza and the West Bank come under separate governments, the Palestinian Authority is certain to collapse, depriving the Palestinians of the vehicle for achieving statehood.

A <u>Hamas</u>-run Gaza is likely to remain under sanctions, plunging its citizens even deeper into poverty, while a West Bank Fatah government could not claim to represent the Palestinian people or conduct negotiations with Israel.

Division is the worst option for the Palestinians.

Load-Date: June 15, 2007



Israeli Army Strikes Cell in Northern Gaza as Palestinian Factional Fighting Persists

The New York Times
May 20, 2007 Sunday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 1; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 14

Length: 1182 words

Byline: By ISABEL KERSHNER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza City.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, May 19

Body

The Israeli Army struck a three-member Palestinian rocket-launching cell near Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip on Saturday, first with tank shells and then from the air, an army spokesman said.

Local residents said the three were shepherds and three other people had been wounded, Reuters reported.

Hours later, the Palestinian faction <u>Hamas</u> claimed responsibility for firing an antitank missile at an Israeli Army bulldozer that was accompanying tanks stationed in Gaza, close to the border with Israel. Two soldiers were slightly injured, the army spokesman said. It was the first time <u>Hamas</u> struck at the Israeli soldiers, who moved a few hundred yards into Gaza on Thursday.

The two events represented an escalation by each side.

[Israel kept up its attacks. Early Sunday, three suspected <u>Hamas</u> militants in a vehicle were killed in one of four predawn airstrikes, Reuters reported, citing an Israeli Army spokesman who said the size of the explosion had confirmed that the vehicle was carrying munitions. The spokesman said the other strikes destroyed facilities suspected of manufacturing munitions.]

Inside Gaza, factional fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah entered its second week, despite the declaration of an internal cease-fire by political leaders on Saturday afternoon -- the fifth such declaration in the past week.

Israeli tanks moved inside Gaza on Thursday in response to days of heavy rocket fire on Israel, but Saturday was the first time those tanks fired shells at a rocket-launching cell, the army spokesman said. In the past few days, some tank shells have been fired into open areas as warning shots, and on Saturday, the army fired artillery shells empty of explosives into Gaza "for calibration purposes," said the spokesman, who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

He said the army had no intention of using live artillery "at this point," but that preparations were being made in case. Generally, artillery shells carry a more powerful payload than tank shells.

Although the Israelis have used airstrikes in the past week that residents say have killed some civilians, the army has been reluctant to fire shells into Gaza because of the higher risk of inaccurate fire leading to civilian casualties.

The army spokesman said that before this week, no tank or artillery shells had been fired into Gaza since November 2006, when an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire in Gaza took effect. That month, at least 18 Palestinian civilians, most from one family, were killed by Israeli shells that missed their target and hit a row of houses in Beit Hanoun.

The militant cell that was the target on Saturday was using an abandoned Palestinian security force base and had fired at least one of three rockets that landed in Israel on Saturday morning, the spokesman said. The rockets landed in and around the Israeli border town of Sderot, causing damage and a fire in a field, but no casualties.

Overnight, the Israeli Air Force struck two weapons-making factories in Gaza City, the army spokesman said.

The shaky six-month cease-fire between Israel and the Palestinians collapsed when the military wing of <u>Hamas</u>, one of the leading Palestinian factions, resumed rocket attacks against Israel on Tuesday. Scores of rockets have been fired since then, with dozens landing in and around Sderot. Two Israelis have been seriously wounded; many have been treated for lighter wounds and shock.

In the months since November, smaller Palestinian factions have continued to fire rockets at Israel. They included Islamic Jihad, which rejected the cease-fire, and Al-Aksa Martyrs Brigades, which is nominally affiliated with the mainstream Fatah faction headed by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas.

Israel said it was ending its policy of restraint against the rocket fire on Wednesday. Since then, the air force has struck mainly at *Hamas* structures and cells that the army said were involved in terrorist activity.

In an interview broadcast on Israel Radio on Saturday, the Israeli defense minister, Amir Peretz, said: "The Palestinians need to understand that <u>Hamas</u> is leading them into disaster, a real disaster. It is our intention to act against <u>Hamas</u>."

The Islamic movement <u>Hamas</u> dominates the Palestinian unity government, which was formed two months ago after a power-sharing agreement with Fatah. That government is now threatened by the factional fighting, with the prime minister, Ismail Haniya of <u>Hamas</u>, unable to control his movement's military wing. Israeli security officials noted months ago that hard-core elements of **Hamas** were acting against the unity government.

<u>Hamas</u> political leaders, meanwhile, have been angered by American-sponsored efforts, financed by Congress, to bolster security forces loyal to Mr. Abbas.

The factional fighting has left about 50 Palestinians dead since May 13. It started after Fatah forces deployed on the streets of Gaza, without coordinating with <u>Hamas</u>.

<u>Hamas</u> supporters in Gaza are openly accusing Fatah of doing the bidding of Israel and the United States, charging Mr. Abbas and his associates with trying to precipitate the end of <u>Hamas</u> rule. <u>Hamas</u> came to power in elections in January 2006, but Israel, the United States and the European Union, all of which list <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist organization, have refused to deal with its members.

At a funeral for a <u>Hamas</u> fighter, Muhammad al-Dalu, in Gaza on Friday, his uncle, Khalil Samaan, 35, said that President Abbas is "implementing what the Israelis and Americans want.

"Anyone who says Islamic prayers is an enemy to him," he said. "There is a group in Fatah that is Zionist. *Hamas* won the election. They must be given four years of rule."

On the streets of Gaza, members of the pro-Fatah National Security Forces were staffing checkpoints at which they made <u>women</u> lift their veils, worn for religious reasons of modesty. They also took away men with beards, which are often associated with members and supporters of <u>Hamas</u>. Those scenes have shocked many local Palestinians.

Israeli Army Strikes Cell in Northern Gaza as Palestinian Factional Fighting Persists

Tawfiq Abu Khoussa, a senior Fatah official and spokesman for the National Security Forces, called <u>Hamas</u>'s talk of Fatah collaboration with Israel and the United States "very dangerous and a threat to Palestinian society."

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Mr. Abu Khoussa said that <u>Hamas</u> is going through an internal crisis, and that he feels he is "not obliged to cooperate with **Hamas**."

Mr. Peretz, Israel's defense minister, said that Israel does not want to get involved in the internal fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah. But he added, "We certainly would like the moderate forces to emerge with the upper hand," referring to Fatah.

An Egyptian-brokered cease-fire between the factions was supposed to take effect at 3 p.m. on Saturday afternoon, the latest of numerous such attempts to restore calm. But minutes after the deadline, members of the <u>Hamas</u> military wing fired at a jeep carrying a senior Fatah intelligence official.

Fighters from both sides were supposed to withdraw at 4 p.m. local time, but instead they have taken up positions in buildings.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: A man ran past a field in the Israeli border town of Sderot yesterday. The field was set ablaze by a missile fired by a militant cell in northern Gaza. (Photo by Rina Castelnuovo for The New York Times)

Load-Date: May 20, 2007



Unity Fractures As Palestinians Battle in Gaza

The New York Times

May 17, 2007 Thursday

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Length: 1375 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Aqaba, Jordan, and Rina

Castelnuovo from Sderot, Israel. **Dateline:** JERUSALEM, May 16

Body

Gaza City was shuttered on Wednesday as gunmen took over rooftops and top-floor apartments. Most everyone else huddled fearfully indoors on the fourth day of factional Palestinian fighting that is drawing in the Israeli military.

At least 19 Palestinians were killed on Wednesday -- more than 40 have been killed over the past four days -- in fighting between Fatah and *Hamas* as their unity government fractures and rage rises on both sides.

"We want this to end, because what's happening endangers not just the unity government, but the Palestinian nation and cause," said Saeb Erekat, a Palestinian negotiator and an aide to President Mahmoud Abbas.

<u>Hamas</u> attacked symbols of Fatah power in Gaza, including the home of the chief security commander. He was not there, but six bodyguards were killed.

Israel carried out a helicopter assault on a <u>Hamas</u> command center in the southern Gazan town of Rafah, killing at least four <u>Hamas</u> men and wounding at least 30, 5 of them seriously. It was retaliation for dozens of rockets launched from Gaza by <u>Hamas</u> militants at the Israeli town of Sderot where two <u>women</u> were wounded, one seriously.

The increase in <u>Hamas</u> attacks, perhaps intended to prompt Israeli retaliation that could reunify Palestinians, presented a political problem for Israel, under pressure to respond but conscious of the limited efficiency of military force to stop rocket fire.

Last summer, facing a similar situation with the Lebanese militia Hezbollah, Israel retaliated with weeks of heavy air raids, artillery and thousands of troops. But rocket fire from Hezbollah did not stop, and Israel's attacks ended up strengthening Hezbollah and weakening the Lebanese government Israel hoped to strengthen. The same could happen in Gaza, where Israel hopes Fatah will prevail.

Late Wednesday, the Israeli government announced an end to its moratorium on assassinations of Palestinian guerrilla leaders in Gaza as part of what it called a "severe and harsh" response to the rockets. But it said it would not let the *Hamas* militants who were launching rockets set the agenda.

"Israel is not going to be dragged into the Gaza Strip the way that <u>Hamas</u> wants," said Miri Eisin, spokeswoman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. "We will choose the time and place to respond. The price of any operation must be measured in terms of how effective it would be in stopping rocket fire, and the cost in life on both sides, and what it would do to Gilad Shalit," the Israeli corporal held captive in Gaza since June.

On Wednesday evening, the Israeli military hit a car with <u>Hamas</u> militants that Israel said were on their way to launch rockets; at least one man was killed, bringing the total to 24 dead -- 19 from infighting, 5 from Israeli attacks. A Fatah spokesman, Abdel Hakim Awad, said **Hamas** leaders "want to turn Gaza into a new Somalia or Darfur."

After another day of fierce hit-and-run fighting, <u>Hamas</u> declared a unilateral cease-fire on Wednesday night. But a few hours later, the shootings continued, with three Palestinians, including two from Fatah, killed in gun battles.

At dawn on Wednesday, after a mortar attack, 200 armed men of the <u>Hamas</u> military wing occupied the house of a senior Fatah commander, Gen. Rashid Abu Shbak, who controls three main security services. General Shbak and his family were not at home -- most senior factional leaders are not living at home these days in Gaza -- but six of his bodyguards were shot dead, and part of the lavish house was set on fire.

Reached by telephone, General Shbak said, "After what has happened, the options are becoming very tough." <u>Hamas</u> fighters, he said, "are killing in cold blood and they are executing people, and this has exceeded all limits."

Mr. Abbas was said to be planning a meeting on Thursday in Gaza with the *Hamas* prime minister, Ismail Haniya.

Islam Shahwan, a spokesman for the <u>Hamas</u>-dominated Executive Force, which had largely stayed out of the fighting in favor of the <u>Hamas</u> military wing, known as the Qassam Brigades, said that after Wednesday's attacks "we have decided to deploy." He added: "We're in a state of alert. After being silent and letting the Qassam Brigades confront Fatah, we have decided to respond with all our power."

The fighting on Wednesday was largely limited to Gaza City, and included bursts of extraordinary violence.

<u>Hamas</u> gunmen ambushed a police jeep containing their own fighters, who had been arrested by Fatah's Preventive Security forces. The <u>Hamas</u> fighters killed two Fatah men as well as five of their own men.

Fatah retaliated by attacking a position of <u>Hamas</u>'s Executive Force, a parallel police force, killing four men. Another Fatah attack on the Executive Force prompted the <u>Hamas</u> men to take shelter in an apartment building, where they gathered the residents into the basement as Fatah forces surrounded the structure and shouted for revenge. The Fatah forces fired rocket-propelled grenades into the building of the Anour Tower and set it on fire.

Two hospitals in Gaza City counted the dead. Scores were wounded.

About 200 Gaza residents tried to demonstrate for calm, marching in the center of Gaza City with Palestinian flags. But masked gunmen used the diversion to move toward different positions, and in the gunfire that followed, one demonstrator was wounded and the others fled.

<u>Hamas</u>'s military wing took responsibility for launching many of the Qassam rockets toward Israel, especially on Tuesday, which Palestinians marked in their calendar as the Nakba, or Catastrophe, when Israel declared independence in 1948. <u>Hamas</u>'s rockets are more accurate than those of other groups, and rockets hit homes in Sderot, including one next to the house of the Israeli defense minister, Amir Peretz.

Mr. Peretz's wife, Ahlama, was seen running for shelter from her jeep and shouting at journalists to take cover.

Anat Roytero, 46, said she was sending her seven children out of the city to her father's house in Gedera, near Tel Aviv. "We can't rely on the prime minister, we can't rely on the defense minister, and the army's hands are tied," she said. Pointing to her daughter, Shirtal, 11, Mrs. Roytero said: "The kids are too frightened. I have to send them away so they can sleep at night."

Unity Fractures As Palestinians Battle in Gaza

On Wednesday evening, a Qassam rocket managed to hit an electrical transformer, knocking out power to the town of about 24,000 people.

<u>Hamas</u>'s open admission of responsibility for the rocket attacks prompted Israel's retaliation, leading some to suggest that <u>Hamas</u> was trying to draw Israel into the fight to take attention away from the intra-Palestinian bloodletting and provide a pretext for unity.

The Israeli airstrike raised the prospect of harsher military actions to stop the rockets, with options ranging from temporary raids to the establishment of a sort of buffer zone in northern Gaza, where the rockets are fired. But there is little appetite in Israel for a major operation in Gaza, which would take weeks and cause significant casualties.

Although the rockets coming into Israel have rarely stopped, Israel has generally not carried out military actions inside Gaza since an often-violated cease-fire was announced in November. Wednesday's violence followed another agreement on an intra-Palestinian cease-fire late Tuesday night, which was almost immediately broken.

A <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, Fawzi Barhoum, said Fatah had violated the agreement first by firing on an Egyptian delegation, which was accompanied by members of the Palestinian government, as the group was touring the city to check on compliance. One Egyptian diplomat was lightly wounded. "They shot more than 100 bullets at them, despite coordination with them in advance," Mr. Barhoum said.

Jibril Rajoub of Fatah, the former Palestinian security chief in the West Bank, said that Mr. Abbas had made a mistake by appointing Muhammad Dahlan, the former security chief in Gaza, who is hated by <u>Hamas</u>, as his national security adviser immediately after the formation of the unity government.

Mr. Abbas should have "tried to make <u>Hamas</u> feel more comfortable," Mr. Rajoub said. He said he had urged Mr. Abbas to replace General Shbak, who is closely allied to Mr. Dahlan, for the same reason.

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Graphic

Photos: Palestinians gathered at the site where an Israeli missile struck a building yesterday in the Rafah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli military said the attack was an act of retaliation, noting that <u>Hamas</u> militants have launched dozens of rockets from Gaza at the Israeli town of Sderot. (Photo by Getty Images)

A father hugged his son yesterday after a rocket landed near their home in Sderot. Some homes in the town were hit by the *Hamas* barrage. (Photo by Rina Castelnuovo for The New York Times)(pg. A12)

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Jail bargain reflects Gaza's changing face

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All-round Country Edition

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Byline: Abraham Rabinovich

Body

Jerusalem

INMATES in Gaza's main prison can shave a year off their sentences if they grow a beard and memorise five chapters from the Koran, as a sign of Islamic devotion.

The new rule, announced this week by prison governor Colonel Abu al-Abed Hamid as a way of encouraging prisoners to behave according to Koranic law, is part of the fast spreading Islamisation in the Gaza Strip since its takeover by *Hamas* in a coup two months ago.

Israel's Channel Two television station, in a series this week devoted to the changing face of Gaza, showed its crowded streets looking more like Tehran than the Palestinian streets Israelis knew before <u>Hamas</u>'s rule. Virtually every man was bearded and virtually every woman wore a loose, floor-length cloak, generally black, as well as a head covering. Many of the **women** were veiled.

Some of the <u>women</u> interviewed by the Israeli Arab reporter expressed fear of venturing out of the house bareheaded since the <u>Hamas</u> takeover. Men sporting new beards also said they were adjusting to the situation.

Since its takeover, <u>Hamas</u> has succeeded in imposing a large measure of order in Gaza, and residents, relieved from previous security anxieties, have been able to relax along the strip's Mediterranean beaches.

But the Islamic wave has also brought a spate of "honour killings" of <u>women</u> by family members who believe their <u>female</u> kin have compromised the family's good name. At least 10 <u>women</u> are reported to have been killed since the <u>Hamas</u> takeover, three of them sisters.

<u>Hamas</u> leaders have condemned such killings but the victory of the Islamist movement has encouraged extremists, some of whom have firebombed internet cafes, pool halls and bars.

An open-air music and dance festival was banned by a <u>Hamas</u>-run local council, which found it in violation of Islamic custom.

A UN school in Gaza attended by local youths was attacked last month because it permitted boys and girls to participate in the same sporting event. One person was killed.

Jail bargain reflects Gaza's changing face

Two months ago, gunmen attacked Gaza's Latin Church and the Rosary Sisters School, destroying crosses, bibles and pictures of Jesus. Such attacks were also condemned by the *Hamas* leadership.

Reporters on a public relations tour of Gaza last week were introduced to a Catholic priest who refrained from criticising *Hamas*, but local Christians have expressed unease.

One radical sheik recently announced that any of the 3000 Christians in Gaza who engaged in "missionary activities" would be dealt with harshly.

But Ismail Haniya, who was sacked as Palestinian prime minister after the <u>Hamas</u> coup in June, said: "We do not want to establish an Islamic state."

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Length: 4226 words **Byline:** Marie Colvin

Body

A radical Islamist state has emerged from the smoking ruins of Gaza, threatening a new war with nearby Israel. Marie Colvin ventures into the lair of the <u>Hamas</u> extremists imposing their hardline doctrine on Palestinians trapped there. Photographs by Seamus Murphy

<u>Hamas</u> wants you to believe it has created a benevolent sanctuary where once chaos reigned. At the beginning of the journey into Gaza it's easy to believe that things are better.

There is no longer a Palestinian immigration desk after the long walk from the air-conditioned Erez terminal on the Israeli side, past concrete blast walls, and down a dusty track in the furnace heat. But further down the road, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen have taken over the checkpoints. They are polite and well turned out in blue camouflage trousers, clean black T-shirts, shiny black boots.

Once hostile, they now smile at returning foreigners who fled after the kidnapping of Alan Johnston, the BBC reporter, and the savage bloodletting between the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) forces and <u>Hamas</u> in June that left the fundamentalist party in absolute power.

So does everyone else in Gaza. It's like hearing the first songbird of spring. The welcome starts in the taxi. "Gaza is safe now. We have security, praise be to God," says Munir, my driver for years, who always in the past shook his head and moaned about how terrible everything was.

It's the same at the Al Deira hotel, mostly empty, where once aid workers, diplomats, journalists and sophisticated Gazans mixed on the terrace overlooking the Mediterranean. "Everything is safe now. You are welcome," says Amir at the front desk.

For the first time on a trip to Gaza, I was stopped going the wrong way down a one-way street, by one of the young <u>Hamas</u> volunteers in yellow vests now standing up to drivers in a culture that considers a red light to be a mere suggestion to slow down.

The rubbish still smells, but now it is piled neatly in the streets. Families stroll late at night. Gone is the gunfire that used to punctuate days and nights and often escalated into street battles that left innocents dead on the pavements.

Then you start talking to people in private.

Young men show you bruised limbs and welts on their feet; every girl wears a hijab head covering and, for the first time, **women** wear niqab Saudi-style face coverings that reveal only the eyes. And people whisper.

Welcome to Hamastan.

Ahmed Al-Naba'at, 24, sits in his courtyard in an oversized Barcelona shirt. He looks too young to be the father of the three young children who toddle barefoot round the tiny dirt courtyard.

His feet still hurt. Hamas came for him at 2am.

About 30 armed men, their faces masked but wearing the black uniforms and badges of the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of <u>Hamas</u>, had surrounded the house. They covered his eyes and took him away in a car.

"They took me somewhere, I don't know, a room," Naba'at says. He has high cheekbones and the near-black skin of his Sudanese ancestry. "They were screaming and beating me, punching me, slapping me on the face," he says. "Then they tied my legs together and started falaka" a traditional Arabic torture where the soles of the feet are beaten with sticks. "I relaxed."

He sees the surprise in my face. "I thought they were going to kill me," he explains. "When I realised it's just falaka, I thought, okay, it's just torture."

Qassam dumped him near his home, hours later. It took him half an hour to walk what usually takes two minutes. "You were lucky," interjects his unsympathetic father, who is sitting against a courtyard wall. "Most of the people they beat, they throw them unconscious in the street and they are not found until the morning."

His crime? Earlier that night at a party for a friend's wedding, Naba'at had danced and played a song popular in Gaza an over-romanticised ballad to Samih al-Madhoun, a Fatah commander executed by <u>Hamas</u> during the fighting. <u>Hamas</u> cameramen had filmed as Madhoun was dragged down the street amid spitting crowds, shot in the stomach, beaten and shot some more. It was shown on **Hamas** television that night.

The overblown ballad of his death "Your blood is not for free Samih/You left behind an earthquake/We will not forget you Samih" is such a Gazan hit that many young people have it on their mobile phones. <u>Hamas</u>, predictably, is furious. Three of Al-Naba'at's friends who had danced at the wedding were also beaten.

Al-Naba'at, who left school at 14 and worked as a farm labourer and painter, has little recourse. He is too afraid to sleep at home any more. His father is clearly exasperated like many of the older generation, he thinks his sons should shut up. He points to another son, 17-year-old Mustafa. <u>Hamas</u> came after him when he burnt a <u>Hamas</u> flag: they arrested his father and twin brother until he gave himself up.

<u>Hamas</u> is not just going after the poor. Azil Akhras is a sophisticated 24 year-old woman with heavily kohled eyes, thick, flowing black hair and rouged lips, comfortable in her jeans and tight red shirt. Life used to be shopping, going out maybe to Roots, a popular Gaza nightclub even though it now serves only soft drinks and going to the beach. Her life changed dramatically three months ago when <u>Hamas</u> took over Gaza.

"Now, I cover my head when I go in a car. <u>Hamas</u> is at the checkpoints. Last week, they stopped a girl who was not covered and they beat her brother when he tried to protect her."

She and her sister must be careful; they are alone. Their father, a former government health minister, has fled Gaza to escape *Hamas*. He has holed up in Ramallah, the West Bank capital, and is unable to return.

It's not just shopping trips she misses. A university graduate, Akhras had wanted to sit her master's degree; she wanted to travel. "I had an idea, I wanted to be famous in history. Maybe a journalist," she says. "Now, there's no chance, I can't even go outside." She resents *Hamas*'s repression. "If I decide to cover (my head), it will be for my God, not some Qassam soldier."

Gazans are living in a climate of fear. The place is eerily serene, not only because of the presence of disciplined <u>Hamas</u> security forces on the streets but, as in all successful police states, because everyone has started policing themselves, afraid of the consequences of stepping over a line not defined in formal law.

<u>Hamas</u> took power after five days of vicious, internecine fighting with the security forces of the PNA, who mostly belong to the rival Fatah organisation co-founded by Yasser Arafat, the late president.

Tension had escalated into clashes between the secular Fatah, who governed for a decade and whose members stack the civil service and security forces, and <u>Hamas</u>, after the religious party won national elections in March 2006.

The differences were exacerbated by Gaza's isolation. The international community cut funds to the Palestinian government after the <u>Hamas</u> election victory. Israel blocked the millions in tax revenue it was supposed to pass on for imports, and closed the borders intermittently. The economy went into freefall.

A national unity government formed in February failed to end the confrontation. But the speed of the coup in Gaza was shocking.

<u>Hamas</u> fielded only about 7,000 members of the Executive Force, its police force, which was backed by the Izzedine al-Qassam Brigade, the military wing of the party, against the 70,000-strong government forces loyal to Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president.

There are many reasons for the swift collapse: the government security forces hadn't been paid for 18 months and were demoralised by the corruption of their own leaders. Their commanders fled, and many foot soldiers found that their guns were locked in storage. *Hamas* was better armed, better trained, and fought with the single-mindedness of those with a cause.

It was the worst ever clash among Palestinians: 110 died, and the population is still shocked by the brother-on-brother nature of the battle. Today there is a deadlock, and essentially two Palestinian governments. Abbas fired the <u>Hamas</u>-led coalition government and named a new emergency cabinet, but its powers run only in the West Bank. **Hamas** ministers refused to step down.

By Palestinian law, the government must be renewed by the parliament, but <u>Hamas</u> dominates the legislature and, anyway, it lacks a quorum: about one third of its members are in Israeli jails for belonging to **Hamas**.

The evidence of the ferocity of the fighting can be seen across Gaza city. The headquarters of the Preventive Security Service, the PNA's main security force, was the last stronghold. Now occupied by the Executive Force, there are gaping holes in the walls from bullets and rockets.

Abbas's presidential house is guarded by <u>Hamas</u> police who brew tea under new posters of <u>Hamas</u> members killed in the fighting. They shake their heads at the marble floors and luxurious furnishings, contrasting it with the home of Ismail Haniya, the <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, who lives in the al-Shati refugee camp.

At the Muntada, the Palestinian version of the White House, <u>Hamas</u> fighters stroll the corridors, and dust gathers on Abbas's rosewood desk, where Arafat once sat.

<u>Hamas</u> is extending its control. Nobody is safe if the example of Ashraf Juma, one of their more articulate opponents, is anything to go by. Juma is a senior member of Fatah, who refused to leave his home or office in Rafah, Gaza's southernmost city on Egypt's border. He is one of the most popular politicians in Gaza: when <u>Hamas</u> won the election, sweeping Gaza, he was one of the few elected from the Fatah list.

He was leader of the al-Aqsa hawks during the first intifada (uprising), and hands out money from his own pocket to the needy of both Fatah and $\underline{\textit{Hamas}}$ (these days it's from his brother's, a wealthy businessman). His latest roject is to find £ 5,000 for school uniforms for poor children.

None of it was any protection from <u>Hamas</u>. It began on the internet. Juma was criticised on the official <u>Hamas</u> website for supposedly sending Abbas the names of people whose salaries should be cut because they were <u>Hamas</u> members. Then critical leaflets were distributed in the local mosque. "Someone called from <u>Hamas</u> and said, 'Leave your office. This is a preparation for an attack on you,' " he says, sitting at home in a white short-sleeved shirt, dark trousers and sandals.

The next day, as he and his office staff finished evening prayers, blue police cars pulled up, disgorging men in the uniform of the Executive Force. They also wore black masks.

As he opened the door, he saw his secretary, Osama, trying to fend them off with a table. The gunmen began screaming and shot Osama in the thigh. They started beating him in the hallway before running off . "You were my sons. I served you," he shouted after them.

Juma shakes his balding head, and describes how the situation turned almost farcical. As word spread that he had been attacked, hundreds of people poured into Shifa hospital and packed the emergency room and courtyard.

"There were so many people, the doctors couldn't work properly. Look, they put stitches in wrong," he says, ducking his head to show newly healed scars. The crowds carried him out of the hospital before the doctors had finished, afraid that *Hamas* would return, and grabbed Osama from the operating room before his broken hand and gunshot wound were treated.

They almost killed their hero. Juma fell unconscious, Osama writhed in pain. Hundreds poured into the streets, denouncing the Executive Force. A doctor finally came and treated both of them at home.

It was a night of terror for many. Ismael, 29, an English teacher for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, sits in the front room of the house he had just painted for a marriage that now will never happen.

"My last hours before they came were happy," recalls Ismael, who doesn't want his last name used because *Hamas* threatened to kill him if he told the story.

"I had just gotten engaged and I spent from 7.30pm to 11pm talking with my friends about what we would do for the celebrations," he says.

Suddenly, his house was surrounded by armed men in black with Qassam Brigade emblems. "One tried to hit me with a stick, and I said, 'What are you doing? I have done nothing.' "

They took him first to the Sayed Sayel Executive Force post. "They put me against a wall and started shouting, 'Have you been to a demonstration?' he says. "They became hysterical, shouting, 'You have been making riots here,' beating me with sticks, metal bars, stones."

His ordeal had just begun. "They said, 'What about the orphans?' " Ismael supports two orphans, Allah, who is nine and needs an eye operation, and Dina, who is 11, while trying to get them medical help through an American charity. *Hamas* said he should have no contact with foreigners.

They beat Ismael for an hour and a half, moving him at one point during the night to Idara Madaneh, the civil administration building in Jabaliya camp. He was blindfolded, but two young teenagers who had been taken in ran to him, screaming "Teacher! Teacher!", probably recognising him from school.

"Then Hamas started beating me on the arm I was using to try to protect the children," he says.

He was finally released at 4am with a warning not to talk, and not to go to a hospital. A doctor friend came round and treated him secretly.

Photographs from the June beating show welts on his back, ferocious bruises on his left arm, and a swollen right arm and elbow. He won't show me his legs out of modesty, but says they were black, and his knees are still not right.

But that was not the worst. His fiancee's family heard of the incident and believed he was a political activist against *Hamas*, which would endanger her future. Her father revoked his permission to marry and he has not spoken to his fiancee, a fellow teacher, since then. "My sister tells me she is crying and crying," Ismael says. Can't they marry when things calm down? "No chance. This is our tradition." For the first time in a long story, he brushes away a tear.

"Most of the educated people here feel they are living in a country that doesn't belong to them," he says when he recovers.

<u>Hamas</u> is not triumphalist in its takeover, as was the first prophet of militant Islam, Ayatollah Khomeini, who immediately set himself up against the West and all who didn't want to follow his unforgiving brand of Islam.

But then he had oil, 50m people, an army, air force and navy, and control of his own borders. <u>Hamas</u> is isolated and depends on international aid, with little but farming, fishing and a hostile neighbour that controls its borders, sea and skies.

This heavily armed statelet is squeezed between Israel's southern border and Egypt's northern border, separated by a chunk of Israel from the West Bank, the bigger, richer other half of the Palestinian "state".

The West Bank is still occupied by Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers: they withdrew from Gaza two years ago, but still control the borders and ban all ir and sea traffic, except for tiny wooden fishing boats allowed to go out six miles.

Since the <u>Hamas</u> takeover in June, Israel has not opened the main crossing points for even a day, and the economy has collapsed. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) estimates unemployment at 80% among the 1.4m inhabitants. There are no exports; a trickle of food bought by private Palestinian merchants from their Israeli counterparts is allowed across at the tiny Sufa crossing. It must be one of the strangest commercial dealings in the world. The Israeli army moves in pallets from about 100 trucks a day, shooting at anyone who approaches before they withdraw behind the fence; then there is a bizarre Mad Max-style race by forklifts to get the merchandise left in the no-man's-land.

In three months, an estimated 70,000 jobs have been lost in the construction industry alone. UNRWA has had to stop £ 47m in projects funded by donors apartments for those whose homes were destroyed by Israeli fire, oxidation projects for Gaza's overflowing sewage-treatment plants. Everyone is desperate. "This place is a powder keg waiting to explode," said John Ging, UNRWA's Gaza director.

Instead of the open defiance of Khomeini's Iran, <u>Hamas</u> has developed a parallel system: show a reasonable face to the world in the hope of ending Gaza's isolation, while enforcing the unforgiving law of the state of Hamastan at home.

Ismail Haniya, the silver-haired <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, could be a poster boy for moderate Islam. When I see him, he is sitting with Arab journalists, and gently lecturing them like the professor he once was. Aware he stands little chance with the West, he is seeking Arab support.

He tells them that negotiations are possible under certain conditions with Mahmoud Abbas, who is welcome to come back to Gaza. No <u>women</u> will be forced to wear the hijab that is a personal choice. Well, of course there can be no negotiations with Israel, although that could happen if they recognise Palestinian rights.

There is duplicity even in the detail, however: Haniya may say that <u>women</u> are free not to cover their heads, but before I go to his office an aide calls to tell me to be sure to wear a headscarf.

And recognising Palestinian rights is <u>Hamas</u>-speak for "We want all of the land of mandate Palestine, from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River," a maximalist position that ignores the fact that most Palestinians have moved on from 1948 to accept the existence of Israel, and would settle for a two-state solution. Negotiations are moribund, but Fatah-led governments have signed agreements with Israel recognising the reality that two states is the only solution.

Haniya may be the smooth-talking <u>Hamas</u> frontman but he lacks real power. A former professor of religion, he was a compromise choice fielded by Khaled Mesha'al, the exiled <u>Hamas</u> leader based in Damascus. "When we were negotiating, whenever a difficult point came up, Haniya had to leave the room to call Mesha'al," one of Abbas's top lieutenants said.

The real power lies with Mahmoud Zahar, who is in the strange position of being a foreign minister who can't travel from Gaza (Israel has closed the borders even to government officials).

A militant once expelled by Israel, he was expected to be prime minister after the <u>Hamas</u> victory, but Mesha'al apparently considered him too radical, and more of a threat than Haniya.

Sitting on a couch in the foreign ministry damaged in an Israeli bombing, he is scathing about Abbas. "(He) committed big crimes against the law, against human interest." Zahar is dressed in a light-grey safari suit, his beard neatly trimmed, his shoes polished. He exudes confidence and scorns any need for <u>Hamas</u> to reach out for a compromise. "Abbas is acting as an agent of America and Israel."

The power that stretches beyond his title peeps out. "We have information that Fatah are organising themselves into cells," he says. "We will find them and we will crush them."

There is no sense of urgency in finding a solution to the desperate need of the average Gazan with a large family and no work.

"We are not in a hurry. Palestinians are used to being under siege. I believe sooner or later the West will change its mind," he says calmly.

Again, during the interview, his power beyond that of the average diplomat is revealed when he takes a phone call about the siege of the powerful Dagmoush clan, the kidnappers of Alan Johnston, the BBC journalist. Earlier in the week the clan killed two *Hamas* policemen.

"Tell them that by 10pm we will go in if they have not agreed. We will enter their houses one by one."

Across town that very siege is under way. <u>Hamas</u> has again surrounded the Dagmoush neighbourhood as they did to get Johnston back. They have cut off the water and electricity.

Few in Gaza have any sympathy for the Dagmoushes. One of the leaders of the clan and Johnston's main kidnapper, Mumtaz Dagmoush spouts extremist Al-Qaeda rhetoric, but his so-called Army of Islam has about 20 members and is better known for theft, gun smuggling and kidnapping. Fatah let Gaza's powerful families run wild, sometimes using them against *Hamas*.

Hamas has taken them on. Breaking the Dagmoushes is crucial to consolidating power.

The discipline of <u>Hamas</u> on the front line of the siege of the concrete-block houses in the neighbourhood is in contrast to Fatah's members who won't talk until they get word from a commander over the walkie-talkie. Once allowed to talk, Abu Yehia, the local commander, doesn't have much to say. "We are imposing law and order. This is our duty. Islam tells us that."

<u>Hamas</u> is demanding that the Dagmoushes surrender the guilty members of the family, and give back stolen weapons.

That night, the family does surrender, led by Mumtaz Dagmoush. He is double the size of the average Gazan, tall, broad-shouldered, with a shaggy dark beard and wild hair. He and his entourage screech their pick-up trucks into the Preventive Security compound, jump out waving guns and, seeing me, starts waving his M16, shouting: "Get this journalist out of here!" With both sides jostling and shoving, for moments it seems there will be a shoot-out.

Dagmoush finally hands over bags of guns, then marches with his bodyguard into the darkened police headquarters and starts pounding on the commander's door, shouting: "I gave you my weapons, let me in there."

The M16 is in the air again, 50 men all shoving with guns and elbows, and shouting.

Eventually, he calms down and half an hour later is talking to Abu Dahab, the *Hamas* commander.

Dagmoush tells me, "We've just had an English guest staying with us for a while," referring to Alan Johnston, the kidnapped journalist. I asked him why he kidnaps, and if his activities other than kidnapping will be affected under <u>Hamas</u>. He shrugs: "Business is business," he says.

Now that <u>Hamas</u> has solidified power, they are putting in place their system of keeping it. One part of this is a new "ladies unit", reminiscent of the one in Iran where fierce, make-up-free <u>women</u> drag other <u>women</u> out of cars and away for re-education. Ominously, <u>Hamas</u> have failed so far to set up a court system, so cases are being heard by an Islamic judge.

The one thriving industry is the arms industry.

I visit a Qassam area leader in Yibne camp in southern Gaza who has been "cooking" for three days making the explosive mixture that goes in the rockets they fire into Israel.

He takes me to one of the many armouries they have and shows me the extraordinary range of weapons they manufacture locally, mostly in underground factories. What they can't make, they smuggle through tunnels from Egypt.

The armoury is in a small, concrete block house, indistinguishable from its neighbours in the squalid maze of the camp. The home-made weapons I see include foot-wide land mines, tank-busting missiles, guns, rocket-propelled grenades, all stored amid the clutter of a bedroom with flowers on the shelf above the bed and a teddy bear lying belly-up on the floor.

He is nervous while we are there the Israelis target such places if they get information from collaborators, but he opens up when we go to another house for tea, although he won't give his name. He is unconcerned about his outside image, and this is the true voice of *Hamas*.

"Of course we will create an Islamic state. This is called for in the Holy Koran," he says. What would that mean, I ask him.

Well, for one, sharia law. "For a murder, death, not this life sentence there is now. A thief should have his hand cut off. An adulteress must be stoned," he says, in a chillingly nonchalant voice.

"There is no possibility of recognising Israel," he says. "All the land is ours. We are taught this by our leaders and they will never compromise."

His certitude comes from how <u>Hamas</u> recruits. It gets them young; my informant started at 14. Only when he proved himself "mentally and spiritually" was he allowed to join Qassam and receive military training.

And not all girls are like Azil Akhras. Gehad Nehan, 19, is studying law at the <u>Hamas</u>-dominated Islamic University in Gaza. She wears glasses, a hijab, and is covered in a navy-blue robe down to her thick black shoes. "<u>Hamas</u> has taken over the police stations and now the life is good."

She insists <u>women</u> are equal, but as she talks, a different reality is revealed. At the university, she says, "the boys say woman is weak, her work must be in the home. I say this is wrong".

Even getting to study was a struggle. "My father hits me and he punishes me and says I should not go to the university. It's difficult."

But despite having described Hamastan as virtually a perfect state, she has the yearning of all here to leave. "I want to travel all over the world and see people and how they live."

Those who have already travelled are the most angry at *Hamas*.

One restaurant owner begins by extolling <u>Hamas</u> for improving security. He sits at a banquette in his eatery in a yellow polo shirt. Christmas streamers still hang from the ceiling, and Whitney Houston is on the soundtrack.

"And they cancelled all family connections," he adds. "Before, if someone was connected to the government, they could eat and just not pay.

"But they are not the future for the Palestinian people," he insists. "We need a government that can deal with the international community." Despite growing dissatisfaction such as his, there is little sign that the green flags of Hamastan will be coming down any time soon

Load-Date: October 6, 2007



How Islamists drew strength from failures of old guard

The Times (London)

June 14, 2007, Thursday

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Section: HOME NEWS; Pg. 6

Length: 506 words **Byline:** James Hider

Body

Palestinian dreams of a viable, independent state appear to be fragmenting into the violent reality of two minifiefdoms.

Most people simply want an end to the chaos, and a unity government in fact as well as name. What they are facing is the prospect of an Islamist "Hamasstan" in Gaza and a secular "Fatahstan" in the West Bank.

<u>Hamas</u> emerged two decades ago out of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, and fed on Palestinian despair at the lack of progress towards peace with Israel. It has gradually eclipsed the old guard of left-wing Palestinian Liberation Organisation revolutionaries -seen by many as corrupt yesterday's men who compromised with the Israelis -with a heady blend of God, suicide bombing and a refusal to acknowledge the Jewish state's right to exist.

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah are radically different. The former promotes an austere, Islamic philosophy that governs every aspect of life, while the latter reflects a more liberal, moderate attitude that is rapidly losing currency in many Arab states.

<u>Hamas</u> was founded by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, who spent decades working for the support of ordinary Palestinians by providing food handouts, kindergarden and medical services at a time when the secular leadership of the PLO of which Fatah, led by Yassir Arafat, was the dominant party -was in exile, its leaders often accumulating great wealth.

While much of Fatah's power ebbed with the death of Arafat, <u>Hamas</u> has gone from strength to strength since Sheikh Yassin was killed in an Israeli air raid in 2004. Washington, which once saw Arafat as an obstacle to peace, has recently been trying to strengthen Fatah's hand against the rising power of its Islamist rival.

But such support has helped to undermine the credibility of Fatah, with <u>Hamas</u> gleefully accusing it of being a foreign stooge.

A key battle has been over the security forces. <u>Hamas</u> formed its own police force in the Gaza Strip, while the US supplied arms and equipment to secularist Fatah fighters, much of which has fallen into <u>Hamas</u> control.

CONSEQUENCES OF TWO PALESTINIAN 'STATES'

* Halt of negotiations and collapse of the peace process. Israel fears that <u>Hamas</u> will continue to refuse to recognise the Jewish state and use Gaza as a base to rearm and attack Israeli towns and citizens. Gaza would acquire pariah status, imperilling Western aid

How Islamists drew strength from failures of old guard

- * Likely imposition of Islamic laws in Gaza, although <u>Hamas</u> insists that unlike the Taleban and al-Qaeda -it supports the education of **women** and promotes religious tolerance
- * Israeli pragmatists who favour a two-state solution are robbed of a Palestinian negotiating partner. Israeli hardliners calling for Gaza to be reoccupied two years after Ariel Sharon ordered settlers and troops to leave
- * An independent *Hamas* fiefdom would encourage the more radical groups throughout the Middle East
- * Fatah forces loyal to warlords such as Muhammad Dahlan are likely to try to destabilise a *Hamas* authority
- * Fatah and its armed wing, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, are certain to target <u>Hamas</u> leaders and institutions in the West Bank

Load-Date: June 14, 2007



Hijacking renews violence among Palestinian factions

The Star Phoenix (Saskatoon, Saskatchewan)

February 2, 2007 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. C12

Length: 559 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) -- Gunfights erupted across the Gaza Strip Thursday, killing at least six people after <u>Hamas</u> militants hijacked a convoy delivering supplies to the rival Fatah-allied security forces, effectively destroying a short-lived truce.

An Egyptian mediator blamed <u>Hamas</u> and called for calm three days after he persuaded the warring factions to end weeks of clashes that killed dozens. However, the truce did not resolve underlying disputes that set off the conflict between the Islamic <u>Hamas</u>, which is running the Palestinian government, and President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement.

Both sides appeared willing to avoid a full-scale civil war, but they were just as adamant over keeping their own security forces on the streets -- a recipe for more clashes. The renewed violence also hurt chances for talks to form a joint government that might end punishing Western foreign aid sanctions.

Late Thursday, hundreds of Fatah gunmen stormed a <u>Hamas</u> stronghold, the Islamic University in Gaza City. At least two people were wounded, and flames were seen leaping from one of the university's buildings.

The trouble started Thursday morning with some gunfire, but an incident in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza set off clashes all over the impoverished seaside territory.

<u>Hamas</u> gunmen ambushed a convoy guarded by the Fatah presidential guard and hijacked two trucks filled with tents, medical kits and toilets, security officials said. The United States and some Arab countries had pledged to give equipment and training to the security forces loyal to Abbas.

The attack sparked the new fighting, which killed six people in Bureij, including a security officer, hospital officials said.

Soon after, separate gunbattles broke out in Gaza City and in northern Gaza outside a military intelligence post. Security officials said <u>Hamas</u> militants fired a rocket at the post and then sacked it, wounding five members of the security forces. At least two <u>Hamas</u> supporters were wounded, <u>Hamas</u> said. In all, hospital officials said 59 people were wounded in the clashes.

Hijacking renews violence among Palestinian factions

<u>Hamas</u> militants fired mortar shells near Abbas' residence in Gaza City, and nearby street battles sent residents fleeing in terror. Abbas was not in Gaza at the time.

"Fatah views with gravity the series of violations to the agreement, which has gone beyond the acceptable limits," Fatah said in a statement, calling on its followers to "act in self-defence."

Information Minister Youssef Rizka of <u>Hamas</u> called on Gazans to form a "human shield" between the factions to stop the fighting. <u>Hamas</u> spokesperson Abu Obeida fiercely denounced Fatah and warned Abbas to get his forces off the streets "before it is too late."

Col. Burhan Hamad, the head of the Egyptian security team in Gaza that negotiated the truce, denounced the attack on the convoy as "unjustified" and angrily blamed <u>Hamas</u>. He appealed to the warring factions to stop the new clashes.

The violent Islamic Jihad, in the role of peacemaker, called for convening an urgent meeting to discuss resumption of the truce.

The mufti of Gaza called for a truce, saying Muslims shedding Muslim blood is "taboo." Another appeal came from the owner of a wedding hall, who said he had 450 **women** and children trapped by the gunfire.

Also Thursday, Israeli forces shot and killed four Palestinians in several incidents in the West Bank.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Getty Images Photo; Masked members of Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of *Hamas*, collect weapons after commandeering a four-truck convoy Thursday;

Load-Date: February 2, 2007



Bloodshed renews ceasefire pleas: Iranians reportedly arrested amid Palestinian strife

The Calgary Herald (Alberta)
February 3, 2007 Saturday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A25

Length: 482 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

After 17 more Palestinians died and nearly 200 were wounded in fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in the Gaza Strip on Friday, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who leads Fatah, and <u>Hamas</u>'s exiled leader, Khaled Meshal, agreed by telephone on an immediate ceasefire.

What may be the most intense fighting since the conflict broke out two months ago escalated sharply with Fatah claiming Friday to have arrested several Iranians, including a general whom it is alleged had been teaching *Hamas* how to make bombs.

That charge comes a day after <u>Hamas</u> used machines guns and rocket-propelled grenades to ambush a Fatah convoy.

Despite wild gunfights, which took place all over the tiny enclave throughout the night and into Friday morning prayers, Egyptian diplomats said there was an agreement in principal from the two warring parties to observe yet another ceasefire similar to the one that lasted less than 48 hours earlier this week.

It was also announced that Abbas and the Syrian-based Meshal would meet Tuesday in the holy city of Mecca to try to agree on a Saudi brokered national unity government -- something that has eluded <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah since **Hamas** won a stunning parliamentary majority in elections nine months ago.

A similar meeting between Abbas and Meshal in Syria last month failed.

And there was little evidence of much goodwill on the ground Friday in Gaza, where huge plumes of smoke wafted above the Islamic University -- a *Hamas* stronghold.

<u>Hamas</u> accused Fatah of trying to burn the university down, but Fatah countered it was apprehending the Iranians, who were described as weapons experts. Seven Iranians were arrested and 1,400 small arms and rockets seized, said Fatah -- which also reported the arrest of more than a dozen Palestinian <u>women</u> it said were working with the Iranians.

Hamas called the Fatah claims "ridiculous."

Bloodshed renews ceasefire pleas: Iranians reportedly arrested amid Palestinian strife

An eighth Iranian had committed suicide, according to Palestinian news agencies, but there was no independent confirmation of the report.

Israel has long asserted that Iran had operatives in Gaza and the West Bank who were helping to finance, arm and train <u>Hamas</u> and other organizations such as Islamic Jihad, which most western countries including Canada consider to be a terrorist group.

Among the dead Friday was Fatah's head of intelligence for the northern half of the Gaza strip.

Meanwhile, most Gazans stayed home as gangs of masked and heavily armed men roamed the streets.

But even remaining inside did not always afford much protection. A Palestinian woman was killed when a bullet pierced her home, Israel Radio reported. Four children were among those killed, according to Associated Press. There were also tit-for-tat bomb attacks on the Fatah and *Hamas* radio stations in Gaza.

Palestinian hospitals reported late Friday their wards were full beyond capacity. They appealed to Gazans to risk the fighting in the streets to come and donate blood.

Graphic

Photo: Wesam Saleh, Associated Press; A Palestinian from the ruling <u>Hamas</u> party stands guard next to a university compound building that was hit during fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in Gaza City on Friday. Fighting left 17 dead and hundreds wounded.;

Load-Date: February 3, 2007



Palestinian PM's house bombed

Geelong Advertiser (Australia)

June 13, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 23

Length: 446 words

Byline: MIDDLE EAST Gaza City, Tuesday

Body

AΡ

A ROCKET-propelled grenade hit the home of Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh today, in what <u>Hamas</u> said was an attempted Fatah assassination of their leader.

The house was damaged, but Mr Haniyeh and his family were not harmed.

The attack came during the bloodiest 24-hour period yet in latest round of <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah fighting, which erupted again in May, after several weeks of lull.

Seventeen people were killed yesterday and today, including several in street executions, as hospitals turned into battle grounds.

Both <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, on websites and in text messages to activists, called for the execution of the other side's military and political leaders.

Mr Haniyeh's house in the Shati refugee camp on the outskirts Gaza City was damaged by the RPG, but the Prime Minister and his family were not hurt, said his son, Abdel Salam.

A <u>Hamas</u> website described the incident as an assassination attempt. <u>Hamas</u> spokesman Fawzi Barhoum accused Fatah of targeting Palestinian institutions to undermine **Hamas** rule.

"They crossed all the red lines," he said.

The latest fighting disrupted final exams for university and high school students.

The three universities called off final exams set for today.

Late yesterday, gunmen, apparently from <u>Hamas</u>, laid siege to the house of Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, the senior Fatah official in northern Gaza, then dragged him outside and killed him, security officials said. Medics said he was hit with 45 bullets.

Mr Al-Jediyan was a top aide to Gaza Fatah strongman Mohammed Dahlan. Mr Al-Jediyan's brother was also killed, execution-style, by two shots from close range, hospital officials said.

Palestinian PM's house bombed

Fatah spokesman Maher Mikdad harshly denounced the killing. "What is this, if not a war," he said, pledging revenge.

Two others were killed in battles late yesterday in northern Gaza, security and hospital officials said.

Nabil Abu Rdeneh, an aide to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah, said no end was in sight.

"You can see for yourself there's no taste for a ceasefire right now," he said, blaming *Hamas*.

The frustrated head of the Egyptian security delegation, Major General Burhan Hamad, who has been trying to negotiate a truce, told Palestinian TV he would call the people out on to the streets to protest if the two rivals did not agree to stand down.

Early today, three <u>women</u> and a child were killed when <u>Hamas</u> militants attacked the home of a senior Fatah security official with mortars and grenades, security officials said.

The gunmen seized Hassan Abu Rabie and killed his 14-year-old son and three other <u>women</u> in the house, hospital officials said.

Also, Fatah gunmen stormed the house of a *Hamas* lawmaker and burned it to the ground.

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



Gaza City street battles intensify headline

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

May 17, 2007 Thursday

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Section: A; Pg. 9 Length: 267 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - Gunfire and explosions raged across Gaza City on Wednesday, killing at least 21 people in the most widespread fighting of nearly a year of clashes between the rival Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> movements.

Street battles turned the densely populated seaside city into a war zone, putting terrified civilians increasingly at risk. Stray bullets damaged apartment buildings, gunmen fired at a group of protesters, and <u>Hamas</u> militants beat a <u>female</u> Fatah lawmaker and her two children before setting fire to their apartment.

<u>Hamas</u> also targeted Israel, firing barrages of homemade rockets for a second day, seriously wounding one person and knocking out power in the southern Israeli town of Sderot, officials said. Israel staged two airstrikes on <u>Hamas</u> targets, reportedly killing five people.

<u>Hamas</u> fighters appeared to be trying to draw Israel into the conflict in hopes of uniting Palestinians against a common foe. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Security Cabinet decided against large-scale reprisal, however, although it authorized the army to step up attacks on **Hamas** rocket squads.

"Israel cannot continue to restrain itself when its citizens are being hit and therefore decided on a severe and serious response," Olmert's office said.

The Palestinian infighting threatened to destroy the fragile unity government established in March by <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah and pushed the rivals ever closer to all-out civil war.

A main goal of the alliance was to halt months of factional violence, but the unity deal never addressed a key area of dispute - control over Palestinian security forces.

Load-Date: July 19, 2007



Legacy of Terror

Richmond Times Dispatch (Virginia)

June 20, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL; Pg. A-10

Length: 312 words

Body

<u>Hamas</u> effectively controls Gaza. Fatah clings to power in the West Bank. If Palestinians must choose between terrorist groups, then it is principally because Palestinians previously chose terror. Consider the disintegrating situation part of Yasser Arafat's legacy.

Arafat bequeathed to an unhappy people a tradition of corruption and violence. <u>Hamas</u> has risen in part because systemic graft long ago deprived Arafat's apparatus, now run by his political heirs, of its authority. Fatah, <u>Hamas</u>, and too many subsets to name have embraced the sword. Is it any surprise they have turned the blade on their own?

<u>Hamas</u> is incorrigible. Fatah is not to be confused with the League of <u>Women</u> Voters, or for that matter with France's Socialist Party, but the Palestinian civil war gives its members an opportunity to transcend themselves. Are rank-and-file Palestinians ready for leaders who stress development and diplomacy? Precedent offers little reason for optimism. The baleful cycle likely will continue.

<u>Hamas</u> and its colleagues in hate make themselves clear. "We will not recognize Israel, we will not recognize Israel, we will not recognize Israel," says <u>Hamas</u> leader Ismail Haniyeh in cadences evocative of the infamous "three no's" that slammed the door on prospects for peace following the Six-Day War. "If the Jews all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide," snaps Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah. "Israel is a tumor which needs to be removed," proclaims Khalid Mashall, chairman of <u>Hamas</u>' political bureau. "Israel must be wiped off the map," Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, president of Iran, asserts.

The quotations appear in an ad sponsored by the American Jewish Committee. Meanwhile, unions representing British academics and journalists have called for a boycott of... Israel. The blood spilled by terrorists leaves many stains.

Load-Date: July 27, 2007



International: Middle East crisis: Erez crossing: Trapped families caught in Gaza firefight

The Guardian - Final Edition
June 19, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: GUARDIAN INTERNATIONAL PAGES; Pg. 17

Length: 519 words

Byline: Hazem Balousha, Erez crossing, Gaza and Rory McCarthy, Ramallah

Body

One man was killed and 10 wounded when Israeli soldiers and Palestinian gunmen exchanged fire at a main border crossing between Israel and Gaza yesterday. Hundreds of Palestinians were trapped at the Erez crossing, hoping to escape through Israel to the West Bank, when fighting broke out.

Hospital staff said a senior member of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an offshoot of Fatah, was killed and another critically wounded. *Hamas* militants said they opened fire at the Israeli army, and that the soldiers killed the man returning fire. An Israeli army spokesman denied that the army killed the man, and said a gunman from Gaza shot him and also threw a grenade into the trapped Palestinians.

Israel's justice minister said that the crowd should be allowed out, but so far the crossing has remained closed, except to around 100 senior Fatah officials, who have been allowed to leave since <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza last Thursday.

The crowd of up to 300 people was made up mostly of young men, members of the Fatah-led security services who have been locked in fighting with <u>Hamas</u> gunmen for months. With them were dozens of <u>women</u> and children. They sat in the long, concrete alley which leads to the heavily guarded Israeli boundary. Troops from the Israeli side of the crossing had earlier fired shots in the air, and Israeli tanks were positioned nearby on sandy hilltops in Gaza.

Abu Iyad, 25, an intelligence officer with Fatah, was trapped in the headquarters of the Palestinian intelligence agency in Gaza City last week when it was surrounded and attacked by <u>Hamas</u> fighters. He said he fled after the battle and has been at the Erez crossing since arriving on Friday.

"I know I'm wanted by <u>Hamas</u>," he said. "Like anyone who belongs to Fatah here I feel miserable." He had given his regular identity and military identity cards to a man collecting names to pass to the Israelis for permission to cross.

Some way before the Erez crossing, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen have set up their own checkpoint. Every car is stopped and searched and Fatah members are turned back. To reach Erez, Fatah officials must skirt around the crossing. Several times <u>Hamas</u> gunmen have fired into the air.

One of the men in the crowd, who gave his name as Yazan, was a member of the Fatah presidential guard who had been trapped in a headquarters in Gaza City when it was attacked by <u>Hamas</u> fighters last week. He escaped, went to the home of a friend, changed his clothes, and went to Erez with his wife and two children. <u>Hamas</u> fighters looted

International: Middle East crisis: Erez crossing: Trapped families caught in Gaza firefight

his apartment, he said. "I can't go back to Gaza City. <u>Hamas</u> is there and I'm wanted. You can't imagine how I feel. Now everything is gone."

Israel's justice minister, Daniel Friedman, said the crowds should be allowed to reach the West Bank. "There's no reason Israel shouldn't treat them humanely and permit them simply to flee," he said.

But other Israeli officials said the crossing was closed because there was no longer an authority in Gaza to coordinate with. "There's a *Hamas* administration now, without links to Israel," said Shlomo Dror, a defence ministry liaison officer.

guardian.co.uk/palestinians >=

Load-Date: June 19, 2007



<u>Fatah leaves coalition as civil war looms; Bloodiest day in months leaves 24</u> more dead, 70 wounded in Gaza

Ottawa Citizen

June 13, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 787 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, The Ottawa Citizen

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - With the Gaza Strip on the brink of civil war, the secular Fatah faction of the Palestinian government announced yesterday it is quitting the national unity government with the Islamist <u>Hamas</u> until the bloody fighting between the two rivals in the territory stops.

Following an emergency meeting called by Fatah's leader, President Mahmoud Abbas, Fatah's central committee "has decided that ministers will no longer participate in the government if the shooting does not stop."

The coalition with <u>Hamas</u>, forged with Saudi help at Mecca only three months ago, deteriorated toward complete collapse as a statement from the president's office accused <u>Hamas</u> of "taking the country into an ugly civil war."

In the bloodiest day of factional fighting in months, hospital officials reported that at least 24 people were killed and 70 wounded, bringing to 44 the number of dead in the coastal enclave since Saturday.

At least 10 men died as <u>Hamas</u> forces, firing mortars and rockets, captured Fatah's security headquarters in northern Gaza and surrounded other Fatah facilities after what the Islamic Resistance Movement claimed was an assassination attempt by Fatah on Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. Mr. Haniyeh's beachfront home near the Egyptian border was hit by rockets as some of his family cowered inside.

Much of the day's fighting centred on a <u>Hamas</u> television station that apparently changed hands twice during the day, with pro-<u>Hamas</u> music briefly replaced by music celebrating Fatah. Areas around Khan Younis, in central Gaza, also reportedly changed hands at least twice during the day.

For its part, <u>Hamas</u> vowed to finish Fatah off if Fatah forces refused to heed an ultimatum to immediately surrender. Mr. Abbas countered by accusing <u>Hamas</u> of "planning a coup."

As Gaza slipped closer to civil war, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's hugely unpopular coalition government received an apparent reprieve late last night when members of the Labour party narrowly selected former prime minister Ehud Barak as their new leader.

Fatah leaves coalition as civil war looms; Bloodiest day in months leaves 24 more dead, 70 wounded in Gaza

In return for Labour's continuing support of Mr. Olmert's coalition, Mr. Barak has been widely expected to ask for and be given the defence portfolio in a cabinet shuffle expected soon.

"Should the Gaza Strip ultimately fall to <u>Hamas</u>, it will have regional implications," Mr. Olmert said yesterday. Although his government and most western countries, including Canada, regard <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist organization and have made plain their preference for Fatah, Mr. Olmert underscored Israeli reluctance to get drawn into the factional fighting.

"We cannot go into the Gaza Strip in order to fight the battle between Palestinian pragmatists and extremists," he said. He added that one way to curb the fighting would be to place an international force on Gaza's border with Egypt to prevent arms smuggling.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain verifiable information about what is happening on the urban battlefield of Gaza, including accurate tolls of the dead and wounded. No western journalists have dared to enter the tiny, densely populated enclave since the kidnapping of a BBC reporter three months ago. Arab reporters mostly follow the fighting by catching quick glimpses from the buildings in which they hide.

But the telltale plumes of black smoke looming over Gaza and television images of a few wild gun battles in the streets told their own grim story. The situation was worse than ever yesterday, with neither side heeding pleas from Mr. Abbas and Mr. Haniyeh to stop fighting.

With Fatah out-manned and out-gunned, the total conquest of the territory by *Hamas* could soon be at hand.

According to Gaza hospitals, several dozen Palestinians died during the fourth day of the most recent of what have been eight waves of attacks, bringing to 180 the number of people killed in factional fighting since last November.

The latest mayhem in the strip, which is hemmed in by Egypt, Israel and the Mediterranean Sea, included several execution-style public assassinations, wounded fighters being shot dead in their hospital beds, the murders in their homes of three **women** and a child, and several men being thrown to their deaths from rooftops.

There were also grave concerns in Israel and the West Bank late yesterday that the war between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah might soon spill over into violence in the larger of the two Palestinian territories. A senior <u>Hamas</u> official was kidnapped by a truckload of gunmen from Fatah's Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the Palestinians' provisional capital, Ramallah, and Fatah raided a West Bank television station sponsored by <u>Hamas</u>. There were also reports of sporadic clashes between the factions in several West Bank towns, including Nablus.

Graphic

Photo: Ibraheem Abu Mustafa, Reuters; Palestinian boys inspect the burned house of senior Fatah leader Jamal Abu al-Jedian after fighting between *Hamas* and Fatah militants in the Gaza Strip yesterday.;

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



World must join battle with hate

The Australian (Australia)
June 18, 2007 Monday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: FEATURES; Opinion / Op Ed; Pg. 14

Length: 983 words **Byline:** Barry Rubin

Body

MATP

The crucial contest is between radical Islamism and the rest of the planet, suggests Barry Rubin

<u>HAMAS</u>'s capture of the Gaza Strip has created, along with Iran, a second radical Islamist state in the Middle East. The region, probably the Arab-Israeli conflict, and certainly the Palestinian movement, will never be the same.

What has happened should not be a surprise. Fatah's failure is not due to American foreign policy, Israel, or anyone but Fatah itself. It is Yasser Arafat's ultimate legacy, for he encouraged not only terrorist violence against Israel, but also anarchy and corruption within his own organisation.

Most importantly, Arafat failed to resolve the conflict or give his people an alternative vision to one of extreme radicalism and endless fighting. By rejecting a compromise peace solution in 2000 that would have created an independent Palestinian state with its capital in east Jerusalem and \$23billion in international aid, Arafat made clear that there would be no alternative, moderate scenario for resolving the Palestinians' problems.

It was clear before the January 2006 elections that <u>Hamas</u> was heading towards a victory. Under weak leadership, Fatah did nothing to address its deep-seated divisions and corruption. Competing Fatah candidates split the vote, ensuring that <u>Hamas</u> nominees won. Even after the defeat, Fatah implemented not a single reform or leadership change. Its leaders squabbled, regarding themselves as the sole possible rulers and engaged in wishful thinking that some external factor would hand them whatever they wanted. Meanwhile, like communist and fascist parties in the past, <u>Hamas</u> moved forward, with a clear doctrine, relative discipline, and grim determination. Fatah's ideology and practice laid the basis for <u>Hamas</u> to advance. With Fatah demonising Israel, rejecting compromise, demanding total victory, glorifying terrorist violence, and portraying moderation as treason, <u>Hamas</u> merely needed to prove that it was better at pursuing this course.

No one should underestimate <u>Hamas</u>'s extremism. Indeed, the only difference between <u>Hamas</u> and al-Qa'ida -- though the two groups do not generally work together -- is that the latter emphasises attacks on Western targets, while the former has up until now focused on Israel.

Consequently, <u>Hamas</u> will not moderate its stance, and its victory sets back the chances of Israel-Palestinian peace for decades. Buoyed by its triumph, enjoying backing from Syria (where its headquarters are located), and Iran,

World must join battle with hate

<u>Hamas</u> will pursue its genocidal and openly stated goal: the extinction of Israel and its people. Any thought of concession or compromise is gravely mistaken.

Four specific issues now move to centre stage: the fate of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, the future of the Fatah-ruled West Bank, the world's attitude toward Israel, and the strategic impact of <u>Hamas</u>'s victory on the Middle East.

Until now, while Gazans have suffered from the constant fighting and economic failures brought about by their leaders' policies, they have been left alone in their private lives. <u>Hamas</u> might go slower or faster with an "Islamicising" program.

Nevertheless, it is determined to transform the lives of those it rules. It will kill as it chooses, abolish <u>women's</u> rights, and indoctrinate schoolchildren with hatred and the ambition to be suicide bombers.

Gaza has suffered from anarchy; now it will be under the heel of a ruthless dictatorship. For example, when <u>Hamas</u> forces seized the Shati refugee camp, they deliberately executed three <u>women</u> -- two teenagers and a 75-year-old - because they were relatives of Fatah officials.

Those truly concerned with the Palestinians' wellbeing should direct their criticism at that people's leaders and seek to protect their human rights in the Gaza Strip.

Fatah's rule is still strong in the West Bank, but even the Gaza catastrophe is unlikely to lead it to change its ways. Logically, it should embrace moderation, crack down on cross-border terrorism, and seek some kind of peace with Israel.

But Fatah has its own view of what is logical -- one that might not coincide with such prescriptions. As wildly different as the two cases are, Fatah resembles the French monarchy before the revolution, incapable of learning from experience or taking the steps needed to avoid its own downfall. The world cannot save Fatah; only Fatah can save itself.

For Israel, of course, developments in Gaza pose a great challenge. Israel has long since decided that it has no interest in renewing its control over the Gaza Strip. In some ways, <u>Hamas</u>'s coup makes things clearer. Gaza is ruled by a completely hostile regime. Israel will feel free to retaliate for cross-border attacks and continuing rocket fire at civilian targets within the country.

At last, the world must recognise that the hopes stirred by the 1990s peace process have been completely dashed. In effect, *Hamas* has returned the conflict to the '60s and '70s, when progress towards peace had to await the PLO's readiness to stop using terrorism and accept Israel's existence. Israel's survival and right to self-defence now has to be supported internationally, and the slander and demonisation of recent years should come to an end.

The strategic implications for the region are equally grim. <u>Hamas</u>'s takeover of Gaza is a victory for the bloc comprising Iran, Syria and Hezbollah, as well as the separate branches of the Muslim Brotherhood (of which <u>Hamas</u> is one) seeking to capture power in their own countries.

These forces fully comprehend that the most important global contest today is between radical Islamism and the rest of the world. The question is when the rest of the world will figure that out.

Barry Rubin is director of the Global Research in International Affairs Center and editor of the Middle East Review of International Affairs journal. His latest book is The Truth About Syria.

Project Syndicate

Load-Date: June 17, 2007



Even this won't change Fatah; Despite humbling defeat, Abbas still runs criminal gang

National Post (f/k/a The Financial Post) (Canada)

June 15, 2007 Friday

All But Toronto Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 793 words

Byline: David Frum, National Post

Body

Scenes from a civil war, courtesy of Human Rights Watch and the British journalist Melanie Phillips:

"At least 15 Palestinians, including a United Nations relief worker, were killed today as <u>Hamas</u> looked set to complete its conquest of the entire Gaza Strip."

"Muhammad Swairki, 28, a cook for Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas's presidential guard, was thrown to his death, with his hands and legs tied, from a 15-story apartment building in Gaza City on Sunday."

"Muhammad al-Ra'fati, a <u>Hamas</u> supporter and mosque preacher, was thrown from a Gaza City high-rise apartment building."

"Fatah gunmen began firing mortars and rocket-propelled grenades at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City."

"<u>Hamas</u> gunmen attacked the home of a Fatah security official with mortars and grenades, killing his 14-year-old son and three <u>women</u> inside, security officials said. Other Fatah gunmen stormed the house of a <u>Hamas</u> lawmaker and burned it down."

"Jamal Abu Jadian, a top Fatah commander, fled his home in the northern Gaza Strip Tuesday evening dressed as a woman to avoid dozens of *Hamas* militiamen who had attacked it. When he arrived at a hospital a few hundred meters away from his house, he was discovered by a group of *Hamas* gunmen, who took turns shooting him in the head with automatic rifles. 'They literally blew his head off with more than 40 bullets,' said a doctor at Kamal Udwan Hospital."

<u>Hamas</u> has now completed its conquest of Gaza. The last Fatah fighters were captured and then machine-gunned to death in front of their wives and children. The Fatah compound in Gaza City will be turned into a mosque; Gaza itself into an Islamic state.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has struck back against <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank, where <u>Hamas</u> is weak and Mr. Abbas's Fatah is stronger.

Even this won't change Fatah; Despite humbling defeat, Abbas still runs criminal gang

On Wednesday, Mr. Abbas declared a state of emergency. His forces have raided <u>Hamas</u> offices in Ramallah and Nablus and arrested some 1,500 <u>Hamas</u> activists. Mr. Abbas is now appealing for more American and Western military and economic aid. And he has requested an international police force for Gaza.

Good luck with that last request. Gaza looks like an Arabic Somalia, a beachfront Fallujah. No Western government will volunteer to deploy forces into such an environment.

But if Mr. Abbas is refused troops, he will certainly now receive massive new infusions of money. The big idea sweeping Western capitals is that Fatah must learn to compete with <u>Hamas</u> as a provider of social services. Over the years, billions of dollars of aid have been donated to the Palestinian Authority. In 2006, the Palestinians collected more Western aid per capita than any other people on earth: US\$300 per year, as compared to US\$44 for sub-Saharan Africa.

Much of that money has been stolen or wasted.

Even worse, because UN relief agencies have allowed themselves to be penetrated and captured by <u>Hamas</u>, much of the Western aid has ended up reinforcing exactly the people we supposedly want to defeat.

It's not very realistic to imagine that Fatah can suddenly change its ways and learn to run aid programs honestly. Fatah is a criminal gang, and it inevitably acts like one.

As Gaza burns, you will of course hear voices blaming Israel. Yesterday morning, the Boston Globe published a classic editorial that attacked Israel for occupying Gaza in 1967 and then for quitting Gaza in 2005. But if any outside forces deserve blame, it is those who have encouraged some Palestinian people in their extremist fantasies: the Arab states, the old Soviet Union, the Islamists, and anti-Israel forces in the West.

Looking at the wreckage in the Palestinian territories, it's impossible to sustain any further hope that any responsible state can ever arise there. Too many Palestinian Arabs are gripped by what might be called "antinationalism": Too many care more about destroying the nation of Israel than about the building of a nation of Palestine.

For Gaza now, the best possible outcome is a reversion to Egyptian rule. That will not happen soon-- the Egyptians are no more eager to assume responsibility for Baghdad by the sea than the Europeans are -- but it will happen. Egyptian forces already patrol Gaza's borders.

They have looked the other way as weapons flow into Gaza to be used against Israel. But what happens when Gaza becomes a sanctuary for anti-Egyptian Islamists?

And as international cash ceases to flow, and <u>Hamas</u>'s service infrastructure breaks down, a constituency for an alternative government will take form inside Hamasistan.

And for the West Bank? Palestinian sovereignty over that territory now looks more and more like a gamble the world cannot afford. In their struggle for control of the Palestinian movement, <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah between them have killed the Palestinian state.

Graphic

Black & White Photo: Jaafar Ashtiyeh, AFP, Getty Images; Palestinians from Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades arrest an alleged *Hamas* member in the West Bank city of Nablus yesterday.;

Load-Date: June 15, 2007



Gaza tumbles toward civil war; Fighting spikes, unity gov't near collapse

Edmonton Journal (Alberta)
June 13, 2007 Wednesday
Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A1

Length: 738 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - With the Gaza Strip on the brink of civil war, the secular Fatah faction of the Palestinian government announced Tuesday it is quitting the national unity government with the Islamist <u>Hamas</u> until there's an end to the bloody fighting between the two.

After an emergency meeting called by Fatah's leader, President Mahmoud Abbas, Fatah's central committee "has decided that ministers will no longer participate in the government if the shooting does not stop."

The coalition with <u>Hamas</u>, forged with Saudi help at Mecca only three months ago, deteriorated toward complete collapse as a statement from the president's office accused <u>Hamas</u> of "taking the country into an ugly civil war."

In the bloodiest day of factional fighting in months, at least 24 people were killed and 70 wounded, hospital officials reported, bringing to 44 the number of dead in the coastal enclave since Saturday. A total of 180 Palestinians have been killed in fighting since November.

At least 10 men died as <u>Hamas</u> forces, firing mortars and rockets, captured Fatah's security headquarters in northern Gaza.

The attack came after the Islamic Resistance Movement accused Fatah of an assassination attempt on Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. Haniyeh's beachfront home near the Egyptian border was hit by rockets as some of his family cowered inside.

A <u>Hamas</u> television station was at the centre of much of the day's fighting, and apparently changed hands twice during the day, with pro-<u>Hamas</u> music briefly replaced by music celebrating Fatah. Control of areas around Khan Younis, in central Gaza, also reportedly changed hands at least twice during the day.

<u>Hamas</u> vowed to finish Fatah off if Fatah forces refused to heed an ultimatum to immediately surrender. Abbas countered by accusing <u>Hamas</u> of "planning a coup."

As Gaza slipped closer to civil war, Israel was anxiously watching the results of a Labour party leadership race, which was expected to affect the future of the shaky coalition government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

"Should the Gaza Strip ultimately fall to *Hamas*, it will have regional implications," Olmert observed Tuesday.

Gaza tumbles toward civil war; Fighting spikes, unity gov't near collapse

Although his government and most western countries, including Canada, regard <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist organization and have made plain their preference for Fatah, Olmert underscored

Israeli reluctance to get drawn into the factional fighting.

"We cannot go into the Gaza Strip in order to fight the battle between Palestinian pragmatists and extremists," he said.

One way to curb the fighting, he added, would be to place an international force on Gaza's border with Egypt to prevent arms smuggling.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain verifiable information about what is happening on the urban battlefield of Gaza, including accurate tolls of the dead and wounded. No western journalists have dared to enter the tiny, densely populated enclave since the kidnapping of a BBC reporter three months ago. Arab reporters mostly follow the fighting by catching quick glimpses from the buildings in which they hide.

But the telltale plumes of black smoke looming over Gaza and television images of a few wild gun battles in the streets told their own grim story. The situation was worse than ever Tuesday, with neither side heeding pleas from Abbas and Haniyeh to stop fighting.

With Fatah clearly out-manned and out-gunned, the total conquest of the territory by *Hamas* could soon be at hand.

The latest mayhem in Gaza included several execution-style public assassinations, wounded fighters being shot dead in their hospital beds, the murders in their homes of three <u>women</u> and a child, and several men being thrown to their deaths from rooftops.

There were also grave concerns in Israel and the West Bank late Tuesday that the war between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah might soon spill over into violence in the larger of the two Palestinian territories. A senior <u>Hamas</u> official was kidnapped by a truckload of gunmen from Fatah's Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in the Palestinians' provisional capital, Ramallah, and Fatah raided a West Bank television station sponsored by <u>Hamas</u>. There were also reports of sporadic clashes between the factions in several West Bank towns, including Nablus.

Maj.-Gen. Burhan Hamad, the Egyptian army officer heading a mediation team that has failed to get the two sides to abide by dozens of truces in recent weeks, said Tuesday's fighting had "killed all hope. They have killed the future."

Graphic

Map: The Edmonton Journal; Gaza Strip;

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



Gaza gun battles fill emergency wards: Faction leaders agree to ceasefire -- last week's truce lasted two days

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

February 3, 2007 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A12

Length: 464 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- After 17 more Palestinians died and nearly 200 were wounded in fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in the Gaza Strip yesterday, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who leads Fatah, and <u>Hamas</u>' exiled leader, Khaled Meshal, agreed by telephone on an immediate ceasefire.

What might be the most intense fighting since the conflict broke out two months ago escalated sharply with Fatah claiming yesterday to have arrested several Iranians, including a general whom it is alleged had been teaching <u>Hamas</u> how to make bombs.

That charge comes a day after <u>Hamas</u> used machine-guns and rocket-propelled grenades to ambush a Fatah convoy.

Despite wild gunfights, which took place all over the tiny enclave throughout the night and into yesterday morning prayers, Egyptian diplomats said there was an agreement in principle from the two warring parties to observe yet another ceasefire similar to the one that lasted less than 48 hours earlier this week.

It was also announced that Abbas and the Syrian-based Meshal would meet on Tuesday in the holy city of Mecca to try to agree on a Saudi brokered national unity government -- something that has eluded <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah since **Hamas** won a stunning parliamentary majority in elections nine months ago.

A similar meeting between Abbas and Meshal in Syria last month failed. And there was little evidence of goodwill on the ground yesterday in Gaza, where huge plumes of smoke wafted above the Islamic University, a <u>Hamas</u> stronghold.

<u>Hamas</u> accused Fatah of trying to burn the university down, but Fatah countered it was apprehending the Iranians, who were described as weapons experts.

Seven Iranians were arrested and 1,400 small arms and rockets seized, said Fatah -- which also reported the arrest of more than a dozen Palestinian <u>women</u> it said were working with the Iranians.

Hamas called the Fatah claims "ridiculous."

Gaza gun battles fill emergency wards: Faction leaders agree to ceasefire -- last week's truce lasted two days

An eighth Iranian had committed suicide, according to Palestinian news agencies, but there was no independent confirmation of the report.

Israel has long asserted that Iran had operatives in Gaza and the West Bank who were helping to finance, arm and train <u>Hamas</u> and other organizations such as Islamic Jihad, which most western countries including Canada consider to be a terrorist group.

Among the dead yesterday was Fatah's head of intelligence for the northern half of the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, most Gazans stayed home as gangs of masked and heavily armed men roamed the streets.

But even remaining inside did not always afford much protection. A Palestinian woman was killed when a bullet pierced her home, Israel Radio reported. Four children were among those killed when they were caught in the crossfire, according to Associated Press.

There were also tit-for-tat bomb attacks on the Fatah and *Hamas* radio stations in Gaza.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Muhammed Muheisen, Associated Press; A masked man from the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades -- part of fighting forces of opposing Palestinian factions.;

Load-Date: February 3, 2007



Waiting for the Kiwi backlash; A cruel response to Hamas extremism; Dark underbelly of the nightclub scene

The Dominion Post (Wellington, New Zealand)

June 23, 2007 Saturday

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Section: FEATURES; GENERAL; Pg. 5; WORLD VIEW

Length: 656 words

Body

Waiting for the Kiwi backlash
THE FIJI TIMES'

THE war of words raging between Suva and Wellington is to be expected. Salvos being fired across the Pacific Ocean are expected to continue for some time till, as New Zealand has told everyone, it is satisfied with the retaliatory measures it wants to take against Fiji for expelling High Commissioner Michael Green. We are yet to be told what Helen Clark and her government are planning. But one thing we can be sure of is that it won't be pleasant as far as the citizens of this nation are concerned. It certainly won't help the recovery of the tourism industry following New Zealand's revised travel advisory warning its citizens against travelling to the country. And, if we are really serious about turning the economy around now, we all know it is tourism which can do the job quickly and effectively for us. Stakeholders in the industry are aching to get off their knees as quickly as practically possible. In the meantime, the nation watches as the economy continues its slump and more families feel the effects of redundancies, reduced working hours, pay cuts and the reduction of financial assistance meant for the poor and underprivileged.

A cruel response to *Hamas* extremism

HA'ARETZ

MANY Israelis are watching the television news these days with feelings of powerlessness and shame. They see hundreds of haunted and frightened <u>women</u> and children crowding into the corridor of the Erez crossing and asking to be allowed to flee Gaza through Israel to the West Bank in order to save their lives. But the defence establishment sees something else: It sees wanted terrorists about to blow themselves up and Iranian agents. The defence establishment apparently has its own vision, which does not let emotional or humanitarian considerations confuse it. The pictures at the Erez crossing remind any person who still tries not to forget harsh scenes of locked, sealed gates from the previous century. The fear that dangerous <u>Hamas</u> operatives might infiltrate into the West Bank is not baseless. But the Shin Bet security service presumably knows how to properly screen those seeking to pass. In the dark days before the Holocaust, it was similarly argued, not without justification, that the German and

Waiting for the Kiwi backlash A cruel response to Hamas extremism Dark underbelly of the nightclub scene

Austrian refugees fleeing for their lives could include moles seeking to assimilate into the countries through which they passed and sabotage them. It must be hoped that Israel's first, cruel and unreasonable response to the scenes on the Gaza border will not be its last word.

Dark underbelly of the nightclub scene

THE AGE

A GOOD Samaritan was gunned down on the streets of Melbourne in the Monday morning rush hour. He died as he tried to help a woman in distress. Another Samaritan who tried to help received serious gunshot wounds, as did the woman. The two men, one a Melbourne lawyer, the other a Dutch backpacker on holiday, did what everyone would hope people would do in such circumstances of a man attacking a woman: they went to her aid. It is a mark of a civilised and compassionate society. But the events that gave rise to the rescue have unmasked another side to life in Melbourne that is both disquieting and unacceptable. This is the underbelly, which if flipped over as it was by Monday's shooting, reveals a world of criminality, violence, sleaze, sex, drugs and drunkenness that borders on the bankruptcy of decency. Melbourne is rightly known for the vibrancy of its entertainment scene yet there is within that scene a culture that warrants examination. Police Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon denies a link between the nightclub strip and the actions of the gunman. On one level she is right. The nightclubs did not pull the trigger. But all Melburnians have a right to feel safe in whatever part of the city they may find themselves.

* These editorials are abridged.

Load-Date: June 25, 2007



Hospitals targeted in Gaza slaughter

The Australian (Australia)
June 13, 2007 Wednesday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 9

Length: 512 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich, Jerusalem

Body

MATP

GUNMEN killed 17 people in the Gaza Strip yesterday and attacked hospitals as the area collapsed into mafia-style violence.

<u>Hamas</u> militants attacked the home of a senior Fatah security official, seizing him and killing his 14-year-old son and three **women** in the house.

Relatives of a Fatah intelligence officer who was killed in a separate incident retaliated by attacking Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza, where those responsible were reportedly taking refuge. The attackers used mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, killing two *Hamas* members in the hospital.

Another hospital in Bait Hanoun, in the north, was attacked, apparently by <u>Hamas</u>, and three people inside were killed.

Egyptian officials, trying to mediate, warned that fighting was suicidal for the entire Gaza Strip and called on the population to take to the streets en masse and force the fighters to disengage.

In Israel, politicians called for the intervention of an international force.

Although ceasefires are arranged almost daily by leaders of <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, they inevitably collapse immediately. Fatah declared a unilateral ceasefire on Monday but a <u>Hamas</u> official was killed shortly afterwards.

After dark on Monday, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen surrounded the home of Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, the senior Fatah official in northern Gaza and a co-founder of the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, the military arm of Fatah. He was dragged out and shot 45 times in front of his house, medics said.

"What is this if not war," said Fatah spokesman Maher Mikdad. He pledged revenge. Fatah officials called on their followers to target all *Hamas* political and military leaders.

An aide to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said there was no end in sight to the killing.

"There's no taste for a ceasefire right now," said the aide, Nabil Abu Rdeneh. Mr Abbas called the killings a mark of shame for the Palestinians.

Hospitals targeted in Gaza slaughter

The day had begun with an attack by Fatah militants on the home of <u>Hamas</u> Prime Minister Ismail Haniya. Neither he nor his family was injured, though a grenade exploded inside. It was the second attack on Mr Haniya's home in two days.

A government official said "Fatah gangs" also fired on the Culture Ministry and shooting broke out in front of the parliament building in Gaza, causing politicians to scurry for safety.

A 26-year-old <u>Hamas</u> member was thrown from the roof of a 12-storey building in retaliation for the death the day before of a Fatah member thrown from a 15-storey building by <u>Hamas</u>.

The death toll in the fighting was the highest in months of internal Palestinian fighting which has killed 630 people.

* In Israel, Defence Minister Amir Peretz called on Syrian President Bashar Assad to come to Jerusalem and persuade the Knesset that his calls for peace were sincere. He urged Mr Assad to emulate the late Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, whose appearance before the Knesset in 1977 opened the way to peace talks between the two countries.

"Instead of making ambiguous speeches, come to Jerusalem and stand before the Knesset so that we can see that your words are truly serious," he said.

Load-Date: June 12, 2007



Trapped Gazans huddle at crossing

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

June 20, 2007 Wednesday

Copyright 2007 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 1153 words

Byline: Sarah El Deeb Associated Press

Body

EREZ CROSSING, Gaza Strip -- Trapped by Israeli tanks and <u>Hamas</u> gunmen, hundreds of terrified Palestinians holed up in a stench-filled concrete tunnel at a border crossing Tuesday, desperate to flee the Islamic militants now ruling the Gaza Strip.

Israel took in two people hit by <u>Hamas</u> gunfire, 24 hours after they were wounded in an assault on the tunnel, but officials remained steadfast in rejecting pleas to throw open the border. Three people wounded in the Gaza fighting last week also were allowed into Israel.

Israeli officials permitted a food shipment into Gaza for the first time since <u>Hamas</u> seized control in five days of fighting with the Fatah movement of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. That eased concerns about a humanitarian crisis in the impoverished coastal territory.

The crowd at the Erez crossing included dozens of Fatah fighters, who Israeli officials feared could destabilize the West Bank, which is separated from Gaza by about 30 miles of Israeli territory. Officials said most of those seeking to cross were not in danger.

As the standoff stretched on, the scene inside the 900-foot-long tunnel grew increasingly desperate.

<u>Women</u>, children and young men sat between two high concrete walls forming a corridor about 30 feet across, looking tired and grimy. Suitcases and trash were strewn about. Some people sat on mats, others on bare asphalt, including several men with bloody bandages on their legs.

A breeze barely stirred in the passage, which is lighted on the Israeli side. The tunnel has no toilets and reeked of urine and sweat.

"It's disgusting. People are using the walls as toilets. The <u>women</u> are suffering," said one man, refusing to be identified out of fear for his safety. He said people were on edge and fighting over food.

In one instance, a crowd attacked a food cart, "and only the strong got the food," the man said. Later, Israel sent in five cartons of food, he said. "There was order because they made everybody sit down," he said.

The man said some in the tunnel feared *Hamas* members had infiltrated the crowd to spy on them.

Late Monday, gunmen from a small <u>Hamas</u>-allied group, disguised as civilians, pulled guns and grenades out of their luggage and killed the nephew of a notorious Fatah militia leader who had been slain by a <u>Hamas</u> mob last week, witnesses said. Fifteen people were wounded.

Trapped Gazans huddle at crossing

Nearly 24 hours after the attack in the tunnel, Israel allowed in two of the wounded Tuesday, army and medical officials said. Three other Gazans wounded last week also were let in. The army did not identify the wounded, who were taken to Israeli hospitals.

An Israeli activist group, Physicians for Human Rights, said Israel's Supreme Court scheduled a hearing Wednesday to hear its petition seeking to force Israeli authorities to offer immediate medical treatment to anyone needing it at Erez.

To maintain order at the crossing, Israeli armored vehicles rolled up to the Palestinian side Tuesday, chasing away cars parked next to the tunnel. One tank blocked people from leaving or entering the tunnel.

The vehicles pulled back later, the military said, but people still were not being allowed to enter Israel.

Witnesses estimated 600 people were huddled in the long concrete passage that leads to the Israeli side of the crossing. About 100 were believed to be fleeing Fatah security men, with the others civilians seeking a better life in the West Bank.

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

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

Israel let about 50 senior Fatah officials and their families cross to the West Bank from Gaza over the weekend, citing threats to their safety. Some 200 other Fatah officials are in Egypt, trying to reach the West Bank via Jordan, Fatah officials said.

<u>Hamas</u> declared a general amnesty for Fatah fighters shortly after its victory in Gaza, but frightened civilians and security officers have not been reassured. <u>Hamas</u> checkpoints have been set up on the road to Erez to arrest fighters trying to leave.

Abu Mustafa, a Fatah fighter seeking to leave through Erez, feared he is a marked man. "They forgave people before and later killed them. There's no way we'll go back," he said.

A Fatah leader in the West Bank, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the delicacy of the matter, said Abbas, the Palestinian president, did not want Gazans streaming out of the coastal strip and leaving it an undiluted <u>Hamas</u> stronghold.

<u>Hamas'</u> victory has left the Palestinians with two rival governments -- Abbas' Western-backed administration in the West Bank and the <u>Hamas</u> rulers of Gaza. The international community has embraced Abbas, while the Islamic militant **Hamas** has been shunned.

In Washington, President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert promised to bolster Abbas in his battle with *Hamas*, calling him a moderate voice and the only true leader of the Palestinian people.

"I am going to make every possible effort to cooperate with him," Olmert said. Bush called Abbas "the president of all the Palestinians" and "a reasonable voice amongst the extremists."

Talking to reporters in Washington, Olmert pledged to free tax money Israel has collected for the Palestinians but has frozen since <u>Hamas</u> took power. He did not give an amount, but the total is in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Olmert also said he would act to ease travel restrictions in the West Bank and would also consider releasing Palestinian prisoners and shoring up Abbas' security forces.

Trapped Gazans huddle at crossing

Egypt's government moved its embassy to the Palestinian Authority from Gaza to the West Bank town of Ramallah on Tuesday in a show of recognition for Abbas, while Arab League chief Amr Moussa insisted Abbas is the authority "for every Palestinian, not just the West Bank."

Facing growing international isolation, *Hamas* called for a "national dialogue" with its Fatah foes.

"We are still prepared for a brotherly, serious and responsible national dialogue," Khalil al-Haya, a *Hamas* lawmaker, told reporters.

But in the West Bank, Abbas' spokesman ruled out talks.

"Before any dialogue, *Hamas* must withdraw its armed people from all the places they occupied and give back the power to the legitimate authority," Nabil Abu Rdeneh said.

On Tuesday, Israel let the first food aid shipment enter Gaza since fighting broke out. The U.N. World Food Program, which ordinarily feeds 250,000 of Gaza's 1.4 million residents, sent in 10 truckloads of food and two trucks with medical supplies.

The Israeli military said aid would continue to flow, unless there is *Hamas* "interference."

The International Red Cross said medicine and medical supplies were urgently needed in Gaza, where it said hundreds were hospitalized with injuries from last week's fighting.

Load-Date: June 20, 2007



Palestinian factional fighting on the rise

The Bismarck Tribune June 12, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: WIRE; Pg. 2A

Length: 305 words

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) - Rival gunmen exchanged fire at two Gaza hospitals on Monday and Cabinet ministers fled their weekly meeting after the government headquarters was caught in the crossfire of a brutal day of infighting that killed 17 Palestinians.

The battles came a day after two militants from the rival <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah factions were dragged onto high-rise rooftops and thrown to their death in a power struggle that appears to be rapidly descending into all-out confrontation.

After sundown Monday, gunmen, apparently from <u>Hamas</u>, laid siege to the house of Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, the senior Fatah official in northern Gaza. They then dragged him outside and killed him, security officials said. Medics said he was hit by 45 bullets.

Al-Jediyan was a top aide to Gaza Fatah strongman Mohammed Dahlan and al-Jediyan's brother was also killed, apparently in the same shootout.

Fatah spokesman Maher Mikdad harshly denounced the killing and threatened revenge.

"What is this, if not a war," he said.

Fatah called on its members to target all *Hamas* political and military leaders.

The bloodiest clashes of the day took place in the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun. Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> gunmen exchanged fire near Beit Hanoun Hospital, killing a <u>Hamas</u> supporter. The battle then moved to the hospital, where three men from a Fatah-allied clan were shot dead.

At Gaza's largest hospital, Shifa, combatants fired mortars, grenades and assault rifles.

Two other Palestinians were killed in battles late Monday night in northern Gaza, security and hospital officials said. Later, *Hamas* said one of its men, who was kidnapped earlier, was found dead in a Gaza street.

Early today, three <u>women</u> and a child were killed when <u>Hamas</u> militants attacked the home of a senior Fatah security official with mortars and grenades, security officials said.

Load-Date: June 13, 2007



Israelis release millions in tax funds to Palestinian government

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)

July 2, 2007 Monday

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Section: A; Pg. 9 Length: 485 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) - Tens of thousands of Palestinian civil servants will be paid in full this week for the first time in over a year after Israel released millions of dollars in tax funds frozen during <u>Hamas</u> rule, officials said Sunday.

The transfer of the funds was Israel's first concrete gesture of support for moderate President Mahmoud Abbas in his battle with <u>Hamas</u>, which violently seized control of the Gaza Strip last month.

Dispensing the salaries allows the West Bank-based government to assert its legitimacy, disputed by the <u>Hamas</u> rulers in Gaza. Abbas appointed a new prime minister, Salam Fayyad, and expelled <u>Hamas</u> from the Palestinian government after the Gaza seizure.

The salaries will bypass employees hired by <u>Hamas</u>, including the 6,000 members of the militant group's security forces. Security forces in Gaza were told they would be paid only if they stayed home and refused to work under **Hamas** command.

Under <u>Hamas</u>, the 165,000 government employees had only received irregular, partial payments because of an international aid boycott imposed over the group's refusal to renounce violence and recognize Israel.

The Israeli government said \$119 million was transferred Sunday, and Palestinian officials confirmed they received it. The Israelis said there would be another transfer in coming days.

Since <u>Hamas</u> came to power in March 2006, Israel had frozen roughly \$600 million, mostly customs duties that it collects on behalf of the Palestinians under interim peace accords. After Abbas expelled <u>Hamas</u>, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the financial transfers would resume.

Meanwhile, a plea bargain that would allow Israel's former president to avoid rape charges and jail time has drawn a fierce public backlash, with protests in Tel Aviv and a Supreme Court appeal on Sunday that have put the deal in doubt.

The plea bargain between prosecutors and Moshe Katsav, who stepped down as Israel's ceremonial leader on Sunday, would allow him to confess to lesser counts of sexual harassment and receive a suspended sentence.

In January, Attorney General Meni Mazuz said he was planning to file rape charges that could carry a 20-year prison term. Now, Katsav's critics fear the deal will allow him to fade quietly away, insisting he signed the deal only to relieve the strain on his family, with the gravest charges buried.

Israelis release millions in tax funds to Palestinian government

Four <u>women</u> who worked for Katsav charged that he repeatedly groped them, kissed them, exposed himself to them and - in two cases - raped them while he served as president and earlier, when he was tourism minister.

Katsav has claimed he was the victim of a witch hunt. He stepped aside in January to fight the charges but refused to resign until the plea bargain forced him to do so.

Dropping the most serious charges infuriated <u>women</u>'s rights activists and led to a hastily organized demonstration that drew a surprisingly large crowd of around 20,000.

Load-Date: July 19, 2007



Trapped families hope to flee Gaza

The Irish Times

June 19, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 10

Length: 512 words

Byline: Hazem Balousha Rory McCarthy

Body

MIDDLE EAST: Hundreds of Palestinians were trapped at one of the main crossing points out of the Gaza Strip yesterday, hoping to escape through Israel to the West Bank.

Israel's justice minister said the crowd should be allowed out, but so far the Erez crossing has remained closed, except to around 100 senior Fatah officials, who have been allowed to leave since <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza last Thursday. Others have fled to Egypt.

The crowd of up to 300 people was made up mostly of young men, members of the Fatah-led security services who have been locked in fighting with <u>Hamas</u> gunmen for months. With them were dozens of <u>women</u> and children, some sleeping on the ground.

They sat in the long, concrete alley that leads to the heavily guarded Israeli boundary. Israeli troops fired shots in the air from the Israeli side of the crossing, and Israeli tanks were positioned nearby on sandy hilltops in Gaza.

Looters have ransacked the Palestinian side of the crossing, which until last week was staffed by security officials from Fatah. Yesterday some were even digging into the ground to steal electric cables.

Abu Iyad (25), an intelligence officer with Fatah, was trapped in the headquarters of the Palestinian intelligence agency in Gaza City last week when it was surrounded and attacked by <u>Hamas</u> fighters. He said he fled after the battle and has been at the Erez crossing since arriving on Friday.

"I know I'm wanted by <u>Hamas</u>," he said. "Like anyone who belongs to Fatah here, I feel miserable." He had given his regular identity and military identity cards to a man collecting names to pass to the Israelis for permission to cross.

Some way before the Erez crossing, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen have set up their own checkpoint. Every car is stopped and searched and Fatah members are turned back. To reach Erez, Fatah officials must skirt around the crossing. Several times <u>Hamas</u> gunmen have fired into the air.

One of the men in the crowd, who gave his name as Yazan, was a member of the Fatah presidential guard who had been trapped in a key headquarters in Gaza City when it was attacked by *Hamas* fighters last week.

Trapped families hope to flee Gaza

He escaped, went to the home of a friend, changed his clothes and went to Erez with his wife and two children. **Hamas** fighters looted his apartment, he said.

"I can't go back to Gaza City. <u>Hamas</u> is there and I'm wanted. You can't imagine how I feel. I've been building myself up, and now everything is gone."

Also in the crowd was a woman, who gave her name as Nora, and her three children. Her husband was already in the West Bank and her cousin was killed in the latest round of fighting.

Israel's justice minister Daniel Friedman said the crowds should be allowed to reach the West Bank. "There's no reason Israel shouldn't treat them humanely and permit them simply to flee," he said. But other Israeli officials said the crossing was closed because there was no longer an authority in Gaza to co-ordinate with. "There's a *Hamas* administration now without links to Israel," said Shlomo Dror, a defence ministry liaison officer. - (Guardian service)

Load-Date: June 19, 2007



Waiting Until It's Safe

New York Sun (Archive) June 19, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: OPINION; Pg. 8

Length: 806 words **Byline:** SETH GITELL

Body

The events in Gaza reinforce a truth about much of the so-called human rights community and the Left: they care when the villain is Israel, but are indifferent to acts of violence committed by Palestinians against Palestinians.

As <u>Hamas</u> stormed Fatah strongholds in Gaza and began slaughtering members of its rival organization last Thursday, there were no Adam Shapiros racing to Fatah compounds to protect its members. Mr. Shapiro was the "peace" activist who made a beeline for Arafat's compound in 2002 when Israel attempted to isolate the Palestinian leader in response to terrorism.

The Web site of a group Mr. Shapiro helped found, the "International Solidarity Movement," was promoting "Freedom Summer 2007: Confronting Apartheid," a campaign opposing Israel's security fence.

Posts to the site, contemporaneous with the <u>Hamas</u> campaign in Gaza, display support for the effort to boycott Israel's academic establishment and memorialize Israel's "Occupation" since 1967.

A statement decrying last week's violence was not found, if there even was one.

The television news channels and newspapers reported no present day version of Rachel Corrie rushing to place herself in between the Fatah and the <u>Hamas</u> gunmen. Corrie, purportedly in defense of a Palestinian home, was killed accidentally when she placed herself in front of an Israeli bulldozer, which was clearing brush and destroying arms smuggling tunnels.

On Friday, a Haaretz reporter, Avi Issacharoff, reported a few acts of violence in Gaza: "Two days ago, <u>Hamas</u> activists fired at a procession of unarmed citizens and killed two of them. On Tuesday they killed three <u>women</u> and a child. On Monday they threw a Fatah activist from the 18th floor of a high-rise building."

Following these reports of <u>Hamas</u> violence, protesters did not take to the streets of cities in America or around the world. The television news was notably bereft of footage of candlelight vigils mourning the impending disaster.

As of Monday morning, the home page of Amnesty International, a group dedicated to "internationally recognized human rights," didn't mention the Gaza killings. But at noon yesterday, the group posted a statement calling for <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah to "end revenge killings, attacks and abductions." The plight of the Palestinians is referred to in a May 31 report, "Enduring Occupation: Palestinians Under Siege in the West Bank."

Waiting Until It's Safe

The report represents the group's commemoration of the "40th Anniversary of the Palestinian Territories." Israeli security checkpoints, constructed after a spate of terrorism and murder, are the centerpiece of the Amnesty International report. The open battle in Gaza, however, was missing in action.

America is also the subject of Amnesty International scrutiny. The home page highlights the plight of 39 individuals, alleged to have been "subjected to enforced disappearance by the U.S. authorities." The group did not post anything about Palestinians attempting to flee Gaza, an event reported by Israel's Channel Two. The station showed one elderly woman shouting, "We want to enter Israel. If they don't, *Hamas* will slaughter us."

There were those, such as Christiane Amanpour of CNN, who were asked to comment on the goings-on in Gaza. Ms. Amanpour acknowledged what was happening, but refused to speculate on what the change-over in control to Iranian-backed *Hamas* would mean. Asked whether the power shift represented a victory for Iran, which, it is, Ms. Amanpour said, "I really don't think it's a victory for anybody."

Instead, she did what many in the world community do when faced with facts that don't gibe with their preconceived views of the Middle East - she found a way to blame America. "What happened was then the U.S., Europe, Israel basically punished <u>Hamas</u> and the Palestinians because of <u>Hamas</u> policy and squeezed them and created this real division between <u>Hamas</u> and the PA, which has exploded now," she said.

What Ms. Amanpour and most other commentators on Gaza fail to mention when they deign to at the least acknowledge the events, is that the seizure of Gaza by <u>Hamas</u> is the final happening in a chain of events that began with the Oslo Accords in 1993.

A former prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, opted to give the Palestine Liberation Organization - the Fatah faction - authority over Gaza and much of the West Bank in the hope that Yasser Arafat and his henchmen would crack down on *Hamas*. Arafat never complied, and Fatah focused on building personal villas on the Mediterranean Sea instead of building a nation.

The usual suspects will likely remain relatively mum. That is, of course, until such time as Israel finds itself unable to live with the situation and moves in. That's when it will be safe, once again, to decry the horrible plight of the people of Gaza.

Mr. Gitell (gitell.com) is a contributing editor of The Sun.

Load-Date: June 19, 2007



<u>Mickey Mouse lookalike calls for Islam to 'lead world'; Israeli complaints</u> prompt shelving of children's show

Ottawa Citizen May 10, 2007 Thursday Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. B3

Length: 298 words

Byline: Nidal Al-Mughrabi, Reuters

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza - The Palestinian government yesterday ordered the shelving of a children's show on a *Hamas* television station in which a Mickey Mouse lookalike calls for Israel to be vanquished and Islam to "lead the world."

Tomorrow's Pioneers, which attracted complaints from Israeli groups, features a host, Farfur, dressed in a full body-suit to resemble Walt Disney's famous cartoon character. He and a young <u>female</u> co-host instruct their young viewers on <u>Hamas</u>'s militant brand of Muslim piety.

"We will restore to this nation its glory, and we will liberate (Jerusalem mosque) Al-Aqsa, with Allah's will, and we will liberate the Muslim countries invaded by murderers," Farfur said in one show.

Following complaints by Israeli watchdog groups that attracted foreign scrutiny, Palestinian Information Minister Mustafa Barghouthi said he had ordered broadcasts of the show to be halted so content could be reviewed.

"I demanded that *Hamas* suspend the program and they have withdrawn it, because it was wrong to use a program directed at children to convey political messages," said Mr. Barghouthi.

"Any media outlet that breaks Palestinian broadcasting law will be penalized by the information ministry," he said.

A Hamas official said the group's Al-Aqsa TV station was considering a possible change to the show's format.

<u>Hamas</u> advocates Israel be destroyed and replaced by a pan-Islamic Arab confederation, a doctrine at odds with Palestinians who have been fighting for independence in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza.

Disney declined comment. A daughter of the U.S. entertainment firm's founder cried foul, however.

"What we're dealing with here is pure evil and you can't ignore that," Diane Disney Miller told the New York Daily News.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Al-Aqsa TV; Farfur, a <u>Hamas</u> TV cartoon character bearing a striking resemblance to Disney's Mickey Mouse, is off the air, at least temporarily, after Israeli groups complained about the way his show pushes <u>Hamas</u>'s militant brand of Muslim piety.;

Load-Date: May 10, 2007



On Gaza's borders, anxiety mounts

Christian Science Monitor June 21, 2007, Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 7

Length: 946 words

Byline: Joshua Mitnick - Correspondent and Jill Carroll - Staff Writer

Dateline: AshkeLon, Israel; and Rafah, Egypt

Body

After five days caught between *Hamas* and Israel on Gaza's northern border, Nader's ordeal was over.

With a bandage and brace supporting his arm wounded in a shootout Monday evening, the son of a Fatah intelligence officer sat in the orthopedic ward at Ashkelon's Barzilay hospital talking to friends and family on a mobile phone.

As uncertainty and degradation grew in the coastal strip following last week's takeover by <u>Hamas</u>, the militant Islamic resistance movement, hundreds of Gazans rushed to flee. Nader, who declined to give his surname, was among the handful allowed into Israel Wednesday.

Along with several other wounded and ill Palestinians and all foreign nationals living in Gaza, he was allowed to cross over the Erez crossing. But he still doesn't know if he will get permission to seek asylum in the West Bank or whether Israel will force him to return to Gaza, where he is convinced he will be harmed by *Hamas* militants.

"If you are not *Hamas*, you are the enemy," he says.

Palestinians along the border who have family members in Gaza reported that <u>Hamas</u> operatives were said to be patrolling neighborhoods with megaphones, and computerized lists demanding Fatah members turn themselves in along with their weapons. Families with relatives that fled to the West Bank, where Palestinian Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah has consolidated control, were threatened with violence, they said.

Israeli security officials have been reluctant let the refugees through, arguing that they could pose a security risk and insisting that <u>Hamas</u> was not harming those who chose to turn back."These people are not refugees. These people have houses in Gaza and they have a place to return to," says Shady Yassin, a spokesman for the Israeli liaison office at the Gaza border. "There are <u>women</u> and children, but there are also extremists, and it's difficult to know who they are."

The threat of a humanitarian crisis in Gaza is increased pressure on Israel to open the Karni crossing, the main commercial junction, to humanitarian aid. The United Nation's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said, "the reopening of Karni crossing is vital to prevent general food shortages in two to four weeks."

On the Israeli side of the Erez crossing Wednesday, two buses pulled away carrying about 90 Ukrainian nationals - most of them children - stranded in Gaza for days because of the backup at the crossing. A spokesman for the

On Gaza's borders, anxiety mounts

Russian Embassy in Israel said there were an additional 100 Russians poised to cross, but Israeli officials had held up passage of males because of their Palestinian nationality.

Anxiety is also growing on the border between Gaza and Egypt that is known for the underground tunnels that ferry supplies to weapons. Egypt has been trying to crack down on the smuggling tunnels and is under pressure from Israel, which says weapons smuggled through them from Egypt are arming militants in Gaza.

At an Egyptian police checkpoint on the road to the border, an officer who did not give his name, voiced similar concerns.

"The Palestinians cause all the problems here. We are worried about [*Hamas*] because they are the reason of all the problems between the Palestinians now and all the problems are coming here. Especially we don't like the *Hamas* movement."

But Ibrahim Awad was more sympathetic to the Islamic movement. Mr. Awad has two small shops next to the Salahideen border crossing, a long-closed link with the Gaza Strip. He says that a bystander near the border was injured by a bullet from a *Hamas* militant this week.

"Just a day ago someone was just sitting here, and he was shot, but it wasn't on purpose," says Awad. "Anything that happens there, it affects here. Here and there is one country. It affects work and trade, also safety, everything."

Residents here feel strong ties with the Palestinians living just a few hundred yards away and many say they support *Hamas* in its fight with Fatah for control of the Palestinian territories.

Abdel Razaq Abdel Hamid grew up in a house facing the border with Gaza. From his roof he can see young Palestinians trying to clamor across the border and buildings in Gaza pocked marked from bombs he says were dropped by Israel.

"<u>Hamas</u> and only <u>Hamas</u>. They are the only ones who can bring security," he says when asked which Palestinian faction he supports. His brother next to him on his rooftop, overlooking the border, nods. "It's just one family between Egypt and Palestine."

Border security since <u>Hamas</u> won control of Gaza has rested mainly with the Egyptians. Fatah border guards fled to Egypt when <u>Hamas</u> won control of Gaza and <u>Hamas</u> has turned up at the border only sporadically so far, local residents say, and have been strafed by Israeli planes.

That has led to some 100 young Palestinian men slipping across to Egypt in the past few days, Awad, Mr. Hamid, and other local residents say.

Three border crossing point connect Egypt and Gaza. Only Rafah still opens sporadically and is heavily guarded.

The other two crossings closed a few years ago and aren't as heavily guarded. The one by Awad's shops was guarded by a single stick-wielding Egyptian soldier on a recent afternoon.

A guard tower and a half dozen soldiers milling about were the only visible human deterrent to illegal crossings from Gaza for the several kilometers of border within in view of the old crossing.

Egyptians living along this border said Palestinians blow holes through the massive metal wall that marks the Gaza Strip's border. Then they scramble across a few hundred yards of no man's land and use wire cutters to breach a fence topped with barbed wired that demarcates Egyptian territory.

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Load-Date: June 20, 2007



POPE TO VISIT U.S. IN SPRING

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)
September 20, 2007 Thursday
SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2007 P.G. Publishing Co.

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

Length: 548 words

Body

VATICAN CITY -- Pope Benedict XVI plans to travel to the United States in the spring to address the United Nations, but other possible U.S. stops haven't yet been confirmed, the Vatican said yesterday.

Pope Benedict accepted an invitation from the U.N. secretary-general.

U.S. bishops and the Vatican have also been discussing other possible stops, including Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington. However, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said that only the spring visit to New York to address the U.N. General Assembly had been confirmed.

A stop in Boston would send a particularly poignant message of papal concern over the clerical sex abuse scandal, which erupted there in 2002 and forced its archbishop, Cardinal Bernard Law, to resign in disgrace.

Khmer Rouge leader held

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia -- Cambodia's most senior surviving Khmer Rouge leader was arrested and charged with crimes against humanity yesterday -- three decades after the murderous regime left 1.7 million people dead through starvation, overwork and execution.

Khmer Rouge ideologist Nuon Chea, the top aide to late leader Pol Pot, was arrested at his home in northwestern Pailin near the Thai border and flown to Phnom Penh, where he was put in the custody of a U.N.-backed tribunal.

The tribunal is investigating abuses committed when the communist Khmer Rouge held power in 1975-79.

Mr. Chea, 82, denies any wrongdoing.

Israel pressures *Hamas*

JERUSALEM -- Hours before Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice landed here yesterday for talks on resolving the Middle East conflict, Israel ratcheted up the pressure on <u>Hamas</u>, the Islamist group in control of the Gaza Strip, by declaring Gaza "hostile territory," opening the way for further restrictions on the supply of vital goods like electricity and gasoline.

The intention of the declaration, by Israel's security Cabinet, is to hold <u>Hamas</u> "responsible and accountable" for any further rocketing or attacks on Israel from Gaza, which <u>Hamas</u> took over when it routed Fatah forces in June, Israeli officials said.

POPE TO VISIT U.S. IN SPRING

Israel, the United States, as well as the European Union, classify <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist organization, and <u>Hamas</u> has refused international demands that it recognize Israel's right to exist, forswear violence and accept all previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

<u>Hamas</u> reacted sharply, calling the Israeli decision "a declaration of war against the Palestinian people, an attempt to target resistance forces and to undermine <u>Hamas</u> politically," according to Sami Abu Zuhri, a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman in Gaza.

Ban on head scarves

ISTANBUL, Turkey -- Turkey's Islamic-leaning prime minister called yesterday for lifting a ban on <u>women</u> wearing head scarves in universities, a shift in position that is certain to alarm secularists who fear the government is moving to foist a Muslim agenda on the nation.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement at a news conference that he wants a constitutional change to remove the ban comes just weeks after he scored a major political triumph: the election of his ally Abdullah Gul -- a devout Muslim -- as Turkey's president.

The opposition had vehemently opposed Mr. Erdogan's choice of Mr. Gul for the influential and highly symbolic post, saying it would open the way for the government to carry out an Islamic agenda.

Load-Date: September 20, 2007



Shortlived jail break for Gaza prisoners

The Australian (Australia)

June 22, 2007 Friday

All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 11

Length: 540 words **Byline:** Martin Chulov

Body

Gaza

WITH the pillars of Gaza crumbling, Fatah's retreating gunmen threw open the doors of the strip's only prison last Thursday, scattering murderers, collaborators and drug dealers to all corners of the lawless territory.

The final act of defiance was meant to cripple the law and order credentials of the conquerors, *Hamas*, forcing them to track down a prison full of inmates who walked out of their opened cells, then fled the front gate.

The <u>Hamas</u> Executive Force arrived to an abandoned prison, a dank, putrid relic of British rule at the heart of a concrete maze in central Gaza that housed 501 men and 15 <u>women</u>. Many had not seen the outside of the prison walls for up to 20 years.

Others, like accused collaborator Mohammed al-Barakat, had served six years without being charged. Like every inmate, he fled, along with the vanquished Fatah guards. And like most, he had simply walked home to a nearby suburb, where he enjoyed his first meal with his family since his arrest.

"I was going to stay there, until I heard the call from <u>Hamas</u> on the radio to come back," he said, as he cleaned pots in the prison's foul-smelling kitchen. "Then I decided to do what they said."

By late yesterday, eight inmates had walked back in the gates and another two had been rounded up by <u>Hamas</u> forces who were trying to find their files in ransacked offices.

The returned prisoners had free rein of the cell blocks, many walking blithely past a dangling executioner's noose inside a small, starkly lit room at the corridor that led to their cells.

Brackish water dripped from algae-covered pipes on to cesspits on the floor, which ebbed into overflowing drains. No fresh air could make its way into the tiny <u>women</u>'s section, about 30m away, and no one dared to go near the rank remnants of the <u>women</u>'s lives.

The newly appointed prison governor, <u>Hamas</u> man Hassan Egnaci, said none of the prisoners who fled would be punished. "If you are going to open a lion's cage, what is he going to do?" he asked from inside the deposed governor's office. "Of course he will run away. This was just a normal human reaction.

Shortlived jail break for Gaza prisoners

"We will show these people that the corrupt days of the past, the brutalisation and the summary punishment is over. Many of the people who had been here had not been charged with any crime and we will make sure their fate will be determined.

"Most people are coming back on their own, but we know where the rest are and we will soon send them notifications. If they don't respond, we will go and get them."

Among those now on the outside are three men who <u>Hamas</u> consider among the worst of the collaborators with Israel -- whose actions had all led to the assassinations of key **Hamas** men.

The Gazans who helped Israel find and kill the <u>Hamas</u> bomb-maker Yehya Ayash, the former head of the military wing, Salah Shahadeh, and senior leader Abdul Aziz Rantisi are top-priority fugitives, but <u>Hamas</u> insists they will be treated "normally" when they are recaptured.

The <u>Hamas</u> pledges appeared to have won favour among the few returned inmates, with Mr Barakat lauding the new rulers' efforts to clean the prison and to crack down on overcharging in the prison canteen -- which most prisoners believe was used to line the pockets of the guards.

Load-Date: June 21, 2007



ISRAELI STRIKE LANDS NEAR PALESTINIAN LEADER'S HOME

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

May 26, 2007 Saturday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2007 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD; Pg. A-4

Length: 389 words

Byline: ISABEL KERSHNER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

The Israeli army intensified its air campaign against <u>Hamas</u> in the Gaza Strip late Thursday night and early yesterday, striking seven different locations, according to an army spokesman.

One of the air strikes hit a guard post close to the home of Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniya of <u>Hamas</u> -- an attack that Israel said was not aimed at Mr. Haniya, but that nonetheless provoked an angry response.

The army spokesman, speaking on condition of anonymity under army rules, said the attack was "definitely not related" to Mr. Haniya, and that the target was "a building used by *Hamas*" in the Shati refugee camp in Gaza City.

Ahmed Youssef, an adviser to Mr. Haniya, said Israel was trying to deliver "a message of threats," according to Reuters. The post that was struck was empty at the time of the attack. Mr. Haniya came out of his house briefly to inspect the damage.

The air strikes aimed at other posts and buildings that the army said belonged to <u>Hamas</u> in Khan Yunis, to the south of Gaza City, and in Jabaliya, to the north. A structure the army described as an Islamic Jihad weapons manufacturing facility was hit in Rafah. Palestinian officials said it was a metal workshop. In Gaza City, missiles hit a money changing business that the army said was "involved in transferring funds to terror organizations."

No Palestinians were reported killed in the latest strikes, but Dr. Moawiya Hassanain, a spokesman for the Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza, said 21 were injured. Of the 21, he said, two were members of the *Hamas* Executive Force, and 19 were civilians, including three *women* and seven children. On Thursday, Dr. Hassanain said 38 Palestinians were killed since air strikes began May 17.

The Israeli military campaign began soon after <u>Hamas</u> announced that it was resuming rocket attacks from Gaza into Israel, ending a six-month cease-fire. About 200 rockets have been launched since then, according to Israeli army officials, killing one Israeli woman and seriously injuring two others. Scores have been treated for lighter injuries and shock.

Five rockets were launched at Israel yesterday morning, the army spokesman said. It was not clear if any of them landed in Israeli territory, and there were no reports of injury or damage. The military wing of <u>Hamas</u>, known as the Qassam Brigades, claimed responsibility.

Graphic

PHOTO: Majed Hamdan/Associated Press: A Palestinian man runs with an injured boy after an Israeli missile strike on a *Hamas* base after they gathered at the scene of an earlier airstrike in Nusseirat, in the Gaza Strip, yesterday. The Israeli airstrike destroyed the compound and injured at least three people, witnesses said.

Load-Date: May 29, 2007



No looking back

Charleston Gazette (West Virginia)

June 17, 2007, Sunday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. P5A

Length: 874 words

Byline: Mohammed Daraghmeh, The Associated Press

Body

RAMALLAH, West Bank - With <u>Hamas</u> forces threatening his life, 49-year-old Abdel Salam Abu Nada took a harrowing journey to safety, dodging <u>Hamas</u> checkpoints, braving Israeli tank fire and crawling the final 300 yards to the Gaza Strip's border with Israel.

Today he is among dozens of Fatah leaders holed up at a luxury West Bank hotel, nervously watching events in Gaza and wondering whether they will ever go home again.

They fled as <u>Hamas</u> completed its takeover of the Gaza Strip, routing Fatah-allied security forces in five days of intense fighting. The exodus continued Saturday, with hundreds of people seeking Israel's permission to cross to the West Bank.

As general manager of Fatah-controlled Palestine TV, Abu Nada said he had long been the target of <u>Hamas</u> harassment.

"<u>Hamas</u> has always targeted me. Once they fired shots at my car. And they wrote on their Web site that I am broadcasting sedition," he said. Recently, he received an ominous text message on his cell phone: "Your punishment is coming."

When <u>Hamas</u> seized control of the TV station during the fighting, Abu Nada headed for the West Bank, not even bothering to go home.

To avoid checkpoints set up by <u>Hamas</u> fighters, Abu Nada took back roads. "And since I don't have permission to enter Israel, in a military area, I found myself crawling on the ground," he said, pointing to scrapes on his right leg.

With Israeli tanks firing toward him, he said he called an Israeli liaison office and persuaded them to let him cross the border. He slowly crawled to safety.

Abu Nada and dozens of exhausted Fatah supporters crammed the lobby of the Grand Park Hotel in Ramallah, nervously smoking cigarettes and chatting on cell phones with relatives in Gaza. Officials said at least 50 Fatah leaders and top commanders from Gaza were in Ramallah.

Everyone seemed to have a terrifying tale.

No looking back

"God knows how I escaped death," said a former doctor for the Fatah-allied Presidential Guard whose car came under fire when he fled the hospital where he worked. He would give only his first name, Medhat, saying he feared for his safety.

Abu Nada and Medhat said they still held some hope of returning to Gaza one day, but many others said they would never go back.

"I don't want to live under <u>Hamas</u> and I don't trust anyone now," said Ahmed Sawan, a 27-year-old officer from the Preventive Security service.

"When you see your friends being killed in front of your eyes, when you see *Hamas* fighters killing the wounded, stopping ambulances, storming houses and security officers, this leads you to one thing: to get away," he said.

Sawan said his wife and mother remained in Gaza, and he had no idea when he might see them again. "What can I do?" he asked, then said he might settle in Ramallah or try to emigrate from the Palestinian areas altogether.

Except for several top Fatah commanders, <u>Hamas</u> has offered amnesty to their vanquished Fatah foes, but the pledges have done little to ease the fears of Fatah supporters.

Hundreds of Gazans flocked to the Erez crossing to Israel in hopes of fleeing the coastal strip Saturday, but most were turned back.

Shlomo Dror, an Israeli army spokesman, said the crossing was closed because of the sudden rush, and only a small number of humanitarian cases were being allowed to pass through.

"Suddenly we had 100 people come to the checkpoint to cross," Dror said. "So the crossing was shut, fearing a terrorist would arrive at the Israeli side."

Inside the crossing's terminal Saturday afternoon, around 120 former Fatah security officials, some with their families, crammed the concrete corridor leading from Gaza to Israel.

One woman arrived with a newborn baby, saying her husband was taken by *Hamas*. A man was wheeled in on a luggage trolley, his leg bandaged up to the thigh - the result of what he said was a gunshot wound.

One young man allowed to cross the border shouted "Bye, bye, Gaza," and waved as he walked through the covered walkway that leads to the Israeli side.

As the day progressed, more people crammed inside, and a fight broke out when some people accused a group of Bedouins of spying on them for <u>Hamas</u>. <u>Women</u> screamed, babies cried and men pushed each other in the narrow corridor.

Israeli troops fired in the air and used concussion grenades and tear gas to halt a rush on the terminal, said one witness, Abu Zawayda. He said he expected about 70 people to remain inside the building overnight, fearing for their safety if they left.

By midafternoon, a <u>Hamas</u> checkpoint was erected on the road leading to Erez. Six masked <u>Hamas</u> gunmen, dressed in blue police uniforms, stopped cars, checked for IDs and prevented people from going through.

One of the men said they were checking for wanted security officers and had detained some people for questioning.

"Today there are traitors belonging to the renegade group who are fleeing to the West Bank. The good people will have to suffer because of the bad people," he said.

The crossing waiting area on the Gaza side was looted. A donkey cart stood in the parking lot, piled with scrap metal, wires and tubes. The gate was a bare skeleton. Tin sheets had been stripped from the roof, and electrical wires were ripped out.

No looking back

Associated Press writer Diaa Hadid at the Erez crossing contributed to this report.

Load-Date: June 17, 2007



Gazans Adjust to Power Shift as New Rulers Revel in Their Victory

The New York Times

June 20, 2007 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

Length: 1117 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Dateline: GAZA, June 19

Body

Muhammad al-Borniah, 23, shook a little on Tuesday as he showed off the tiny cell, No. 13, where he spent five days in January as a prisoner of the Palestinian Preventive Security, the elite Fatah force that dealt with subversion.

"I felt then that I was dead, that I would never come out of there," Mr. Borniah said, his voice wavering. Then he threw back his shoulders. "Now," he said, dressed in his uniform of the <u>Hamas</u> military wing, the Qassam Brigades, with two automatic rifles over his shoulders, "now I feel victory."

Mr. Borniah was arrested at his mosque by Fatah gunmen, in a series of tit-for-tat kidnappings between the two Palestinian factions, part of the cycle of vengeance that culminated last week in the routing of Fatah and the military takeover of this impoverished coastal strip by *Hamas*.

Outside of the Preventive Security compound, the Qassam Brigades, Gaza's new security force, patrolled what once was Fatah's center of power, feared by every <u>Hamas</u> member. They showed off in their new Japanese trucks and Jeep Grand Cherokees, seized from Fatah.

It was here that many *Hamas* leaders were beaten and tortured.

Now, in post-revolutionary Gaza, the place is trashed and looted, toilets and tiles ripped away, offices emptied of computers, furniture, light fixtures, doors and electric wiring. Bits of plastic plumbing dot the courtyard, mixed with broken glass, burned files, the charred manual to a computer and the melted paper tray of a photocopier.

A green <u>Hamas</u> flag flies over the building, a tourist site for <u>Hamas</u> members and their families. Um Omran came to see where her son had been tortured. She said he was killed in 2003 by Fatah. Her husband's brother had also been held there. He was Adnan al-Ghul, the man credited with inventing the first Qassam rocket in 2001, a weapon that **Hamas** has used to terrorize Israeli cities like Sderot. He was killed by the Israelis in 2004.

"We're all Qassam in our family, the <u>women</u> and the men," Ms. Omran said. "I wanted to see this place where my son was tortured." Asked if she was ashamed by the bloodletting among Palestinians, she said: "Fatah pushed us toward this."

But *Hamas*'s victory has left many Gazans feeling vulnerable and afraid.

Gazans Adjust to Power Shift as New Rulers Revel in Their Victory

Ghada, 50, a Palestinian Christian, is afraid to go outside. When she does, "You have all these men suddenly in the street with these long beards, and they look at you in surprise, from up to down, and their look is, like, why are you like this?" Several times, young men have told her she should be killed for not wearing a head covering.

Ghada, who asked that her last name not be used, and who works for an Arab consulate here, now will only take a taxi to her office. On Sunday, the Latin Church and Rosary Sisters School were ransacked and looted, with crosses and Bibles destroyed. <u>Hamas</u> leaders condemned the attack and denied responsibility, but the small Christian community here is anxious.

"Many of us are thinking about leaving Gaza for the West Bank once the crossings are open," Ghada said. Then she said angrily, "I can't leave my home -- why should I leave it?"

A moment later, she said, "But I may leave for a time until the situation is more clear."

The Palestinian infighting has shamed everyone, she said.

"Look at how <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah fought each other, and they're both Palestinian and both Muslim," she said. "If they do this to each other, what can they do to others? Now it's to the advantage of <u>Hamas</u> to make it calm, but afterward we don't know what they're up to."

In another recent attack also condemned by the <u>Hamas</u> leadership, a statue of the Unknown Soldier, a symbol of Palestine, was removed from a Gaza square and smashed. Some Muslims believe that statuary, like portraiture, is forbidden.

There are other fears. A member of the Preventive Security Force, who asked not be identified, is in hiding, not trusting *Hamas*'s assertions that no harm will come to him.

Tahani Skaik, a well-known painter here who also works for the Ministry of Agriculture, is afraid she will be fired from her job.

"There's so much we don't know," she said, shopping with her husband to stock up on staples like rice, flour, cooking oil and noodles, which are all running short because of the closing of the crossings in and out of Israel. "Everything is very vague," she said. "In a way, the day is darker than the night. There is no feeling of safety."

When she left her office on Tuesday, she said, "I took home all my personal stuff."

Ms. Skaik, 50, wears a head scarf, but her family has been affiliated with Fatah. Their lives have bounced around the region: they fled to Kuwait when Israel conquered Gaza in 1967, then fled Kuwait when Saddam Hussein invaded to come back to Gaza. "And now Palestinians are fighting a war among themselves," she said. "This hurts us the most."

She paints nationalist pictures of Palestine. Asked if a Palestinian state seemed any closer now, her face collapsed. "I feel now it's far away," she said. "As a Palestinian I feel very empty."

A shopkeeper, Hazen Hassouni, 36, said he was running very short on supplies of rice and potatoes, sugar, milk, yogurt and cheese. He is not happy with the <u>Hamas</u> victory, but agrees with their edict not to raise prices due to shortages. Cigarettes, however, have gone up 30 percent to more than \$3 a pack, a large sum for Gaza.

He listens to the radio for news, but Fatah journalists at its two radio stations have fled, leaving only <u>Hamas</u> radio and television and the satellite channels. Palestinian television, run by Fatah, has no office here now, but broadcasts from Ramallah, in the West Bank. While few Gazans used to watch it, more do now, people say, just to hear Fatah's view of the news.

Asked if the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, can restore his authority here, Mr. Hassouni laughed. "Abu Mazen?" he asked incredulously, using a common name for Mr. Abbas. "How? He's gone."

Gazans Adjust to Power Shift as New Rulers Revel in Their Victory

Inside Mr. Abbas's presidential compound here, near the beach, a mural of Yasir Arafat and Mr. Abbas is scarred, with chips of painted brick shot away by rifle rounds. At the gate of the compound, to show some respect, is one of the only Palestinian flags to be seen today in Gaza City.

But there are two green <u>Hamas</u> flags on the gate, too, and one of them is placed higher than the Palestinian one.

Just outside, a convoy of armored white United Nations jeeps waited. Suddenly two Jeep Cherokees with police lights, now manned by the Qassam Brigades, arrived to escort them. Sirens wailing, tires screeching, the new rulers of Gaza pulled out into the street, to make sure that their foreign guests felt secure.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photos: Men in the Qassam Brigades displayed blindfolds yesterday in a jail where members of <u>Hamas</u> were tortured and imprisoned by Fatah.

Members of the Qassam Brigades, <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing and Gaza's new security force, prayed yesterday at the Preventive Security building.(Photographs by Tyler Hicks/The New York Times)

Load-Date: June 20, 2007



Talks aim to secure release of Israeli soldiers in 'swap'

The Irish Times

November 2, 2006 Thursday

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Section: WORLD; Other World Stories; Pg. 11

Length: 467 words

Byline: Michael Jansen

Body

MIDDLE EAST: Mediated discussions involving <u>Hamas</u>, Hizbullah and Israel have been proceeding in parallel - with the aim of securing the release of three Israeli soldiers, captured last summer by Palestinian and Lebanese fighters, in exchange for Arab prisoners held by Israel.

<u>Hamas</u> representatives left Cairo yesterday after two days of talks with Egyptian officials on a prisoner exchange and the formation of a Palestinian national unity government.

The delegation, headed by Imad al-Alami, the group's delegate in Damascus, met Egyptian intelligence chief Oman Suleiman, who has been trying to secure an agreement on prisoners for the past three months.

<u>Hamas</u> is demanding 1,000 Palestinian detainees, including long-term prisoners, <u>women</u> and minors, as the price of freeing Gilad Shalit, seized by Palestinian guerrillas on June 25th on the Gaza border. <u>Hamas</u> holds that once Cpl Shalit is released to a third party, Israel must free a substantial number of the 9,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails while the rest could be released later.

After a meeting with Egyptian foreign minister Ahmad Abu Gheit, Israeli Arab legislator Ahmad Tibi said substantial differences remain between <u>Hamas</u> and Israel on terms for a prisoner swap, although there was a good chance of reaching a deal soon. The head of <u>Hamas</u>'s politburo, Khaled Mishaal, plans to travel to Cairo once an agreement is near.

But a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman warned that Israel's ongoing military action in Gaza could have a "negative influence" on the negotiations.

This is unlikely. <u>Hamas</u> seeks to conclude this deal to clear the way for a "hudna", a 10-year ceasefire during which Palestinians and Israelis would have a quiet period to negotiate a permanent settlement.

<u>Hamas</u> has dispatched spokesmen to European capitals to promote this offer and the Washington Post yesterday carried an article on the subject by the prime minister Ismail Haniyeh's senior political adviser, Ahmad Yusif. Mr Haniyeh is expected to discuss a "hudna" during a tour of regional capitals later this month.

Meanwhile Hizbullah secretary general Hassan Nasrallah announced that UN-sponsored talks on a prisoner exchange between his organisation and Israel are taking place.

"They are serious negotiations . . . We have reached the stage of exchanging ideas, or more accurately, exchanging conditions."

Talks aim to secure release of Israeli soldiers in 'swap'

This was the first indication that negotiations are in train. It is widely assumed that the go-between is a German intelligence team which concluded a deal in 2004 for the hand-over of the bodies of three Israeli servicemen and an Israeli businessman seized by Hizbullah in 2000 in exchange for Lebanese and Palestinians imprisoned by Israel.

A major obstacle is Hizbullah's demand for the release of Samir Kuntar, who killed two Israelis during a 1979 raid into northern Israel.

Load-Date: November 2, 2006



Rice to visit Middle East

Irish News

January 6, 2007 Saturday

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Section: Pg. 21

Length: 349 words

Body

Violence threatened to spiral out of control in the Middle East after <u>Hamas</u> gunmen killed a senior Palestinian security commander and four of his guards at his Gaza home and Israeli forces killed four people in the West Bank during an arrest raid, drawing harsh criticism from Egypt's president. Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah and Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> met early yesterday in Gaza and agreed to work to defuse the tensions and pull back their forces, Mr Haniyeh told reporters. "We are going to end all armed displays in the streets," he said. It also emerged on Thursday that US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will travel to the Middle East later this month to try to promote peacemaking, senior European diplomat Javier Solana said.

Asked if Ms Rice was optimistic about prospects for peacemaking between Israel and the Palestinians, Solana told reporters: "I don't think that optimism is the word.

"We have to stick to the word realism."

The body of Colonel Mohammed Ghayeb, chief of the Preventive Security Service in northern Gaza, riddled with bullets and mutilated by stab wounds, was found in his home in northern Gaza on Thursday after a daylong battle with *Hamas* gunmen.

The killing of the senior officer was likely to spark reprisal raids.

In several places in the West Bank last night, Fatah militants attacked *Hamas* offices and vehicles.

One *Hamas* activist was wounded, Palestinian security officials said.

Ghayeb was on the phone to Palestine TV just moments before his death and appealed for help as his house came under attack. "They are killers," he said of the *Hamas* gunmen.

"They are targeting the house, children are dying, they are bleeding. For God's sake, send an ambulance, we want an ambulance, somebody move."

The battle outside the house raged for much of the day and killed four of Ghayeb's guards and a *Hamas* gunman. About three dozen people, including eight children, were also wounded.

During the standoff outside Mr Ghayeb's home in Beit Lahiya, dozens of <u>women</u> rushed into the streets in protest, chanting:

"Spare the bullets, shame, shame."

Rice to visit Middle East

Load-Date: January 8, 2007



Gaza city erupts into violence

Aberdeen Press and Journal May 17, 2007 Thursday

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Section: Pg. 20 Length: 440 words

Body

The sounds of gunfire and explosions enveloped Gaza City yesterday, killing at least 21 people in widespread violence.

The latest fighting between the rival <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah factions turned the densely populated seaside city into an urban battle zone, putting terrified civilians increasingly at risk.

Stray bullets damaged apartment buildings, gunmen opened fire at a group of protesters, and in one chilling incident, <u>Hamas</u> militants set fire to the apartment of a <u>female</u> Fatah lawmaker, beating the woman and her two children before setting their home ablaze.

<u>Hamas</u> also targeted Israel, firing barrages of home-made rockets for a second day in an apparent attempt to drag Israel into the fighting.

One Israeli was seriously wounded in the southern town of Sderot, rescue officials said. Israel responded with two airstrikes on *Hamas* targets, killing five people.

Later a rocket hit the town's electricity transformer, causing a brief blackout.

At an emergency meeting, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's Security Cabinet decided against a large-scale reprisal, but authorised the army to step up its attacks on rocket squads. "Israel cannot continue to restrain itself when its citizens are being hit and therefore decided on a severe and serious response," Mr Olmert's office said.

The Palestinian infighting has threatened to destroy the fragile unity government established in March by <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah and pushed the rivals ever closer to all-out civil war.

A main goal of the alliance was to halt months of factional violence.

However, the unity deal never addressed a key area of dispute - control over Palestinian security forces.

The latest round of violence erupted early this week after President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah deployed thousands of police to halt a crime wave in Gaza without first consulting with <u>Hamas</u>.

A total of 45 people have died, most of them Fatah men, and dozens have been wounded.

Mr Abbas will go to Gaza from the West Bank today, according to aide Yasser Abed Rabbo.

Gaza city erupts into violence

He said the president would meet Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, of <u>Hamas</u>. One option was declaring a state of emergency, Abed Rabbo said.

Mr Abbas spoke by phone yesterday morning to <u>Hamas</u> leader Khaled Mashaal and the two agreed to work to end the violence.

The 45th birthday of kidnapped BBC journalist Alan Johnston will be marked by a series of events around the world.

The TV reporter, originally from Argyll, was seized at gunpoint on his way home in Gaza City on March 12.

He now faces spending today's birthday in captivity,

66 days on from his abduction.

The BBC said its news broadcasts would featuring interviews and birthday wishes from family members.

Load-Date: May 18, 2007



GAZA RESIDENTS HUDDLE INDOORS AS FIGHTING ENTERS FOURTH DAY

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (Pennsylvania)

May 17, 2007 Thursday

SOONER EDITION

Copyright 2007 P.G. Publishing Co.

Section: WORLD; Pg. A-4

Length: 347 words

Byline: STEVEN ERLANGER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Gaza City was shuttered yesterday as gunmen took over rooftops and top-floor apartments with most everyone else huddled fearfully indoors on the fourth day of factional Palestinian fighting that is drawing in the Israeli military.

At least 19 Palestinians were killed yesterday -- more than 40 have been killed over the past four days -- in fighting between Fatah and *Hamas*, as their unity government fractures and rage rises on both sides.

"We want this to end, because what's happening endangers not just the unity government but the Palestinian nation and cause," said Saeb Erekat, a Palestinian negotiator and aide to President Mahmoud Abbas.

<u>Hamas</u> attacked symbols of Fatah power in Gaza, including the home of the chief security commander. He was not there, but six bodyguards were killed.

Israel carried out a helicopter assault on a <u>Hamas</u> command center in the southern Gazan town of Rafah, killing at least four <u>Hamas</u> men and wounding at least 30, five of them seriously. It was retaliation for dozens of rockets launched from Gaza by <u>Hamas</u> militants at the Israeli town of Sderot, where two <u>women</u> were wounded, one seriously.

The increase in <u>Hamas</u> attacks, perhaps intended to prompt Israeli retaliation that could reunify Palestinians, presented a political problem for Israel, under pressure to respond but conscious of the limited efficiency of military force to stop rocket fire.

Last summer, facing a similar situation with the Lebanese militia Hezbollah, Israel retaliated with weeks of heavy air raids, artillery and thousands of troops. But rocket fire from Hezbollah did not stop, and Israel's attacks ended up strengthening Hezbollah and weakening the Lebanese government that it hoped to strengthen. The same could happen in Gaza, where Israel hopes that Fatah will prevail.

Late yesterday, the Israeli government announced an end to its moratorium on assassinations of Palestinian guerrilla leaders in Gaza, as part of what it called a "severe and harsh" response to the rockets. But it said it would not let the *Hamas* militants who were launching rockets set the agenda.

Graphic

PHOTO: Saif Dahlah/Agence France-Presse/Getty Images: A mother grabs her child to stop him from going into the streets as the Israeli soldiers carry out a search operation in the village of Atell near the West Bank city of Tulkarem yesterday.

Load-Date: May 17, 2007



Grenade slams into PM's home

Herald Sun (Australia)

June 13, 2007 Wednesday

FIRST Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 36

Length: 357 words

Byline: Sarah El Deeb, AP

Body

GAZA CITY -- A rocket-propelled grenade hit the home of Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh yesterday, in what *Hamas* said was an attempted assassination of their leader.

The house, in the Shati refugee camp on the outskirts of Gaza City, was damaged but Mr Haniyeh and his family were not hurt.

The attack came in the bloodiest 24-hour period yet in the latest round of <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah fighting, which erupted again last month.

Seventeen were killed on Monday and yesterday, including several in street executions, as hospitals turned into battlegrounds.

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, on websites and in text messages, called for the execution of each other's leaders.

The latest fighting disrupted final exams for university and high school students. The three universities called off yesterday's final exams.

High schools tried to move exam centres, said Deputy Minister of Education Mohammed Abu Shkeir.

On Monday gunmen, apparently from <u>Hamas</u>, laid siege to the house of Jamal Abu al-Jediyan, a senior Fatah official, dragged him outside and killed him, officials said. Medics said he was hit with 45 bullets.

Mr Jediyan was top aide to Fatah strongman Mohammed Dahlan.

Mr Jediyan's brother was also killed, by two shots from close range, hospital officials said.

Two others were killed in battles late yesterday in northern Gaza, security and hospital officials said.

The frustrated head of the Egyptian security delegation, Maj-Gen Burhan Hamad, who has been trying to negotiate a truce, told Palestinian TV he would call the people on to the streets to protest if the two rivals did not agree to stand down.

Earlier yesterday, three <u>women</u> and a child were killed when <u>Hamas</u> militants attacked the home of a senior Fatah security official with mortars and grenades.

Grenade slams into PM's home

The gunmen seized Hassan Abu Rabie and killed his 14-year-old son and three <u>women</u> in the house, hospital officials said.

A bloody clash took place in the northern town of Beit Hanoun.

Fatah and *Hamas* gunmen exchanged fire near the hospital, killing a *Hamas* supporter.

The battle then moved to the hospital where three men, a father and two sons from the Fatah-allied al-Masri clan, were shot dead.

Load-Date: June 12, 2007



Palestinian premier blocked at border

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

December 15, 2006 Friday

Copyright 2006 The Deseret News Publishing Co.

Length: 876 words

Byline: Joel Greenberg Chicago Tribune

Body

JERUSALEM -- Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> was stranded for hours at Egypt's border with the Gaza Strip on Thursday after Israel prevented him from entering with tens of millions of dollars in aid, setting off gun battles at the border crossing between <u>Hamas</u> militants and guards loyal to President Mahmoud Abbas.

Haniyeh later crossed into the Gaza Strip without the money amid continued shooting as <u>Hamas</u> gunmen rampaged through the border terminal at Rafah, destroying computers, surveillance cameras and furniture, witnesses said.

More than two dozen people, including Haniyeh's son, were wounded in the fighting that sent terrified travelers diving for cover while European border monitors withdrew.

The mayhem was the latest outburst of violence between <u>Hamas</u> and Abbas' Fatah movement since the collapse of talks to form a national unity government and threats by Abbas to call new elections, and it raised fresh concerns about a slide toward civil war.

Haniyeh had cut short a trip abroad and was returning to the Gaza Strip in an attempt to defuse the crisis.

But Israel, acting on information that Haniyeh was carrying tens of millions of dollars raised abroad, alerted the Egyptian authorities and European monitors at the terminal, demanding that the crossing be closed, according to an Israeli security official and Maria Telleria, the spokeswoman for the monitors.

"This is money to strengthen the <u>Hamas</u>, it could find its way to terror, and Israel was not going to allow that," said the Israeli official, who declined to be named.

<u>Hamas</u> militants, angered by the news that Haniyeh's entry was being blocked, stormed the terminal, and a gunfight erupted with members of Abbas' Presidential Guard, who are responsible for securing the crossing. Travelers ran for cover with their luggage, and <u>women</u> and children hid behind walls and taxis, according to reports from the scene.

<u>Hamas</u> militants, chanting "God is Great, let's liberate this place," took over the arrival hall, and border guards escorted the European monitors to safety, The Associated Press reported. Two loud explosions were heard as militants blew a hole in a border wall about a half-mile from the terminal. According to some reports, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen also fired toward Egypt, drawing fire from Egyptian border guards.

Palestinian premier blocked at border

The Presidential Guard later regained control of the terminal, and the European monitors returned to enable Haniyeh to cross. A short while later the monitors withdrew again as <u>Hamas</u> militants surged back into the terminal and shooting resumed.

Under an agreement mediated by the Egyptians, the money brought by Haniyeh was to be deposited in an Egyptian bank in a Palestinian Authority account, Telleria said.

A Palestinian official said Haniyeh was carrying \$35 million he raised during his trip, which included stops in Syria, Iran and Sudan.

<u>Hamas</u> officials have brought in more than \$50 million in cash this year through the Rafah crossing, after sanctions imposed by Israel and Western donor nations have left the Palestinian government unable to pay salaries to its 165,000 employees. The donors are demanding that the <u>Hamas</u> government recognize Israel, renounce violence and accept previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

The chaos at the border tested an agreement brokered last year by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that gave Palestinians authority over the Rafah crossing after four decades of Israeli control. The border can operate only with the presence of European monitors, and video cameras and computers transmit data on entering travelers to a liaison office manned by Israeli, Palestinian and European representatives.

Telleria, the monitors' spokesman, said that "significant damage" had been done to equipment at the border terminal in Thursday's clashes and that it was not immediately clear whether it would reopen Friday.

Earlier Thursday, Palestinian intelligence officers arrested a militant in Gaza City in connection with the killing of the three sons of a Fatah-linked officer, who were shot Monday on their way to school. The militant, Hisham Mukhaimar, is from the Popular Resistance Committees, a group linked to <u>Hamas</u>.

Militants from the Popular Resistance Committees retaliated by kidnapping an intelligence officer, saying he would be released in return for their colleague.

On Wednesday a <u>Hamas</u> militant was shot outside a courthouse in the Gaza Strip town of Khan Yunis, an attack <u>Hamas</u> blamed on Fatah.

About 1,000 Fatah supporters marched to Abbas' house in Gaza City on Thursday, demanding that he take action to end the soaring violence. Abbas, who was at his headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah, is expected to outline his plan for new elections in a speech Saturday.

In other developments, Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian in the West Bank village of Kafr a-Dik during a stone-throwing clash. The army said soldiers opened fire at a man preparing to hurl a cinderblock at them from the top of a staircase.

In Nablus, Israeli undercover troops shot and killed two militants suspected of organizing attacks on Israelis. Palestinians said the soldiers ambushed the men in a refugee camp. The army said the militants were shot after they emerged armed from their car when they were stopped.

Load-Date: December 15, 2006



Old women step forward as 'martyrs': A 70-year-old blew herself up in a Hamas attack. She may be just the first of many elderly recruits

The Observer (London)

December 3, 2006

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The Observer

Section: OBSERVER FOREIGN PAGES; Pg. 37

Length: 1023 words

Byline: Sandra Jordan, Beit Hanoun, Gaza

Body

IN THE centre of Beit Hanoun, there is nothing left of the 800-year-old mosque but the minaret. It looks like a lighthouse stranded in a sea of rubble. People whose homes were demolished during the latest Israeli army incursion sit on plastic chairs around bonfires. At night they bunk down with the neighbours. One of them is Watfa Kafarna.

'I saw the Israeli soldiers eye-to-eye,' she said. 'They took my four-year-old grandson, Mahadi, who has Down's syndrome. They shook him and yelled: "Where are the guns?" Now he is traumatised and wets the bed every night.'

Not his own bed - the Kafarna family is homeless, living off the charity of friends. Tears run from Watfa's eyes as she looks at her son, daughter-in-law and grandchild huddled around a brazier. Her husband, Diab, shuffles across the ruins towards his wife. 'Bossa!' he says, 'A kiss!' In a highly unconventional move, Diab kisses his wife on the mouth. 'She is my heart, my eyes, my light. We have lost our house but not each other.'

During the incursion, Israeli soldiers detained all men aged 16 to 40, including Watfa and Diab's sons and grandsons. The army targeted the mosque, attempting to arrest militants hiding there.

The <u>women</u> put up their own resistance, gathering as human shields around the mosque to help the militants escape. 'I am 72, says Watfa, 'but by doing this I felt 20, young and useful and ready to act.' She pulls off her long veil and holds it high in her right hand. 'I waved my hijab as a white flag and prayed with the other <u>women</u> in front of the holy mosque. But the Israelis continued to destroy it.'

Two <u>women</u> were killed by the Israeli Defence Force that day. Watfa was bruised, as was 70-year-old Fatma Najar, hit by a bulldozer. Three weeks later, Najar blew herself up near Israeli soldiers, wounding two. In Gaza she is seen as a heroine. 'If the Israelis came to my house to gun down my children and I had a belt, I would do the same,' says Watfa. 'The woman is the biggest loser here,' says Khola, a neighbour, standing on the remains of a kitchen where flour is mixed with pulverised masonry. Two hundred homes were destroyed in Beit Hanoun. 'Fatma Najar, an old woman, did what many people don't have the guts to do. If you go back and research Fatma,' says Khola, 'you will see her home was destroyed on top of her head, her sons jailed, her grandson killed.'

Old women step forward as 'martyrs': A 70-year-old blew herself up in a Hamas attack. She may be just the first of many elderly recruits

'We want to believe in peace, but how can we when the warplanes still fly over our heads every night,' asks Watfa, 'making our grandchildren cry and wet themselves? When there are still tank movements on the border? I can't believe there will be peace.'

Najar's family heard of her attack on the radio. 'We thought it must be another Fatma Najar,' said her son, Jihad, 35. 'It never occurred to us it could have been my mother. Then the crowds started to arrive and we knew it was true. We had mixed feelings, sadness at her irreplaceable loss. But pride too.'

There is a huge shaheed - 'martyr' - poster of Najar on her house. It is shocking to see an old woman carrying an M16. Some of her 70 grandchildren and great-grandchildren play beneath the picture. Israa, six, wears a pink top with 'Happy Childhood' embroidered on it. 'My grandmother's gone to heaven. Because she shot the Israelis,' she says.

The funeral tent is empty now, the three days of official mourning over. On the first evening, men from the Qassam Brigades, the military wing of <u>Hamas</u>, arrived. Her son Inam said: 'They told us: "Your mother has been asking to do this for two years. We said no. Finally she said, if you don't give me a belt I will go anyway and get killed and my blood will be on your hands. We gave in".'

Other old <u>women</u> now want to become suicide bombers. The family talks of why she did it. Perhaps it was her grandson's death. 'My son, Adil, was 18 when he was killed,' says Fathiya, 52, Najar's eldest daughter. 'He was throwing stones at the Israelis.' Then there was Fathiya's other son, Sha'aban. He attacked an Israeli soldier with a knife. He was shot 72 times, lost a leg and is paralysed. The family show a photo of Fatma, a sweet-faced woman in a white cotton scarf. .

Najar was a religious woman, involved with mosque committees and close to memorising the Koran. It was only after her death, her family discovered she had been working for <u>Hamas</u>: 'They told us she had carried food, water, ammunition to the resistance at the front line. We had no idea.' The night before her suicide operation, Najar went to visit all of her children and grandchildren. 'But she was always so good to us,' says Inam. 'As she left me for the last time, she looked back in a way that made me wonder, but then she was gone.'

'On the day she acted like it was a normal day. She baked the bread in the clay oven. She took a shower, put on a new dress and went out,' said Jihad.

'I think the final straw was the Beit Hanoun massacre [a family of 17 killed at dawn when Israeli shells hit their house]. Mother went to the family's home and asked the <u>women</u>: "Why leave it to your sons to die? If Allah allows, I will become a martyr." They said: "You think they will take an old lady like you?"

A fortnight later she was a suicide bomber, injuring two Israelis, decapitating herself. This weekend <u>Hamas</u> held a ceremony in Beit Hanoun, in memory of the 140 Palestinians killed in November. Thousands attended, waving <u>Hamas</u> flags. The mayor, Dr Nazek el-Kafarna, made a speech in honour of Najar: 'This old lady looked at the houses destroyed and the trees uprooted. She looked at how our people had been humiliated. She took her soul in her hand and rushed to her martyrdom.'

Huda Haim, a <u>Hamas</u> PLC member, believes Najar's act begins a new culture. 'We know behind the Israeli leaders there are decision-makers studying the behaviour of the Palestinians. Fatma told them they can't end the Palestinian issue with violence.'

The audience was thronged with <u>women</u>, many elderly, many clinging to photographs of their dead. 'We all want to be like Fatma,' they shouted.

'I am happy about the ceasefire,' says Zaifa. 'But if the Israelis come back, they will see what we will do, we will be like Fatma Najar.'

Old women step forward as 'martyrs': A 70-year-old blew herself up in a Hamas attack. She may be just the first of many elderly recruits

Load-Date: December 4, 2006



Abbas election call raises civil war fear

The Sunday Times (London)

December 17, 2006

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Section: OVERSEAS NEWS; News; Pg. 24

Length: 807 words

Byline: Reham Abd Al-Karim, Gaza

Body

THE Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas threw down a challenge to the government of the militant group *Hamas* yesterday by calling fresh elections, raising tensions that have already prompted warnings of civil war.

Abbas's announcement of presidential and parliamentary elections within three months came after a week of mounting violence on the streets and was denounced by <u>Hamas</u> as an attempted coup aimed at returning his Fatah movement to power.

<u>Hamas</u> leaders demanded his resignation and called for a protest demonstration after sunset prayers yesterday in Gaza City, the scene of growing bloodshed between the two sides.

Last night gunmen armed with rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons exchanged fire at Khan Yunis in southern Gaza. In Gaza City, thousands of <u>Hamas</u> supporters marched and 18 people were wounded in clashes between the political camps.

The developments threatened Tony Blair's attempt to launch a peace initiative on his tour of the Middle East, which is due to include a meeting with the Palestinian president.

Blair has indicated his preference for <u>Hamas</u> -whose refusal to recognise Israel has led to crushing sanctions -to join forces with Fatah in a government of national unity.

"The door is still open to <u>Hamas</u> at any point to come into a national unity government," Blair said last night. But he praised Abbas for "signalling his determination to move on without them (<u>Hamas</u>) if they are unwilling or unable to play a constructive part".

The prime minister added: "I think this is the moment for the international community to come behind him."

Abbas is taking a huge political gamble. Fatah is in disarray and he has previously said he would not run for president again. Marwan Barghouti, one of the leaders of the Palestinian uprising, is seen as his most likely heir, but remains in an Israeli jail.

It is by no means certain that Fatah would overturn the parliamentary majority won by <u>Hamas</u> 11 months ago. There is also the possibility that <u>Hamas</u> could boycott elections.

"We have a crisis. We have an authority with two heads. So what do we do? Bullets or ballots?" asked Saeb Erekat, a key Abbas aide. "Abu Mazen said ballots," he said, using Abbas's familiar name.

Abbas election call raises civil war fear

The announcement of elections was greeted by cheers and the honking of car horns by Fatah supporters in Gaza and the West Bank. But Palestinians remain deeply divided, with many saying in interviews yesterday that they feared an upsurge in violence.

"What was wrong with the last election?" asked Nadine, a Gaza student. "They haven't given this government a chance. This will lead us into civil war."

Tensions on the streets came to boiling point last week with an alarming upsurge in shootings and kidnappings. "I'm afraid of kidnapping every time we go out in the car," said a respected professional in Gaza. "I just try and keep the family at home."

The mood was symbolised in a demonstration outside Abbas's official residence against the murder of three boys, aged between six and nine, shot dead in a car taking them to school.

Alongside the white, blood-stained vehicle, which belonged to their father Colonel Baha Balousha, a senior Fatah security official, <u>women</u> have gathered all week to protest. Nadia Mohamed, one of the demonstrators, said: "We will not stand by and watch this slaughter any more. We'll keep on protesting until this bloodshed stops."

<u>Hamas</u> blamed Fatah for an assassination attempt on Ismail Haniyeh, the prime minister, after he returned to Gaza from a foreign fundraising mission. One of his bodyguards was killed and his son was injured. In renewed skirmishes at a mosque on Friday, 32 <u>Hamas</u> supporters were wounded in the West Bank city of Ramallah when Fatah gunmen opened fire.

"There are always new excuses for each side to act and react," said Talal Okal, a Palestinian political analyst. "I think the worst is yet to come as long as *Hamas* and Fatah continue to divide the street with their rivalry."

In an immediate step to prepare for the elections, Abbas announced that he was appointing new Fatah leaders to replace the discredited old guard who still tarnish the movement. Fatah officials said the party's younger leaders, who had long fought for a role in decision-making, would now be given their chance.

Abbas also said he had revived the Palestine Liberation Organisation's negotiating department, signalling he could pursue peace talks with Israel despite the political turmoil.

Israel and the West are eager to boost Abbas in his struggle with <u>Hamas</u>, but know they are largely powerless to influence events. They fear a full-scale civil war could spill over beyond the Palestinian territories, further destabilising the region and threatening not only Israel's security but moderate Arab states such as Egypt and Jordan, which Blair is trying to bolster.

Additional reporting: Larry Derfner, Tel Aviv

Load-Date: December 17, 2006



Bombing wounds 2 Israelis; Grandmother blows herself up in Gaza

The International Herald Tribune November 24, 2006 Friday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 5

Length: 489 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

In the first suicide bombing claimed by <u>Hamas</u> in nearly two years, a grandmother blew herself up Thursday near Israeli troops operating inside Gaza near the town of Beit Lahiya.

The soldiers, who had warning, threw a stun grenade toward the woman, who then detonated her explosive belt. Two soldiers were slightly wounded. The woman, identified as Fatima Omar Mahmud al-Najar, died. Her age was given as both 57 and 64. She was a mother of 9 and a grandmother of more than 40, according to Agence France-Presse.

She was shown on television in a so-called martyr's video, wearing a white veil, a bright green <u>Hamas</u> bandana and holding an automatic rifle.

The oldest daughter of the suicide bomber, Fathiya al-Najar, said that her son had been killed, her mother's house had been destroyed and that another grandson was in a wheelchair with an amputated leg. "She and I went to the mosque," she told reporters. "We were looking for martyrdom."

The <u>Hamas</u> military wing had threatened to resume suicide bombings in response to the Israeli shelling of houses in Beit Hanun two weeks ago. The shelling killed 19 people, most of them <u>women</u> and children, as they slept after what the Israelis said was a malfunctioning radar on the artillery cannon. Israeli Channel 10 television reported Thursday that Israel might pay compensation to the victims; Israel has regularly refused to pay compensation in the past to Palestinian victims of Israeli artillery errors.

<u>Hamas</u> was elected in January to lead the Palestinian Authority, and efforts continue to be made by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, to organize a unity government that would mean the resignation of the current <u>Hamas</u> administration.

<u>Hamas</u> is considered a terrorist organization by Israel, the United States and the European Union, and they have cut off funds to the *Hamas*-run Palestinian Authority.

A new government would be designed to allow funding to resume, and an exiled <u>Hamas</u> political official, Khaled Meshal, who seems to direct the <u>Hamas</u> military wing, was in Cairo Thursday discussing the issue with the Egyptians.

Bombing wounds 2 Israelis Grandmother blows herself up in Gaza

It was another bloody day in Gaza, with Israeli soldiers killing a commander of the militant group the Popular Resistance Committees in northern Gaza and a deputy.

Faik Abu al-Kamsan, Mahmoud al-Basiyuni and a third man were killed when an Israeli missile hit their car in the Jabalya refugee camp. The Israeli Army said the men had been involved in firing Qassam rockets into Israel both Wednesday and Thursday, and that there was a secondary explosion from the car. Two other Palestinians were reported to have died in armed clashes with Israeli troops. Another Palestinian, Muhammad Jarjawi, 20, was also killed.

At least seven Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded Thursday.

Some 1,000 Israeli soldiers are in northern Gaza in operations designed to try to stop Qassam rockets. At least five fell in Israel on Thursday, the Israeli Army said.

Load-Date: November 24, 2006



Racist rodent axed

MX (Australia)

May 10, 2007 Thursday

Melbourne Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 12

Length: 240 words

Body

FARFUR AWAY

The Palestinian government today ordered the shelving of a children's show on a *Hamas* television station in which a Mickey Mouse look-alike calls for Israel to be vanquished and Islam to "lead the world".

Tomorrow's Pioneers, which attracted complaints from Israeli groups, features a host, Farfur, dressed in a full body-suit to resemble Walt Disney's famous cartoon character.

He and a young *female* co-host instruct their young viewers on *Hamas*'s militant brand of Muslim piety.

"We will restore to this nation its glory, and we will liberate (Jerusalem mosque) Al-Aqsa, with Allah's will, and we will liberate the Muslim countries invaded by murderers," Farfur said in one show.

Following complaints by Israeli watchdog groups that attracted foreign scrutiny, Palestinian Information Minister Mustafa Barghouthi said he had ordered broadcasts of

Tomorrow's Pioneers halted so the content could be reviewed.

"I demanded that <u>Hamas</u> suspend the program and they have withdrawn it, because it was wrong to use a program directed at children to convey political messages," said Barghouthi, a political independent in the <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian government.

"Any media outlet that breaks Palestinian broadcasting law will be penalised by the Information Ministry," he said.

A <u>Hamas</u> official said the group's Al-Aqsa Television station was considering a possible change to the show's format.

Load-Date: May 10, 2007



Chaos at Gaza crossing as Fatah forces flee

Guardian.com June 18, 2007

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theguardian

Length: 583 words

Highlight: Hundreds of Palestinians were today trapped at one of the main crossing points out of the Gaza Strip,

hoping to escape through Israel to the West Bank.

Body

Hundreds of Palestinians were today trapped at one of the main crossing points out of the Gaza Strip, hoping to escape through Israel to the West Bank.

Israel's justice minister said the crowd should be allowed out, but so far the Erez crossing has remained closed, except to around 100 senior Fatah officials, who have been allowed out since <u>Hamas</u> seized control of Gaza last Thursday. Others have fled to Egypt.

The crowd of up to 300 people was made up mostly of young men, members of the Fatah-led security services who have been locked in fighting with <u>Hamas</u> gunmen for months. With them were dozens of <u>women</u> and children, some sleeping on the ground.

They sat in the long, concrete alley that leads to the heavily-guarded Israeli boundary. Israeli troops fired shots in the air from the Israeli side of the crossing, and Israeli tanks were positioned nearby on sandy hilltops inside Gaza.

Looters ransacked the Palestinian side of the crossing, which until last week was staffed by security officials from Fatah. Today, some even dug into the ground to try and steal electric cables.

Abu Iyad, 25, an intelligence officer with Fatah, was trapped inside the headquarters of the Palestinian intelligence agency in Gaza City last week when it was surrounded and attacked by <u>Hamas</u> fighters. He said he fled after the battle and arrived at the Erez crossing on Friday, where he has waited since.

"I know I'm wanted by <u>Hamas</u>," he said. "Like anyone who belongs to Fatah here I feel miserable. I can't move freely inside the Gaza Strip and I don't think I'll be able to go back to Gaza as long as the current situation lasts." He handed his regular identity card and military identity card to one man who was collecting names to pass to the Israelis to ask for permission to cross.

Some way before the Erez crossing, <u>Hamas</u> gunmen set up their own checkpoint. Every car is stopped and searched and Fatah members are turned back. To reach Erez, Fatah officials must skirt around the crossing to avoid being searched. Several times the <u>Hamas</u> gunmen fired into the air near the crowds.

One of the men in the crowd, who gave his name as Yazan, was a member of the Fatah presidential guard who were trapped in a key headquarters in Gaza City when it was attacked by *Hamas* fighters last week. He escaped,

Chaos at Gaza crossing as Fatah forces flee

went to the home of a friend who lived nearby, changed his clothes and went to Erez with his wife and two children. *Hamas* fighters later looted his apartment, he said.

"I've called my leaders and some Israelis that I know, but up to now they haven't done anything except give us promises," he said.

"I can't go back to Gaza City. <u>Hamas</u> is there and I'm wanted. You can't imagine how I feel. I've been building myself up, and now everything is gone."

Also in the crowd was a woman, who gave her name as Nora, and her three children. Her husband was already in the West Bank and her cousin was killed in the latest round of fighting. "My children are scared, but are they guilty?" she said.

Israel's justice minister, Daniel Friedman, said the crowds should be allowed to reach the West Bank, just 30 miles away. "There's no reason Israel shouldn't treat them humanely and permit them simply to flee," he said.

But other Israeli officials said the crossing was closed because there was no longer an authority in Gaza to coordinate with. "There's a <u>Hamas</u> administration now without links to Israel. Those we worked with in the past are not in touch with us any more," said Shlomo Dror, a defence ministry liaison officer.

Load-Date: June 18, 2007



Israel is not the problem

The Toronto Star June 29, 2007 Friday

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Section: LETTER; Pg. AA07

Length: 356 words

Body

Clark offers precedent for Harper

Column, June 26

Linda McQuaig's column was depressingly familiar in that simple facts were twisted, holding Israel responsible for all of the ills of the Middle East while declining to hold Palestinians accountable for their own voting decisions and consequential misfortunes.

As Prime Minister Stephen Harper has stated time and again, his support of Israel is based on the fact that Israel and Canada are democracies, both fight for human rights and both fight terrorism.

<u>Hamas</u> is a terror-based organization whose objective is two-fold: the total destruction of the State of Israel and the establishment of a fundamentalist Islamic republic. We are not dealing here with objections by Israel or the West; we are dealing with the fundamental approach and biased declarations of **Hamas** leaders.

Because of this, it is not only Israel and Canada that refuse to indulge in a dialogue with <u>Hamas</u>, but all of Europe, the UN and a few Arab countries as well.

It may be of interest that the "democratic" <u>Hamas</u> does not hold liberal views. What is the precise status of <u>women</u> under the <u>Hamas</u> regime and how does it approach homosexuals? The first thing the <u>Hamas</u> "fighters for democracy" did was destroy, burn and desecrate crosses and religious scriptures in Christian churches in Gaza.

It's necessary to correct some inaccuracies in the column. First, the Israeli government decided in 2004 to build a security fence - not a security wall - for the sole purpose of preventing the entry into Israel of Palestinian terrorists. We acknowledge the living conditions of some Palestinians became more difficult as a result of this fence, but the importance of saving lives far exceeds the certain discomforts imposed on some Palestinians. Second, Israel did not conquer Palestine in 1967. Israel defended its existence in 1967 following the declaration of its neighbours to destroy Israel once and for all.

The only country that has engaged in a dialogue with the Palestinians is Israel, at all times declaring Israel's willingness to assist in establishing a Palestinian state.

Ya'acov Brosh, Israeli Consul General, Toronto

Load-Date: June 29, 2007



Palestinian campuses show infighting's cost

The Philadelphia Inquirer February 19, 2007 Monday

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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Found on Philly . com

Section: NATIONAL; Pg. A02

Length: 668 words

Byline: Dion Nissenbaum, McClatchy Newspapers

Body

The smell of charred books drifted through the library as dozens of students gingerly stepped through candlelit hallways littered with shattered glass.

Young <u>women</u> in head scarves whispered as they peered into the ravaged rooms of the Islamic University's main library, where they once studied English, math and science.

"I can't recognize it," said math student Rihan Riha, 20, as she stood on a pile of rubble and took cell-phone pictures of the wreckage. "It's totally destroyed."

Palestinians have grown accustomed to Israeli air strikes on government buildings, police stations, and even this <u>Hamas</u>-allied campus, but this attack came from within. Months of violent clashes between the extremist Islamic group <u>Hamas</u> and the secular Fatah party battered the Gaza Strip and the Palestinian universities there before the leaders of the two groups agreed to form a coalition government.

But the attacks on competing colleges allied with the two factions are visible reminders of how deep the divisions between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah run, how fragile their power-sharing deal may be, and what could happen if the two return to open warfare.

Students said they were worried that, even with a unity government, the wounds from the clashes would hardly have time to heal before new battles began.

"I'm not very optimistic about what will happen," Riha said. "This shows that some people in Fatah want to destroy any kind of agreement."

Sitting in his office overlooking his damaged 25-acre campus, Western-trained Islamic University president Kamalain Shaath said the assault did more than damage buildings; it undermined the Palestinians' drive to end decades of stateless poverty and depression.

"The most prominent achievement of the Palestinian people in the last 40 years has been the establishment of universities in Gaza and the West Bank," Shaath said. "In fact, they are the cornerstone for the whole society, and

Palestinian campuses show infighting's cost

to have someone attack this university - or any university - I think it is shooting his own heart. The heart of Palestinian society."

Islamic University came under attack this month, at the peak of the Fatah-<u>Hamas</u> clashes, which ended with nearly three dozen people dead and scores wounded.

Forces loyal to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas stormed the university after claiming that <u>Hamas</u> was using its campus as a launching pad for mortar attacks.

Virtually every building, save the campus mosque, was set ablaze. Thousands of books in the central library were destroyed. The student union hall was ransacked. Offices across campus were torched.

On the walls of one charred meeting hall, angry <u>Hamas</u> supporters left no doubt whom they blamed for the damage.

"Abbas and Dahlan to the depths of the hell," wrote one Palestinian, referring to the Palestinian Authority president and Mohammed Dahlan, the Fatah security chief in Gaza who is blamed for stoking the factional fighting there.

Islamic University has long served as an intellectual incubator for <u>Hamas</u>. Virtually every major leader of <u>Hamas</u> has taught or studied at the university, and the Israeli air force attacked an empty university building in July after claiming that <u>Hamas</u> had used the campus to plan attacks against Israel.

The recent Fatah attack was the worst on the school, now a respected university with 17,000 students. It will take months to repair, and campus leaders are preparing to teach in outdoor tents.

The assault on Islamic University was followed by an attack on a smaller university affiliated with Fatah. Masked gunmen believed to be with <u>Hamas</u> attacked Al-Quds Open University with rocket-propelled grenades, stormed the three-story building, doused classrooms with gasoline, and set them on fire. Dozens of computers were stolen, and scores more were destroyed, university spokesman Assad Keita said.

"This is the only weapon we have as Palestinian citizens: Science. Education," Keita said as he wandered through the halls, pointing out ashen boot prints where the gunmen kicked in doors and set the rooms ablaze.

Load-Date: February 19, 2007



<u>Palestinian women rush to gunmen's aid: Two killed. Hamas broadcast</u> appeal to help fight Israeli siege

The Gazette (Montreal)

November 4, 2006 Saturday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A3

Length: 989 words

Byline: GREG MYRE, New York Times

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

Israeli troops killed two Palestinian <u>women</u> and injured about 10 others who were seeking to serve as human shields for *Hamas* militants holed up in a Gaza mosque yesterday after an overnight standoff.

The troops fired on a crowd of <u>women</u> and at least a few men as they marched to the mosque.

The <u>women</u>, urged on by Palestinian radio during the standoff, were flocking to the mosque to prevent an Israeli attack and to help an estimated 60 men escape.

The Israeli army said men mixed among the <u>women</u> marchers were armed. In the chaos that erupted when the shooting began, the gunmen inside the mosque escaped.

The shooting provoked widespread outrage among Palestinians.

The Israeli military said its fire was directed at Palestinian gunmen hiding among the <u>women</u> as they marched toward the Um al-Nasir mosque in Beit Hanun, the town in the northeastern Gaza Strip where Israeli troops and militants have been battling for several days.

The Israeli military said eight gunmen in the crowd were shot, and while it acknowledged that there were many **women** present, it was not aware of having hit them.

Hundreds of women participated in the march. The death and casualty tolls were provided by Palestinian hospitals.

Video footage shot by Western news organizations showed <u>women</u> walking close together, and then fleeing in several directions after the shooting began. The footage also showed at least two men, who were not visibly armed, among the <u>women</u>.

Ismail Haniya, the Palestinian prime minister, angrily called on the international community to "come here and witness the daily massacres that are being carried out against the Palestinian nation."

Haniya praised the women "who led the protest to break the siege of Beit Hanun."

Palestinian women rush to gunmen's aid: Two killed. Hamas broadcast appeal to help fight Israeli siege

The shooting, which was replayed frequently on Palestinian TV and Arab satellite channels, marked the most dramatic episode in this week's fighting in Beit Hanun.

Israeli forces entered the town early Wednesday in an attempt to stop Palestinian rocket fire coming from the area aimed at southern Israeli towns.

As Israeli forces pursued the militants in the town Thursday, an estimated 60 gunmen dashed inside the Um al-Nasir mosque, initiating a standoff that lasted through the night.

Israeli troops in armoured vehicles surrounded the mosque. For several hours, soldiers on loudspeakers called for the militants to surrender, and several did, according to the military.

The Israelis also fired tear gas and stun grenades, which make a deafening sound, in an attempt to force out the gunmen.

Around 3 a.m., the gunmen in the mosque began firing on the Israeli soldiers, who shot back, and heavy exchanges ensued, the military said.

The Israeli army called in an armoured bulldozer, which tore down one wall of the mosque compound, the military and Palestinian witnesses said.

"The fighting around the mosque is not something we wanted," said Mark Regev, a spokesman for Israel's foreign ministry. "But international law is clear: When combatants take control of a religious site and begin firing, it becomes a legitimate target. They broke the sanctity of the site."

Early yesterday, a Palestinian radio station called on <u>women</u> to march to the mosque to support the gunmen inside. A short time later, <u>women</u> dressed in flowing black abayas and wearing head scarves began marching toward the mosque.

As they approached, shots rang out, but the <u>women</u> continued marching. A moment later, a number of <u>women</u> were hit, and the crowd scattered.

Some wailing <u>women</u> turned back, while others kept advancing toward the mosque, climbing over improvised dirt barriers set up by the Israeli forces.

"We heard the call for **women** to help the fighters, and we decided to go," said Mona Abu Jasir, 37, who was hit by a bullet in the right leg.

"We did not have weapons, and we were walking toward the mosque when I was shot."

The Israeli military first said they had shot at individual gunmen they spotted among the <u>women</u>, but several hours later, the military said soldiers had fired in response to shots fired from men in the crowd.

One marcher, Suhad el-Masri, 28, said she and several of her relatives were carrying abayas and scarves to give to the men.

"We took them so they could disguise themselves as <u>women</u> and escape," Masri said.

Her sister, Hiba Rajab, 20, was shot in both legs and her left arm.

Some <u>women</u> reached the mosque, and the gunmen managed to slip away, the military and Palestinian witnesses said.

The two women killed were Ibtisam Masoud, 45, and Rawda Khelah, 48, according to Kamal Adwan Hospital.

In violent clashes throughout the day, at least eight more Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip and two in the West Bank, according to Palestinian medical workers and security officials.

Palestinian women rush to gunmen's aid: Two killed. Hamas broadcast appeal to help fight Israeli siege

Over the past three days, more than 25 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, including militants and civilians, as well as one Israeli soldier. No Israelis were injured in the fighting at the mosque.

Also yesterday, Palestinian militants fired several more rockets from northern Gaza into southern Israel, but there was no damage or injuries, the military said.

So far, the Israeli incursion has not reduced the rocket fire, which has continued for the past three days.

In the West Bank, Israeli soldiers arrested the Palestinian minister for housing and public works, Abdel Rahman Zaidan, who belongs to *Hamas*, which leads the Palestinian government.

Israel has arrested more than two dozen Palestinian legislators and cabinet ministers from <u>Hamas</u> in the West Bank over the past four months.

Ariel Sharon, Israel's former prime minister, who has been in a coma for 10 months, was transferred to an intensive-care unit yesterday because of an infection affecting his heart, the Sheba Medical Centre said.

In a statement, the centre described Sharon's condition as stable, but did not provide additional details.

Sharon, 78, had served as prime minister for nearly five years when he suffered a massive stroke and fell into a coma on Jan. 4.

Graphic

Colour Photo: SUHAIB SALEM, REUTERS; <u>Women</u> run for cover after an Israeli tank opened fired yesterday in Beit Hanun, the Gaza Strip town where troops and militants have been battling for several days.

Load-Date: November 4, 2006



Grandmother Blows Self Up in Suicide Attack on Israeli Forces

The New York Times

November 24, 2006 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 20

Length: 616 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER **Dateline:** JERUSALEM, Nov. 23

Body

In the first suicide bombing claimed by <u>Hamas</u> in nearly two years, a grandmother blew herself up on Thursday near Israeli soldiers operating inside Gaza, near the town of Beit Lahiya.

The soldiers threw a stun grenade toward the woman, who the Israeli authorities said had been acting in a suspicious manner, and she detonated her explosive belt, killing herself. Two soldiers were slightly wounded. The woman, identified as Fatima Omar Mahmud al-Najar, had nine children and more than 40 grandchildren, Agence France-Presse reported. News reports put her age at either 57 or 64.

She was shown on television in a so-called martyr's video, wearing a white head scarf and a bright green <u>Hamas</u> bandanna and holding an M-16 automatic rifle. The <u>Hamas</u> military wing had threatened to resume suicide bombings in response to the Israeli shelling of houses in Beit Hanun two weeks ago. The shelling killed 19 people, most of them <u>women</u> and children as they slept, after radar on an artillery cannon malfunctioned, the Israelis said.

Israeli Channel 10 television reported Thursday night that Israel might pay compensation to the families of the victims; Israel has repeatedly refused in the past to pay compensation after such artillery errors.

<u>Hamas</u> was elected in January to lead the Palestinian Authority, and efforts continue to be made by the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of the rival Fatah faction, to organize a unity government that would replace the current <u>Hamas</u> administration.

<u>Hamas</u> is considered a terrorist organization by Israel, the United States and the European Union, and they have cut off funds -- including taxes collected by Israel from Palestinians for their government -- to the <u>Hamas</u>-run Palestinian Authority. A new government would be intended to allow payments to resume. An exiled <u>Hamas</u> political official, Khaled Meshal, who seems to direct the <u>Hamas</u> military wing, was in Cairo on Thursday discussing the issue with the Egyptians.

In northern Gaza on Thursday, Faik Aby al-Kamsan, commander of a militant group, the Popular Resistance Committees; a deputy, Mahmoud al-Basiyuni; and a third man were killed when an Israeli missile hit their car in the Jabaliya refugee camp. The Israeli Army said that the men had been involved in firing Qassam rockets into Israel on Wednesday and Thursday, and that there was a secondary explosion from the car after the missile hit.

Grandmother Blows Self Up in Suicide Attack on Israeli Forces

Two other Palestinians were reported to have died in armed clashes with Israeli troops. Another Palestinian, Muhammad Jarjawi, 20, was also killed. It was not immediately clear whether he was a civilian or a militant.

At least seven Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded Thursday.

About 1,000 Israeli soldiers are in northern Gaza in operations intended to try to stop Qassam rockets. At least five of the rockets fell in Israel on Thursday, the Israeli Army said, as Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni escorted diplomats through the nearby Israeli town of Sderot, which has borne the brunt of the Qassams.

Late Thursday, Khader Habib, a spokesman for the militant group Islamic Jihad, said the main Palestinian factions had agreed to offer to stop firing rockets into Israel in exchange for a cessation of all attacks on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. He said that the offer applied only to rockets and that it would take effect only after Israel ceased attacks.

Explaining the suicide bomber's action, Fathiya al-Najar, her oldest daughter, said that her son had been killed by Israelis, that her mother's house had been destroyed, and that another grandson was in a wheelchair with an amputated leg. "She and I went to the mosque," she told reporters. "We were looking for martyrdom."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: <u>Hamas</u> released this image of Fatima Omar Mahmud al-Najar, who blew herself up yesterday near Beit Lahiya, injuring two Israeli soldiers. (Photo by Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)

Load-Date: November 24, 2006



Woman, 57, fulfils 'martyr' wish: Grandmother blows herself up in response to Israeli 'massacre'

Ottawa Citizen

November 24, 2006 Friday

Final Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A6

Length: 957 words

Byline: Ken Ellingwood, The Los Angeles Times; with files from The Associated Press and Agence France-Presse

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM - Fighting in the Gaza Strip yesterday killed at least eight Palestinians, including a militant commander, as Israeli forces continued a drive to stop cross-border rocket attacks into southern Israel.

Amid the clashes, a 57-year-old Palestinian woman blew herself up near Israeli soldiers, slightly injuring three. The suicide bomber was identified by family members as Fatma al-Najar, a grandmother and member of the military wing of the ruling *Hamas* movement.

Female suicide bombers are relatively rare, and those older than 30 rarer still.

At the compound where her extended family lives near the Jebaliya refugee camp in the northern Gaza Strip, 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.

Another family member said Mrs. al-Najar, who left behind seven sons and two daughters, plus 41 grandchildren, said the suicide bombing was a direct response to the botched Israeli shelling in the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun that killed a family of 18, mostly **women** and children.

"She did this operation in response to the Beit Hanoun massacre. She was very moved by what happened," said Azhar, another daughter.

The Israeli army said the woman approached troops near the farming town of Beit Lahiya and set off the explosives after soldiers spotted her and hurled stun grenades to make her stop.

It was the second time in recent weeks that a <u>female</u> suicide bomber set off explosives near Israeli soldiers operating in northern Gaza. On Nov. 6, a woman blew herself up near soldiers during a raid in Beit Hanoun, lightly injuring one.

"I received the news with happiness. We are all proud of our mother. She was always hoping to be a martyr," said one of her sons, Fuad al-Najar, 32, as wellwishers handed out sweets and tossed flowers outside the family home.

Woman, 57, fulfils 'martyr' wish: Grandmother blows herself up in response to Israeli 'massacre'

The past few weeks have seen an increase in militant activity by <u>women</u> 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 a rally at a Gaza mosque three weeks ago, where <u>women</u> defied a cordon of heavily armed Israeli troops to create a diversion for besieged <u>Hamas</u> 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, Mrs. al-Najar filmed the video testament customary for suicide bombers. The video 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.

Reading from a sheet of paper, she dedicated her attack to the <u>Hamas</u>-led government and to the movement's military commander, Mohammed Deif.

Eight other Palestinians were killed yesterday. In Gaza, three militants from the Palestinian Resistance Committees were killed in an Israeli air strike on their car. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades said one of its men, a 20-year-old, was killed in a clash. Two *Hamas* militants were killed in a gunbattle with Israeli forces, and another was shot dead as he was about to fire a rocket at Israel, the military said. Another man died of wounds in a Gaza hospital. It was not known whether he was a militant or a civilian.

Israeli military commanders have considered plans for a wide-scale incursion into Gaza to stem the rocket attacks into northern Israel, but a major offensive carries political risks for Israeli leaders and the possibility of high casualties on both sides.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has warned against expectations for a knockout blow against the rockets, which have killed two people in Sderot in the past nine days.

A failed offensive could further erode Mr. Olmert's popularity, already low after the summer's inconclusive war with Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

Yesterday, Palestinian officials criticized the Israeli incursions into Gaza as a dangerous escalation.

"It's not enough for Israel to control every aspect of life in Gaza, it (seems it also) has to visit untold horrors on an imprisoned and embattled civilian population," said Saeb Erekat, the chief Palestinian negotiator. "This is a war crime that the international community must address."

The escalating violence added urgency to diplomatic efforts to defuse the conflict.

In one hopeful sign, the Damascus-based supreme leader of <u>Hamas</u>, Khaled Mashaal, began talks with Egyptian mediators in Cairo on a vital prisoner swap with Israel and formation of a Palestinian national unity government that could end months of crippling western aid sanctions.

No announcement was made after the talks between Mr. Mashaal and the chief of Egyptian intelligence, Omar Suleiman, Egypt's point man for the Israeli-Palestinian dispute.

The capture in late June of an Israeli soldier by <u>Hamas</u>-linked militants set off the latest Israeli offensive in Gaza. Israel insists the soldier must be returned before other issues are discussed.

<u>Hamas</u> official Mussa Abu Marzouk said negotiations were centring on Israel's three-stage release of 1,400 Palestinian prisoners, including 400 children and <u>women</u>, in exchange for the soldier.

Mr. Mashaal, who is recognized as having the final say in <u>Hamas</u>, was expected to discuss prospects for replacing the current <u>Hamas</u>-led Palestinian cabinet with a more moderate coalition including President Mahmoud Abbas's more moderate Fatah party. Talks have been sputtering for months.

Woman, 57, fulfils 'martyr' wish: Grandmother blows herself up in response to Israeli 'massacre'

The West cut off funds to the Palestinian government in March, when <u>Hamas</u> took control after sweeping Fatah out of office in a parliamentary election. The U.S., Europe and Israel list <u>Hamas</u> as a terror group. A government with Fatah might satisfy western demands.

Graphic

Photo: Fatma al-Najar, a grandmother and member of the military wing of the ruling <u>Hamas</u> movement, is shown above in a 'martyr' video released by the <u>Hamas</u> media office after the woman blew herself up. 'She was always hoping to be a martyr,' said one of her sons.

Load-Date: November 24, 2006



U.S., Israel Seek To Boost Abbas With Prisoner Swap

The Forward January 5, 2007

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Section: News; Pg. A4

Length: 880 words

Body

Israeli and American officials are seeking ways to credit Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas with any Israeli-Palestinian deal on a prisoner swap reached in the coming days.

Israel and the United States are expected to agree to the release of leading Fatah activist Marwan Barghouti as part of the deal, viewing him as a potential reformer who can help Abbas. Barghouti was arrested in April 2002 by Israeli forces and is serving five life terms for aiding terrorism.

According to reports in the Israeli press, Israeli and Palestinian officials already have agreed on the main components of the prisoner-swap deal. Ha'aretz reported Tuesday that Israel would start off the deal with a release of <u>women</u> and children held in Israeli prisons in return for a video tape of Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier held by <u>Hamas</u> since his kidnapping last year on June 25. In the second phase, Israel will release 450 Palestinian prisoners, including Barghouti and <u>Hamas</u> political and military officials. At the same time, the Palestinians will hand over Shalit to Egyptian negotiators. In the third phase, which will take place two months later, Israel will release another significant amount of Palestinian prisoners.

The deal is being brokered by Egyptian Intelligence Minister Omar Suleiman, who met with <u>Hamas</u> leaders in Saudi Arabia last weekend.

While <u>Hamas</u> sources in Gaza described the deal as imminent, Israelis dismissed the report of an upcoming agreement as Palestinian spin, saying that both sides have yet to agree on the number and identity of prisoners who would be released in return for Shalit.

It seems clear that under the deal being discussed, Palestinian prisoners with blood on their hands meaning those who were involved in terrorist attacks would be released. Senior members of both Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> would be included.

The main issue now troubling Israelis is how to present the prisoner swap to the Palestinian public as an achievement of Abbas rather than of <u>Hamas</u>. Since <u>Hamas</u> is holding Shalit, it is clear that the organization is playing a significant role in bringing about a prisoner release. At the same time, Israel does not negotiate directly with <u>Hamas</u> and is attempting to make clear that the Palestinian prisoners will be given over to Abbas rather than to the <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh.

The whole issue of prisoners is very emotional for the Palestinians, said Nathan Brown, professor of international affairs at Washington's George Washington University and a former adviser on the drafting of the P.A.'s constitution. Neither Abbas nor Arafat managed to get prisoners released. Now <u>Hamas</u> is trying to prove its effectiveness.

The main figure on the list of prisoners to be swapped is Barghouti, the unofficial leader of the second intifada. Though behind bars, Barghouti is seen as a major political force in Palestinian politics and is the co-author of the so-called prisoners' document a joint *Hamas*-Fatah platform that hints at accepting Israel and was supposed to lead to the formation of a national unity government. Barghouti is known for his good ties with all Palestinian factions, and stands out as the leader of the younger generation of Palestinians in a society still largely ruled by Arafat's old guard. Before the intifada began in 2000, Israelis saw Barghouti as a moderate interlocutor who favored coexistence.

If released, Barghouti can force Fatah to go through a reform process which in the long run has the potential of strengthening the movement, Brown said.

Experts say that <u>Hamas</u> looks strong and generous by pushing for the release of Barghouti and other prisoners from the rival Fatah movement at a time when both factions are fighting over control of Gaza.

According to sources in Washington, the United States has little to do with the planned prisoner swap. The administration is following Egyptian efforts to finalize the deal and is expected to support Israel if it decides to release Barghouti, though it will not push Israel on this issue.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice plans to visit the region in the middle of the month, days after President Bush presents his new policy on Iraq, which also may touch on issues relating to the broader region. Rice, according to diplomatic sources, will visit Israel, the P.A., Jordan and Egypt to discuss ways of strengthening Abbas and of restarting the peace process.

Experts are predicting that Rice's visit will not bring immediate change.

Expectations on the Palestinian side are low, said Edward Abington, a former American consul general in Jerusalem who now lobbies for the P.A. in Washington. The Palestinians are used to having Rice come over, hold a press conference with [Abbas] and then leave back to Washington without anything happening.

Rice will make another attempt, during her visit, to implement a year-old agreement that was supposed to lead to the opening of the Gaza border crossings and allow Palestinians in Gaza to access the West Bank. The agreement is seen as one of the measures that can improve daily life for the Palestinians and at the same strengthen the political standing of Abbas.

Load-Date: January 4, 2007



Nation & world

Charleston Daily Mail (West Virginia) February 15, 2007, Thursday

Copyright 2007 Charleston Newspapers

Section: NEWS; Pg. P3A

Length: 506 words

Body

Hamas cabinet to resign,

form coalition with Fatah

RAMALLAH, West Bank - The *Hamas* government is set to resign later today, paving the way for the formation of a broader coalition with the rival Fatah movement, a Palestinian negotiator said.

Last-minute demands by <u>Hamas</u> had raised doubts about whether the Islamic militant group would go ahead with the resignation. However, the disputes were resolved, said Ziad Abu Amr, an independent who is expected to serve as foreign minister in the new Cabinet.

Abu Amr said <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah representatives met in his office and agreed that the <u>Hamas</u> Cabinet led by Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> would resign later today. President Mahmoud Abbas would then hand Haniyeh a letter of appointment as the new prime minister, with a request to form a <u>Hamas</u>-Fatah coalition, Abu Amr said.

Meanwhile, aides to Abbas said the United States has informed him that it will shun any members of a future *Hamas*-Fatah coalition.

Trial in 2004 Madrid

train bombings opens

MADRID, Spain - A trial into Spain's worst terrorist attack opened today amid airtight security, with 29 suspects facing charges for the 2004 bombings that killed 191 rush-hour commuters.

The case promises to be highly emotional, dredging up terrifying memories of one of Spain's darkest days. Some 100 experts and 600 witnesses are likely to be called, among them people who had their lives shattered in the Mar. 11, 2004, blasts.

"I hope justice is rendered and that there is a worthy sentence," Pilar Manjon, president of an association of March 11 victims, said before the proceedings got under way. She lost her 20-year-old son in the disaster.

Ben & Jerry's names ice

cream flavor after Colbert

NEW YORK - Stephen Colbert may have no taste for the truth, but he does have a sweet tooth.

Nation & world

Ben & Jerry's has named a new ice cream in honor of the comedian: "Stephen Colbert's Americone Dream." It's vanilla ice cream with fudge-covered waffle cone pieces and caramel. Announcing the new flavor Wednesday, Ben & Jerry's called it: "The sweet taste of liberty in your mouth."

"I'm not afraid to say it. Dessert has a well-known liberal agenda," Colbert said in a statement. "What I hope to do with this ice cream is bring some balance back to the freezer case."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Mexico has bought 500 talking urinal cakes.

Talking urinal cakes

to fight drunken driving

SANTA FE, N.M.- New Mexico is taking its fight against drunken driving to men's restrooms around the state. The state has ordered 500 talking urinal cakes that will deliver a recorded anti-DWI message to bar and restaurant patrons who make one last pit stop before getting behind the wheel.

"Hey there, big guy. Having a few drinks?" a **female** voice says a few seconds after an approaching male sets off a motion sensor in the device.

Transportation Department spokesman S.U. Mahesh said the urinal cakes are a way to reach one group that's a target of state safety campaigns. Men commit about three times as many drunken-driving infractions as **women**.

COMPILED FROM WIRE REPORTS

Load-Date: February 16, 2007



Sentences reduced for Quran study

Deseret Morning News (Salt Lake City)

August 7, 2007 Tuesday

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Length: 201 words

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) -- Inmates in the Gaza Strip's main prison can now reduce their sentences by one year if they memorize five chapters from the Quran, Islam's holy book, the governor announced Monday.

The prison, controlled by the radical Islamic <u>Hamas</u> movement since its violent takeover of the Gaza Strip in June, holds 350 prisoners, 30 of whom are on death row.

The new scripture program seeks to encourage prisoners "to behave according to the Quran's law," said the prison governor, Col. Abu al-Abed Hamid, in a statement.

Most of the inmates were sentenced before <u>Hamas</u> took power for crimes ranging from murder to corruption to collaborating with Israel.

The traditionally male-dominated <u>Hamas</u> also announced its intention to add 100 <u>women</u> to the Gaza police force. They would supervise <u>female</u> prisoners and help in police actions when "<u>women</u> must sometimes be present to search other <u>women</u>," said Gen. Tawfiq Jaber, the acting police chief.

Jaber added that a number of <u>women</u> have already applied for jobs and that new recruits would be selected and trained soon.

<u>Hamas</u> pledged to bring law and order to the chaotic Gaza Strip after wresting control of the area from the rival Fatah movement.

Load-Date: August 7, 2007



Israel Presses Attacks in Gaza, Killing a Rocket Maker

The New York Times

November 5, 2006 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section 1; Column 3; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

Length: 829 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Nov. 4

Body

Israel continued its military offensive in Gaza on Saturday, destroying a minivan containing a <u>Hamas</u> rocket maker and two associates and demolishing at least five homes in Beit Hanun, on the Gaza-Israel border.

The rocket maker, identified by <u>Hamas</u> as Louay al-Burnu, was killed Saturday in Gaza City with two other members of the militant faction. Another <u>Hamas</u> fighter was killed in a gun battle with Israeli forces after firing an antitank rocket near Beit Hanun, and an Israeli noncommissioned officer was badly wounded. A Palestinian civilian, Marwan Abu Harbid, 46, died when an Israeli tank shell hit his home, burying him inside, a relative told The Associated Press.

In nearby Jabaliya, a <u>Hamas</u> member died from wounds from an artillery shell, which wounded four other members of <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing. Later Saturday, two brothers, both members of <u>Hamas</u>, were killed in a helicopter strike, as was a 16-year-old Palestinian, according to Agence France-Presse.

Since Israel began its new campaign to halt rocket fire into Israel four days ago, more than 40 Palestinians have been killed, most of them militants, and one Israeli soldier has died. More than 200 Palestinians have been wounded, some 30 of them seriously, Palestinian health officials and doctors at local hospitals said.

The rocket fire has continued, with 28 rockets landing in Israel since the operation began Wednesday, an army spokesman said. At least three Israelis have been wounded by shrapnel. Because Beit Hanun is so close to Israel, Palestinian militants often come there to fire their short-range Qassam rockets, made in Gazan workshops, toward nearby Israeli towns like Sderot and Ashkelon.

For three hours on Saturday morning, Israeli troops suspended patrols in Beit Hanun, a town of some 25,000 people, to allow civilians to leave their homes and open shops, and to let aid groups deliver supplies.

Israeli troops have been rounding up young men suspected of being militants and questioning them. Most have been released. At least 15 men have been detained and brought to Israel for further questioning, an army spokesman said.

The houses the Israelis destroyed contained weapons, the army said, including antitank missiles, automatic rifles and grenades.

Also on Saturday, a 12-year-old girl was shot in the head and killed by an Israeli sniper in Gaza, Palestinian officials said. The Israeli military expressed regret, saying the sniper was aiming at an armed militant.

The Israeli operation is a continuation of the Gaza offensive that followed the capture of an Israeli soldier, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, on June 25. Corporal Shalit remains a hostage, as do two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah a few weeks later.

Parallel but apparently separate negotiations about prisoner exchanges are ongoing with Hezbollah in Lebanon and with the Palestinian government led by *Hamas*.

Israel has said that it will pull its armed forces out of Gaza once the corporal is released.

Israeli forces have also been active in southern Gaza trying to destroy tunnels to Egypt used for smuggling contraband including weapons, antitank missiles, ammunition and explosives. But the Israeli cabinet decided not to approve a larger operation there, especially with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert due in Washington to meet President Bush in a little more than a week.

On Friday, as many as 17 Palestinians were killed from dawn to midnight, including two <u>women</u> and two medical workers, in one of the deadliest days in months. Two more men were killed by the Israelis in clashes on the West Bank.

Also on Friday, hundreds of <u>women</u> wrapped in flowing robes called abayas and wearing head scarves, responded to appeals on <u>Hamas</u>-controlled radio to come to a Beit Hanun mosque where a large group of <u>Hamas</u> fighters had taken refuge.

Israeli troops could not dissuade the <u>women</u>, even with live fire, and many of the fighters escaped, presumably in <u>female</u> clothing brought to the mosque by the <u>women</u>. Israel says its soldiers fired only at armed men, but two <u>women</u> were killed. Israel blamed <u>Hamas</u> for encouraging the <u>women</u> to act as "human shields," but a <u>Hamas</u> spokesman, Ghazi Hamad, praised them for their courage.

On Friday, Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations criticized the Gaza operation in a statement and urged Israelis "to exercise maximum restraint, do their utmost to protect civilians and to refrain from further escalating an already grave situation."

But in Washington, the State Department spokesman, Sean McCormack, said, "The U.N. has a point of view" and added that Israel has the right to defend itself. "The reason why all of this developed in the first place is because you have continuing attacks on Israel from Palestinian Authority areas," he said.

In Tel Aviv, the former prime minister, Ariel Sharon, remained in intensive care as doctors battled an infection affecting his heart. Mr. Sharon, 78, has been in a coma for 10 months after a stroke.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: Palestinians mourned yesterday in Beit Lahiya during the funeral of two brothers who were killed Friday. In nearby Beit Hanun yesterday, Israel killed a <u>Hamas</u> rocket maker and two associates, and razed five homes. (Photo by Mahmud Hams/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images)

Load-Date: November 5, 2006



DIGEST

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

July 15, 2007 Sunday

FOURTH EDITION

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Section: NEWS; Pg. A9

Length: 320 words

Byline: FROM NEWS SERVICES

Body

MIRAN SHAH, PAKISTAN

Suicide bomber strikes military convoy, killing 24

In the deadliest suicide attack in many months in Pakistan's tribal borderlands, a bomber struck a military convoy Saturday, killing 24 troops and injuring almost 30 others, authorities said.

The attack could presage a broader war by Islamist militants against government forces in the wake of the siege of a radical mosque last week by elite Pakistani commandos, which left more than 100 people dead.

Radical groups have vowed to avenge the government's storming of the Red Mosque and the killing of one of two brothers who presided over the complex.

NEW DELHI

Proposal aims to curb abortion of *female* fetuses

Indian <u>women</u> would be required to register their pregnancies and seek government permission for abortions under a proposal intended to curb abortions of <u>female</u> fetuses in the country, where boys are traditionally preferred.

"This will help to check both feticide and infant mortality," said Renuka Chowdhury, India's <u>women</u> and child development minister.

Boys are preferred because they do not require the enormous dowry payments that bankrupt many poor families when their daughters marry.

RAMALLAH, WEST BANK

Abbas installs moderate interim government

President Mahmoud Abbas consolidated his control of the West Bank on Saturday, installing an interim government of moderates to lead indefinitely.

DIGEST

Meanwhile, the militant Islamic <u>Hamas</u> - in control of the Gaza Strip - called a special session of the Palestinian parliament for Sunday to challenge the new government.

By law, any new government requires parliament approval. But the legislature has been paralyzed by the power struggle between <u>Hamas</u> and Abbas' Fatah movement and by Israel's arrest of more than three dozen <u>Hamas</u> legislators.

The latest power play followed <u>Hamas'</u> violent takeover of Gaza last month, which led to the dissolution of the power-sharing coalition between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah.

Load-Date: July 15, 2007



Will Gaza, like Iraq, descend into civil war?

The Independent (London)

December 14, 2006 Thursday

First Edition

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Section: EDITORIAL & OPINION; Pg. 40

Length: 1116 words **Byline:** JOHANN HARI

Body

Every time I come to Gaza - this clogged, cramped collection of palm trees and bomb craters on the Mediterranean - it is crumbling and collapsing a little more. As I wander the streets, I find rusting old cars are slowly being replaced by rickety horse-drawn carts, with <u>women</u> and children clinging to the back like refugees fleeing the 19th century.

The refugee camps themselves are sagging into the earth, with nobody bothering to rebuild the bombed-out homes since they expect them to be blown up again any time. There are open fires on street corners as people try to dispose of a nine-month build-up of rotting rubbish. This is just another result of the American and European choking-off of funds for the Palestinians since they democratically elected *Hamas*: there is no money to pay the binmen. Gaudy and grim, with the sea air mixing with clouds of dust, Gaza looks oddly like Blackpool after a nuclear war. The Israeli government claims the 38-year occupation here ended when they finally withdrew the illegal settlements built here by religious fanatics. This is a lie. As the heroic Israeli journalist Gideon Levy explains, "Without anyone paying attention, the Gaza Strip has become the most closed-off strip of land in the world - after North Korea." The Israeli army has been ordered to seal the borders of Gaza since June, making it almost impossible to get anyone - or anything - in or out. Some 1.5 million people are now locked in an area the size of the Isle of Wight, and their lives consist of excruciating boredom punctuated by moments of raw terror. They increasingly fear that, like animals trapped in a tiny cage, they will turn on each other. There have been portents of a Palestinian civil war ever since the *Hamas* victory, and while I have been stumbling around Gaza they seem to be multiplying. This weekend, three children of a Fatah intelligence officer - aged seven, eight and nine - were gunned down in a drive-by shooting. Yesterday, a *Hamas* judge was shot in retaliation. The idea of a unity government between the factions seems to have joined them in the grave.

So will the molten misery of Gaza now be multiplied by a civil war - and what would it be about? The leaders of <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah claim vehemently they do not want a civil war and will do all they can to avoid it, but I wanted to get beyond their carefully constructed sentences and speak to their supporters on the ground.

Most people on the streets believe it will not happen. "We are all Palestinians," they insist. Almost everyone explains that in an individual family it is very common to find supporters of <u>Hamas</u>, Fatah and Islamic Jihad. "Will brother kill brother?" asks Abu Ahmad, a 25-year-old student, sceptically. I am relieved - but then I also remember

Iraqis saying the same thing to me four years ago, pointing proudly to the huge number of Sunni-Shia intermarriages. One of the many awful lessons of Iraq is that it only takes a determined few to start a civil war: if their attacks are gruesome enough - like targetting the other side's kids - they will crowbar open sectarian divisions, even where a great majority wants peaceful co-existence.

The tribal lineaments of a civil war are visible in the most unexpected places. Just as Fatah filled the government machine with its lackeys, now <u>Hamas</u> is trying to slowly replace them with its own. In the hospitals, many doctors are known as <u>Hamas</u> or Fatah-installed, as if there was a distinctively <u>Hamas</u> model of haematology or a Fatah school of pediatrics. One senior medical officer - Dr Bassam Said Nadi - explains: "We have two camps and two administrations, and it's very easy to get lost between the two. The bureaucracy is doubled, and when <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah don't agree, it's hard to do anything. To be frank, it is causing real problems in the hospitals."

But does this bifurcated state make a drift to civil war inevitable? Mahmoud Ajrami, an independent-minded Marxist analyst at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, tells me, "The only reason a civil war hasn't broken out already here is because Fatah is so weak." He believes Fatah has a vested interest in avoiding civil war because it would obviously lose: while <u>Hamas</u> can bring 100,000 onto the streets easily, as I saw last Thursday, Fatah can barely muster a few hundred. It was always a Yasser Arafat-shaped party, and without his iconic status in the eyes of the Palestinian people, it has deflated like a failed soufflé. <u>Hamas</u>, he reckons, doesn't think a nasty civil war against such a feeble opponent is worth it.

When I ask people what a civil war would be about, their answers are unclear. Nobody mentions the division that seems to be most prominent to outsiders: the question of recognising the existence of Israel within the 1967 borders. In theory, Fatah recog-nises Israel, while <u>Hamas</u> refuses to. But in practice, Fatah is the only group still firing a few Qassam rockets into Israel during the official ceasefire, while <u>Hamas</u> has offered a 40-year hudna (ceasefire) if Israel withdraws to the 1967 borders. To Palestinians, the differences on Israel have, it seems, blurred to near-zero - even though America and Europe consider them significant enough to justify the strangulation of Gaza.

No, the few reasons offered here are different. Nidal Sheikh Eid, the head of the <u>Hamas</u> student wing and an IT student, says, "Our difference with Fatah is over the questions of Islam and shariah. We believe in an Islamic environment with Islamic law, while Fatah is" - he spits these words - "a secular party." He adds that his interpretation of shariah does not include the "terrible" oppression of <u>women</u> that was seen in Afghanistan, but it does include punishments like chopping off the hands of thieves. Abdul Haqim Awad, the head of Fatah's student movement - guarded by bulletproof-vest-wearing bodyguards - agrees that this is the main point of division. "They want to impose sharia law, like the Taliban," he says. "We want secularism."

But this debate does not seem very alive to most of the Palestinians on the streets. Almost all looked blank when I asked about it, and muttered platitudes about Islam. To them, the biggest difference between Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> is corruption. One nonaligned nurse - speaking on condition of anonymity - said that in her hospital under Fatah, if you had an underweight baby you had to have connections with the ministry or pay a fat bribe to get your child into an incubator. "Now, that has ended," she says.

From the wrecked refugee camps of Gaza - braced for more Israeli terror - there seem to be no good reasons and no clear cry for yet more war. But will the people's shaky voices be heard over the sound of militias clashing?

Load-Date: December 14, 2006



Israel to restore finance ties to Abbas

The International Herald Tribune
July 2, 2007 Monday

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 1

Length: 809 words

Byline: Steven Erlanger - The New York Times Media Group

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

The Israeli government agreed Sunday to restore full financial ties with the new, non-Hamas Palestinian Authority.

Israel will now resume monthly transfers of taxes to the new authority, as well as unfreeze, in installments, the \$600 million or so withheld from the Palestinians since early 2006.

The decision represented an end to an Israeli policy of fiscal isolation of the Palestinians that began with the installation of a <u>Hamas</u>-run Palestinian Authority in March 2006, after <u>Hamas</u> won a legislative majority that January, beating the Fatah faction.

The policy, together with a Western ban on aid to the <u>Hamas</u> government, was designed to undermine that government and bring it down, officials conceded at the time.

Now, with <u>Hamas</u> having taken over the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah, has dismissed the <u>Hamas</u>-dominated "unity" government and installed an emergency cabinet led by an independent economist affiliated with Fatah, Salam Fayyad.

Fayyad, educated in Texas and a former economist with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, is prime minister, finance minister and foreign minister.

As finance minister, he will receive direct transfers from the Israeli treasury and from the West. It remains to be seen whether the European Union, which has been paying part of the salaries of almost 80,000 Palestinians through direct transfers to their bank accounts, will now revert to putting its funds - \$900 million in 2006 - solely through Fayyad.

As prime minister of the new government, Fayyad has said that he intends to pay Palestinians in Gaza even though *Hamas* holds effective power there.

Israeli government officials said Sunday that they could have no objection if Fayyad did that.

"Whether he pays Gaza salaries is not our business," said Miri Eisin, spokeswoman for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. "This is a Palestinian government that has already outlawed all armed groups outside the official security services, and we want to cooperate with them to give a clear-cut chance for Palestinians to be ruled in a different and effective way."

Israel to restore finance ties to Abbas

Some of the money will inevitably go to support <u>Hamas</u> members and groups, but Eisin said that Israel had tried to ensure that it would not be passed to any "nongovernmental groups linked to terrorism."

Israel, the United States and the European Union classify <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist organization and have legal bans on contact with any part of it.

Israel collects taxes and import duties for all goods coming into Israel and the Palestinian territories under a customs agreement and then is supposed to pass the part belonging to the Palestinians - roughly \$45 million to \$50 million a month after deductions for Israeli-supplied water and electricity - to the Palestinian Authority.

But since March 2006, Israel has only provided \$100 million to Abbas for health and human services, leaving about \$600 million in Israeli coffers.

That money will now be paid in five or six installments to Fayyad, although about \$200 million of it is subject to legal appeals by private Israeli companies like Dor Alon - which sells gasoline and fuel oil to the Palestinian Authority - to settle unpaid debts.

Beginning this month, the Israelis will also pay the taxes owed monthly, so there will be no further withholding. The Israelis also plan to hold regular meetings with senior officials of the new government and those close to Abbas on more extensive security cooperation, partly to ensure that the <u>Hamas</u> rout of Fatah in the Gaza Strip will not be duplicated across the road in the West Bank.

Most Israelis and their newspapers, however, were consumed with the case of President Moshe Katsav, who resigned Sunday in the face of charges of rape and sexual misconduct.

Attorney General Menachem Mazuz agreed to a plea bargain that spared Katsav a trial on rape charges and any prison time at all, even though his alleged offenses, if proved in court, could result in a term of up to 20 years.

Mazuz was said to have been concerned by the impact on Israel of a rape trial and prison term for Katsav. He said that some charges were too old, given the statute of limitations, and that rape might be difficult to prove conclusively. But many Israelis were outraged by the arrangement and about 20,000 people demonstrated in Tel Aviv on Saturday night against the plea bargain.

The Israeli Supreme Court agreed Sunday to hear a petition that sought to overthrow the plea bargain, putting it on hold until a hearing Monday. Katsav insists he is innocent, but he will have to plead guilty under the deal to lesser counts of indecent acts, sexual harassment, and obstruction of justice and pay compensation to two of his four accusers, all **women** who worked for him.

Shimon Peres has been elected the new president, a largely ceremonial post, and will take over in the middle of the month.

Load-Date: July 4, 2007



Radicals threaten to behead women

The Australian (Australia)
June 4, 2007 Monday
All-round Country Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 16

Length: 411 words

Byline: Abraham Rabinovich

Body

MATP

AMID fears that growing religious extremism may turn the already chaotic Gaza Strip into a Taliban-like area, an underground group threatened at the weekend to behead <u>female</u> news presenters on the official Palestinian Authority television station who did not wear strict Islamic dress.

"If necessary we will behead and slaughter to preserve the spirit and morals of our people," the Righteous Swords of Islam said. The group said the <u>women</u> presenters were corrupting Palestinian society by appearing on television with their faces uncovered.

The group is one of three al-Qa'ida-affiliated organisations that have emerged in Gaza in the past two years. These groups have taken responsibility for bombing more than 30 internet cafes, music shops and pool halls.

"These are extremely dangerous groups that 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 extremist groups.

"The day will come when we will miss Hamas."

The threat to <u>women</u> announcers was condemned by the armed wing of the secular Fatah, the al-Aksa Martyrs Brigades. "We reject the lies of the so-called Righteous Swords of Islam," a brigades spokesman said.

Meanwhile, reports that <u>Hamas</u> leaders were inclined to seek a renewal of the ceasefire with Israel, broken two weeks ago by the massive launching of rockets from Gaza at Israel, were apparently confirmed by the <u>Hamas</u> deputy political leader, Moussa Abu Marzouk, from his headquarters in Damascus.

"We may agree to a one-year ceasefire," he told the Egyptian newspaper al-Aharam at the weekend.

Israel claims to have killed more than 50 operatives from <u>Hamas</u> and other militant groups in air strikes since the current round began two weeks ago. The strikes were carried out mostly against rocket crews preparing to fire and against *Hamas* bases.

For the first time since the latest upsurge in fighting began, a militant official was killed at the weekend in an attack specifically directed at him. The dead man was Fadi Abu Mustafa, 26, a spokesman for Islamic Jihad. He was killed

Radicals threaten to behead women

by an air-to-ground missile as he rode his motorcycle. Most militant leaders in Gaza have gone to ground for fear of such an attack.

<u>Hamas</u> has launched nearly 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.

Load-Date: June 3, 2007



Terror cash case fails

Herald Sun (Australia)
February 3, 2007 Saturday
FIRST Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 26

Length: 368 words

Body

Reuters

CHICAGO -- A jury has found two Palestinian-born men not guilty of carrying out a 15-year conspiracy to illegally finance *Hamas* terrorism in Israel.

Muhammad Salah, 53, and Abdelhaleem Ashqar, 48, were acquitted of racketeering conspiracy, which could have seen them jailed for life.

They plan to appeal against convictions on lesser charges of obstructing justice for denying membership of *Hamas* and refusing to answer grand jury questions.

"It is better than we thought," a tearful Salah, a businessman from the Chicago suburb of Bridgeview, Illinois, said as he hugged supporters.

"We are good people, not terrorists."

The pair are free until sentencing in June.

<u>Women</u> knelt outside court praying before and after the jury's verdict, which followed three weeks' deliberations and a 10-week trial.

Salah, who became a US citizen in 1979, was alleged to be the point person for money transfers that went to <u>Hamas</u>, providing recruits and delivering messages on behalf of the accused <u>Hamas</u> leader in the US, Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook, now thought to be in Syria.

Ashgar was said to be a co-ordinator and archivist for *Hamas*' military wing.

Lawyers for both men said they were involved only in charitable work.

<u>Hamas</u> leads the Palestinian Government, but Israel, the European Union and the US regard it as a terrorist group. It is illegal for US citizens to contribute to it.

John Ashcroft, attorney-general when the pair were charged, said then they had been "taking advantage of the freedoms of an open society to foster and finance acts of terror".

Terror cash case fails

In January 1993, Salah was arrested at an Israeli checkpoint and found to be carrying almost \$100,000 in cash. His two-month interrogation produced confessions that helped send him to an Israeli prison for 4 1/2 years.

Prosecutors used Salah's confession in the trial, but his lawyers said he was tortured into confessing.

"I'm not sure Salah did anything wrong before he was incarcerated by the Israelis, and I'm quite sure he did nothing wrong after," defence lawyer Matthew Piers said.

The trial saw an unprecedented appearance by agents of Israel's Shin Bet intelligence service, who testified in disguise to a cleared courtroom.

They reportedly denied any torture.

Load-Date: February 2, 2007



The New York Times
July 15, 2007 Sunday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 42

Length: 5282 words

Byline: By STEVEN ERLANGER

Steven Erlanger is the Jerusalem bureau chief for The New York Times. Taghreed El-Khodary contributed

additional reporting from Gaza.

Body

Palestinians never used to do these things to one another. Putting bullets in the back of the heads of men on their knees. Shooting up hospitals. Killing patients. Knee-capping doctors. Executing clerics. Throwing handcuffed prisoners to their deaths from Gaza's highest (and most expensive) apartment buildings. There is a madness in Gaza now. *Hamas* -- a religious political-military organization that dominated the last Palestinian elections -- claimed it was fighting infidels, with a holy sanction to kill. Fatah -- the largest group in the Palestine Liberation Organization -- was nearly as brutal as *Hamas* and claimed it was fighting the Nazis. Poor young men from the squalid, stinking refugee camps of Gaza, their heads filled with religious slogans and revolutionary cant, took off their knitted black masks to pose in front of the gilded bathrooms of the once-powerful and rich men of Fatah. Then they stole the sinks, toilets, tiles and pipes, leaving the wiring and the metal scraps for the ordinary, unarmed poor.

Gaza today is so far from the hopes of people like James Wolfensohn -- the former World Bank president who tried to coordinate economic redevelopment in the 140-square-mile territory between Israel and Egypt after the Israelis withdrew nearly two years ago -- as to seem like the other side of the earth. Rather than a model for a future Palestinian state, Gaza looks like Somalia: broken and ravenous. The civil war that Palestinians insisted could never happen just has, a civil war abetted by Israel and the United States in the name of antiterrorism and stability - another policy that has failed, at least here, where a burning smell still fills the nostrils and where a masked *Hamas* gunman with an AK-47 recently sat at the abandoned desk of the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, lifted up the phone and said: "Hello, Condoleezza Rice? You have me to deal with now." But the military victory of *Hamas* may also bring a welcome measure of quiet and security to the 1.5 million people of Gaza, nearly 70 percent of them refugees, who have been living a nightmare of criminal gangs, street-corner vendettas, clan warfare, absent police, corrupt officials, religious incitement and unremitting poverty.

Khaled Abu Hilal, a thin, grizzled chain-smoker who sucks in tobacco smoke the way an emphysema patient sucks in oxygen, is at the center of the revolution. He is a hated figure among many in the secular, nationalist Fatah; they think he is a heretic who helped set off the Gaza implosion. But his journey is Gaza's journey, from Fatah fighter and Israeli prisoner to disgusted ex-Fatah man, now associated with <u>Hamas</u>. His anger with Mahmoud Abbas -- Yasir Arafat's successor as chairman of the P.L.O. and now president of the Palestinian Authority -- and with what he considers the endless, futile and demeaning effort of a corrupt Fatah to please the Israelis, is shared among an increasing number of Palestinians.

Standing early last month amid the Israeli-bombed ruins of the buildings of the Executive Force, which he helped *Hamas* build as a parallel police and protection force, Hilal, now 39, was quietly triumphant. He had been serving as a close aide to, and spokesman for, the tough *Hamas* interior minister, Said Siam, who left office in opposition to the national-unity government with Fatah. Both he and Siam were central to the campaign by the Executive Force and by *Hamas*'s military wing, the Qassam Brigades, that pulled Fatah down in six days in early June. "I feel proud, no question," he said as aides urgently shoved cellphones into his hand. "I feel I did my national duty, and that makes me very comfortable, psychologically speaking." Two weeks later, at a packed and sweaty rally in Gaza City, Hilal announced that he would lead a new Fatah movement and military force in Gaza, allied with *Hamas*, called Fatah al-Yasir/Higher Military Command, named after Yasir Arafat.

"This is pure Fatah, Fatah before Oslo," Hilal shouted hoarsely, referring to the 1993 peace accords with Israel that created the Palestinian Authority. Hilal sees Oslo as a betrayal of the Palestinian struggle for real statehood, and he called his new movement "a true Palestinian national liberation movement." Surrounded by large, bearded gunmen in black uniforms, Hilal wore a loose, untucked shirt and looked as tiny as Arafat. "The good and honorable people of the Fatah movement have rejected the collaborators!" he shouted. At the end, he was mobbed by hundreds of young men, both acolytes and job seekers.

Whether or not he succeeds with the new movement, Hilal (if he lives) presents the first major internal challenge to the Fatah establishment, represented by Abbas, calling Fatah back to its roots as a resistance movement of revolutionary fighters. Establishment Fatah has excommunicated Hilal, and some would surely like to see him dead. But if Palestine is now divided between the West Bank and Gaza, Fatah in Gaza is divided, too.

In a conversation after the <u>Hamas</u> victory, Hilal, speaking through an interpreter, said he felt "bitterness about the spilling of Palestinian blood," but the spilling of blood for the cause of Palestinian independence and dignity, as he sees it, is an inevitable, even necessary sacrifice. At least 160 Palestinians, most of them Fatah, died in that week of war last month, including 45 civilians, and some 800 were wounded, according to the Mezan Center for Human Rights in Gaza. Another 50 were killed in an earlier round of fighting, in May. No matter what happens now, Hilal said, "it will not be worse than the previous period of chaos, nothing worse can come. And maybe now we have the chance to move very seriously to encourage the local economy, small business, agriculture. The most important thing is that we have got rid of the mafia that exists in the security apparatuses and that paralyzed our daily life."

By "mafia" he means Fatah -- or at least the leadership of Fatah that he believes betrayed its duty to its own people. For Hilal, the recent battle was for the purity of Fatah, which he maintains he represents against what he calls "the polluted stream" of Fatah, "the diverted ones," who betrayed Palestinian aspirations for independence at Oslo and became entranced by Israeli and American approval and gold. The major mistake of Arafat and Fatah was to accept the Oslo accords, Hilal says, and those who opposed the accords then -- <u>Hamas</u> and Islamic Jihad -- were correct. "I am pro-peace and anti-Oslo," Hilal told me. "Oslo is a project for treason, not for peace."

The Palestinian Authority, an outgrowth of the accords, was not a government, in Hilal's view, but a welfare agency that has served Israeli interests. By keeping Palestinians focused on getting their monthly checks, it has enslaved them and prolonged the Israeli occupation of Palestine, instead of enabling Palestinians to build a real economy and nation. "Negotiations have become a good in themselves after Oslo, and that's a complete failure," he said. "The Palestinians only talk, and the Israelis are happy. They can negotiate forever and seduce these collaborators with money, V.I.P. treatment, exit visas, cars, businesses and monopolies.

"It's a form of control, of colonialism," Hilal went on. "When the Palestinian Authority employs 180,000 people, you drive them away from the real issue, you hold them by their neck and you make them dependent on the system. If you agree with Oslo, you get benefits and jobs. For those who resist, nothing; the price is sometimes to be killed." There is no real economy in the Palestinian territories, he said, noting that the authority has to rely on foreign aid even to pay its swollen wage bill for employees who do little work. "Instead of decent jobs, we have these colonial handouts, and the corrupted ones take their cut of everything," he said. He paused a moment, then added, "You can control an animal by feeding it, but a human being will start to think."

Born in southern Gaza a year after the 1967 war, Hilal came of age in the refugee camps of Khan Yunis. His family fled from Bashit, a village in what is now central Israel, during the 1948 war. The village was destroyed, he notes coldly, replaced by what he calls "the Jewish settlements" of Benaya and Aseret.

He grew up under Israeli occupation in the twisting, fetid alleys of Khan Yunis, only a few yards from the home of Muhammad Dahlan. Dahlan, seven years older than Hilal, would become Fatah's security chief in Gaza. Hilal once worked for him, then came to despise him.

Hilal was radicalized early. "I was no observer," he says now. "I was arrested two days before I turned 16, because I threw a hand-made bomb toward an Israeli military jeep in Khan Yunis." He spent the next 11 years, from 1984 to 1995, in six different Israeli prisons, from the most secure, in Ashkelon, to the most difficult, in the Negev tent prison of Ketziot, which was shut down for a time after international protests. "I paid the price," Hilal says flatly. "Many like me paid the price. Though our economic situation then was better than in any Arab country, we cared more about fighting the occupation than about bread or school. The occupation arrested us to put an end to all these emotions in us. But it backfired."

Like Maxim Gorky, he said that "prison was my university," and then he laughed. A year in Israeli prison, he says, "is like 10 years outside in terms of educational consciousness and commitment to your country, transferring it to a faith inside yourself. That's the most powerful incentive, to sacrifice for your country with consciousness. It's not about passion." Every Palestinian entering prison chose a faction; he chose Fatah, he says, because of Arafat. Most prisoners belonged to Fatah, and they met three times a day, for 90 minutes a session, to learn about the history of Palestine, the Arab world and the Fatah program. They also studied what Hilal calls "political science and military science." They studied languages; he chose to learn Hebrew, which he speaks and reads easily.

After the Oslo accords, which brought Arafat and the P.L.O. back from exile in Tunis, thousands of Palestinian prisoners were released, but not Hilal. "I opposed Oslo from the beginning," he says. "I was the representative of all the factions in Ketziot then, and the Israelis knew I opposed Oslo. Not because I oppose peace, but because I didn't trust the Israelis and military occupation."

Fatah split bitterly over Oslo, with Farouk Kaddoumi, Arafat's No. 2 in the faction, remaining in exile. When Hilal was finally released in 1995, Arafat persuaded him to "give Oslo a try" and work in the Palestinian Authority. He served in the presidential-security detail from 1996 until 2002, the second year of the second intifada. He then became a leader of Fatah's Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades -- set up by Arafat to compete with <u>Hamas</u>'s military wing, and using many of the same tactics, including killing Israeli civilians -- and was a close aide to Samir al-Masharawi, who was Muhammad Dahlan's right-hand man.

Then, following <u>Hamas</u>'s victory in January 2006, Hilal left Fatah, soon becoming spokesman for the minister of the interior in the new <u>Hamas</u> government. Why? "I discovered there were traitors in conspiracy against our Palestinian cause," Hilal told me. "Even Arafat understood by 2002 that Israel and America were looking for collaborators, not partners for peace." For Hilal, the symbol of the rot in Fatah was the dapper Dahlan, the boy who grew up near him in Khan Yunis and who became a favorite of the Israelis and the Americans. "Dahlan is an American employee," Hilal said. "I heard Arafat say that myself."

Ahmed Hillis, a critic of Dahlan who nonetheless remained in Gaza as a leader of Fatah after last month's fighting, dismisses Hilal's claim to hold true to the ideals of the organization. "He's <u>Hamas</u> now," Hillis says. "He was kicked out of Fatah a long time ago."

Ziad Abu Ein, a Fatah leader in Ramallah, knew Hilal in Ashkelon prison and respected him. He says he believes that Hilal left Fatah over a difference about money and sponsorship. "For the sake of dollars he left the official channels and went to <u>Hamas</u> seeking funding," Ein said. "He doesn't represent Fatah anymore; he was fired when he joined the <u>Hamas</u> government. Fatah doesn't need mercenaries. He sold himself to <u>Hamas</u>, even though he claims he is Fatah."

Hilal scoffs at the charge. And in fact he seems sincere in his anger with Fatah and in his belief that those who supported Oslo and negotiations with Israel, led by Abbas, have lost their way and lost touch with the real life of Gaza's people.

<u>Hamas</u> won the January 2006 elections for many reasons, but prime among them was a general disgust that had built among Palestinians, and among many members of Fatah like Hilal, at the corruption of Fatah's men at the top. They may have begun as revolutionaries, but they ended up as padded bureaucrats, benefiting from the privileges that their supposed adversary, Israel, was eager to provide them. One Israeli negotiator in the days of Camp David, Gidi Grinstein, recently described how Fatah's leaders would travel only first class, with junior staff traveling in business. Only Israeli cabinet ministers could travel business class, Grinstein noted. "We used to joke that they were the 'full-belly revolutionaries,' " he said. "Dahlan was a kid from a refugee camp who lived in a palace."

Dahlan, who has always denied corruption charges, used to control monopolies on oil supplies into Gaza and on exit permits. Fatah took a big cut of the import and export business at the Karni crossing on the Israeli border. But there was also Ahmed Qurei, the former prime minister known as Abu Ala, who was famous for his factory in Abu Dis, which was widely reported to supply cement for the building of some Israeli settlements and even for the separation wall.

Fatah lost touch not only with the grass roots but also with its soul, and when it largely traded armed resistance against Israel for negotiations that failed to produce either peace or a better life for Palestinians, it seemed to lose a certain amount of self-respect. When Arafat died, it lost its defining symbol, the one charismatic man who combined the idea of war and politics in his tiny, uniformed self, his kaffiyeh carefully tied in the shape of British Mandate Palestine, and who could gather together the many strands of Palestinian politics.

Even the gunmen of Fatah's Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades began to lose faith in their leaders, especially in Abbas. He had trouble paying them, but more important, his sincere, open and brave commitment to nonviolence seemed to them a surrender to Israeli occupation.

<u>Hamas</u>, working to Islamicize Palestinians and recruit them, combined religious fervor, well-financed charitable and social work and an effective strategy of military confrontation and terrorism. It is classified as a terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union, and both try to disrupt its financing through charitable contributions and bank transfers. Its choice to enter electoral politics was much discussed inside the movement and presented a profound change. It also meant that Fatah had a competitor for the first time, and one as well-financed as itself.

<u>Hamas</u> has a religious foundation, but it is also an intensely nationalist movement, with Palestine as its focus. <u>Hamas</u> continues to refuse to recognize the existence of Israel. But it has none of the grand ambitions of Osama Bin Laden or Al Qaeda to drive the "U.S. crusaders" out of the Middle East, nor does it aim at Americans; instead, <u>Hamas</u> sees Washington as a reality and wants the Americans to push Israel to leave lands it occupied after the 1967 war, although <u>Hamas</u> refuses to endorse a permanent two-state solution. <u>Hamas</u> is secretive and severe but also, in its way, pragmatic. (For example, it stopped carrying out suicide bombings inside pre-1967 Israel as of September 2004, judging them to be counterproductive.)

It was Muhammad Dahlan who organized the Gaza crackdown on <u>Hamas</u> in 1996, when on Arafat's orders, <u>Hamas</u> men were arrested and their beards shaved. Many were taken to the headquarters of the Preventive Security, which Dahlan headed, where, it was reported at the time, they were tortured. Sometimes, according to <u>Hamas</u> officials, men were made to sit on bottles and thus sodomize themselves. Ten years later, during one postelection round of fighting between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, men of the Preventive Security marched through the streets, chanting a slogan referencing that time, with particular messages for Ismail Haniya, the <u>Hamas</u> prime minister, and Mahmoud Zahar, then the <u>Hamas</u> foreign minister. "Zahar!" they chanted. "Tell Haniya! The time of the bottle is returning!"

When <u>Hamas</u> took over Gaza, its fighters wept as they raised their green flag over the Preventive Security building, then turned to Mecca and prayed. Then they looted the building and Dahlan's luxurious villa. Dahlan, who was in Cairo, did not return to Gaza but fled to the West Bank.

The fight between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in Gaza has been brutal ever since last year's elections brought <u>Hamas</u> to power. Fatah refused <u>Hamas</u>'s invitation to join in a coalition government. And, together with the security forces it had controlled since the Palestinian Authority was established after the 1993 Oslo accords, Fatah simply refused to recognize the legitimacy of <u>Hamas</u>, elected or not.

Even more, there were organized campaigns of crime and disruption from Fatah-run security forces, intended to make <u>Hamas</u>'s government untenable. Many Palestinians spoke of recognizing Fatah men as they hijacked cars or forced their way to the head of lines in hospitals and ministries. One family I met spoke of Fatah officers, called to stop a riot in Khan Yunis over a new delivery of cooking gas, forcing their way to the front of the line and taking the remaining gas canisters for themselves. Then there were the criminal gangs that, as Hilal put it, "hid under the umbrella of resistance and invented a slogan and bought the T-shirt and pretended to belong to the Brigades of Whatever."

Hilal, like the leaders of <u>Hamas</u>, says that Fatah security forces deliberately set out to undermine the new <u>Hamas</u> government. But in any case, the Fatah-dominated police were doing little to enforce the law or to confront armed gangs, some of whom also contained policemen. Nor were the courts in Gaza providing any form of justice, meaning Gazans who wanted retribution or protection found their own armed men, usually from their own clan, or hamulla.

To defend <u>Hamas</u> and to try to provide security on the streets, in April 2006, the Palestinian Authority's new interior minister, <u>Hamas</u>'s Said Siam, created the Executive Force, the parallel police force of volunteers, which President Abbas soon banned. No one in Gaza paid any attention to the ban. Hilal went to work for Siam and <u>Hamas</u>, agreeing with their attempt to bring security to Gazans, as <u>Hamas</u> had promised during its campaign. Hilal brought with him, he told me, 1,000 members of the Fatah-affiliated Aksa and Abu Rish Brigades, as well as representatives from other factional militias who were committed to fighting Israel, like the Popular Resistance Committees, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. (The Israeli security agency, Shin Bet, confirmed this information to me.)

"We can do more to provide security with 3,500 volunteers than the Palestinian security forces with their 70,000," Hilal said at the time, in one of a series of conversations we've had since <u>Hamas</u> took over. "We hold the gun out of faith and commitment to the national project, not for a salary. The main reason for the chaos is not the society, but the paralysis, weakness and corruption of the Palestinian Authority and its security forces, who just incite and do not do their jobs."

Hilal, who lives modestly with his wife and five children in the center of Gaza, is revered by many in the Executive Force, who regard him as clean, committed and logical. Akhaim al-Khalidi is one of them, a 23-year-old Fatah member from a Fatah family. He joined the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades in 2001 to fight the Israeli occupation, he told me recently. "But instead, many of them became corrupted, trying to find money," he said, especially as Arafat was being squeezed by Washington and Israel to stop paying so many gunmen. "Abu Hilal is an honorable man, and he is doing important work." Another Gazan fighter who supports Hilal, Muhammad Saqqa, is also Fatah but told me he admires *Hamas*. "Though we in Fatah were the fathers, I feel jealous of *Hamas* and their inspiration," he said. "They respect the young and the old, they're very secretive and disciplined, unlike Fatah. Don't consider them a stupid terrorist group. They're educated, organized, and they were elected. They distinguish between military and political and social work, and they are very honest with themselves."

Saqqa said that his father and one brother worked for Abbas's Presidential Guard; another brother worked for Fatah General Intelligence. But another brother joined <u>Hamas</u>'s military, the Qassam Brigades, while Saqqa himself joined the Executive Force. "My family criticizes me for dealing with <u>Hamas</u>, but <u>Hamas</u> are our brothers," he said, adding later, "Abu Hilal knows Fatah very well and understands its shortcomings."

By the time the fighting in Gaza began last month, the Executive Force had grown to nearly 6,000 well-trained men and had been made a part of the Palestinian Authority's security forces, and they were being paid. The Shin Bet says the force shared a military headquarters with the Qassam Brigades, and while retaliating for rocket fire into Israel, Israeli forces aimed at and destroyed nearly every facility of the Executive Force. Shin Bet officials refused to

discuss Hilal, despite his prominence and his years in Israeli prisons, but Israel clearly regards him as a danger. On May 17, an Israeli missile was fired at the bodyguards around Hilal's house. One of them, Talat Abed Haniya, 30, was killed, and four others were wounded.

Israel is now confronted with an excruciating if not quite existential dilemma. There is a hostile entity on its southern border, run by an armed group that is committed to fighting Israel and is opposed to its existence. Gaza has become comparable to southern Lebanon, which is run by Hezbollah. Israel let Hezbollah grow, feeling restrained by an international border and its own nightmares about its 18-year occupation of southern Lebanon. Many in Israel consider that policy of restraint to have been a considerable mistake. Should Israel now let a Gazan Hamastan grow, or try to take it out, hoping that Fatah can restore some semblance of authority there? Even before last month's rout of Fatah, there was already pressure from the Israeli Southern Command for a major incursion into Gaza to try to whack back growing *Hamas* power -- "to cut the grass," as the Israeli military chief of staff, Dan Halutz, told me when he was still in office.

The problem of Gaza will be the first to confront Ehud Barak, the new Israeli defense minister. Barak, who as prime minister tried and failed, with Bill Clinton, to cut the clotted mess with the Palestinians in one go, is also the most decorated soldier in Israel's history. A former army commando, Barak is likely to favor operations neater than massed-armor invasions of crowded refugee camps. But ambitious to be prime minister again, he is also unlikely to sit on his hands.

<u>Hamas</u> is likely to try to ensure that it gives Israel no provocation for such an incursion, needing the time to try to consolidate daily life in Gaza, which means working functionally with Israel on imports of fuel oil, electricity, milk, drugs and most everything else. Fighting Israel now will do nothing for <u>Hamas</u> or for Gazans who want <u>Hamas</u> to deliver on its promise of "change and reform," the slogan under which it won power.

Hilal says that he still believes, like Abbas and unlike <u>Hamas</u>, in a negotiated two-state solution. "But more and more," he explained, "Palestinians understand that a real peace is built on struggle, and it is made between enemies, not friends. The government that is an enemy to Israel but chosen by the people is the one able to make peace."

As you move around Gaza, along with the poverty and shoddy construction of everything except public buildings, a few lavish apartment houses and the mosques, what strikes you hardest is the increasing religious conservatism. Most of the people in the streets are men, and the <u>women</u> you see are almost invariably covered -- not just with a head scarf that surrounds the face and hides the hair, but with long, heavy dresses, usually black, that fall to the ankles. You notice the radical fervor of the martyr posters and the fierceness of the gunmen, but perhaps the biggest shock is how young everyone is. According to official figures from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 49 percent of the population of Gaza is 14 or younger; 60 percent are 19 or younger. Nearly 76 percent are under 30. So there is a lot of testosterone, not much sexual mingling and very few jobs.

For Hilal, this pressure cooker of youth, anger and lack of opportunity is necessary for the revolution in consciousness he maintains is happening. According to the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, 58 percent of those under 30 expect a more violent struggle with Israel over the next 5 to 10 years, and only 22 percent say that there will be a peaceful negotiated solution between Israel and the Palestinians. Forty-eight percent say they believe such an agreement is impossible; 20 percent more say that it will come only "in a few generations."

Nasreen al-Howh is a 26-year-old psychiatric social worker in Gaza, and she says that the constituency for peace is shrinking, especially among the young. "I'm very worried about this generation," she said recently, pulling at her white head covering. "They are very pessimistic and very vulnerable to appeals for mastery, for meaning." What they want, she says, is a sense that they can control their lives, and that their lives will have meaning. So they are susceptible to appeals from religious groups and armed groups that claim to be fighting Israel. She conceded that she, too, cannot imagine a final peace with Israel or a two-state solution. "The resistance camp is crowding out the peace camp," she told me. "So long as there's no peace, there's resistance."

Under pressure and without work, many young men "will try to avoid all that responsibility and go to the tanzim," she went on to say, referring to the militias. "The tanzim also gives them self-confidence; it alleviates the fear inside of them." Mkhaimer Abusada, who teaches at Al Azhar University, told me: "They can get \$100 working for the tanzim. They've lost perspective. They've lost the belief in peace. And they've lost faith in education -- in their future here."

It's not hard to find young people at loose ends, jobless and bored, admiring of the gunmen, ready to be inspired or recruited or manipulated or brainwashed into fighting for -- or against -- something larger than their own lives. Some want a job, but many believe that their only honorable future is in "struggle" or "resistance" against an Israel that they, like Hilal, believe does not keep its promises and is insincere about its willingness to leave Palestinian lands in return for peace.

Fadel Bsiso, a skinny and jobless teenager, sat with two friends in the smoky A-Shiraa coffee shop in Gaza City not long ago, nursing a single coffee and sharing a water-pipe. (Each pipe costs \$1.20 to rent with one bowl of tobacco.) His father "confronted the Israelis many times in the first intifada," he said proudly.

And Bsiso himself? "I've just got into one military faction," he said. Why join? "I feel I'm looking for protection," he said. "This is how I find it." Protection from whom? He looked stunned. "From Israel," he said. "It's a war, an endless war with them, mentioned even in the Koran. Our religion does not allow us to live with them."

But his father is Fatah, which recognizes a two-state solution, right? Bsiso shrugged: "The Jews are imposed on us. They have no roots here. They came and took our land and built a state, but we don't accept it."

One of the friends, Sakher Hillis, who is 19, broke in. "They chose a weak country, but they were surprised to find out we're strong," he said.

Bsiso said his father wants him to be a teacher. "But then he jokes and says, 'Even if you go as a martyr, I have seven others.' "

Hillis's own father is in <u>Hamas</u>. "I'm very pessimistic," he said. "But I feel I can give my life to the cause. I'm very bored with this life, honestly. This life has no meaning for me. If I can find a goal and achieve it, I can be optimistic. But this depression is inside of us."

Is religion part of the answer? "Religion plays a role because it encourages struggle," Hillis said. "It says fight in the name of God. I'm not extreme, I promise you -- this is normal."

The Palestinian poet Ahmed Dahbour is troubled by the turn to <u>Hamas</u> and religious and political extremism and has tried to understand it as an expression of frustration, especially generational frustration. Dahbour was 2 when his family fled Haifa into exile in 1948. "I'm the generation of the nakba," he told me recently -- the "catastrophe," as Palestinians refer to the establishment of Israel and their own flight or expulsion. "We fled with nothing, and my mother used to create for me an imaginary city, a paradise called 'Haifa.' The enemy was an idea. But this generation is different. This generation saw the Israeli soldier, and it is full of bitterness and envy."

He emphasized the patriarchal nature of Palestinian society, and the deep humiliation suffered by a father who cannot protect his family from invasion, incursion, poverty, unemployment and fear. "The fathers feel shame, but so do the sons," Dahbour said. "The sons become martyrs, not the fathers."

Then he added, "The revolution of the sons is to protect the dignity of the fathers."

"This suffering and these deaths are the tax imposed on us by the occupation," Hilal told me. "We suffer and burn, but what causes revolution? Poverty, injustice and anger -- this is what leads to revolution, even in free countries. This is what gives us fuel to resist the occupation and create a revolution in our thinking."

Two phenomena are merging, he went on to say: "personal revenge and the national project." Israeli policies in Gaza and the West Bank, he's convinced, are stoking a third intifada, "more bloody and violent." Hilal is stoking it too, in his own way. The young generation now, with all its anger and hopelessness, is a necessary part of the

victory Hilal is sure will come -- when Israel, he believes, will come to terms with Palestinian nationalism and negotiate a future with an enemy it has been forced to respect.

"I think this generation will be the liberation generation," he said. "If in the past, 1 percent of the people went into resistance, from this generation, 20 percent or more will do it. This generation will be the one most ready to resist. This generation will be our liberation army."

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY TYLER HICKS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Load-Date: May 31, 2008



Captured Israeli soldier in good health: Palestinians

Prince George Citizen (British Columbia)

January 10, 2007 Wednesday

Final Edition

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Section: WORLD; Pg. 16

Length: 447 words

Byline: Associated Press

Dateline: GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip

Body

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) -- One of the Palestinian militant groups that captured an Israeli soldier last summer said Tuesday that the serviceman is in "good health," the first time it has given details about his condition.

But Abu Mujahid, spokesman for the Palestinian Resistance Committees (PRC), said Cpl. Gilad Shalit would not be freed until Israel gives in to demands to release more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners.

"Gilad Shalit is in good health and is being treated according to Islamic standards of dealing with prisoners of war," he said. "He has been in custody for 6 1/2 months and we are ready to keep him for years, so long as our demands are not met."

He did not elaborate on the "Islamic standards" of treating a prisoner, nor did he offer any proof about Shalit's condition.

The PRC was one of three militant groups linked to the Islamic militant group <u>Hamas</u> that tunnelled into Israel from the Gaza Strip on June 25 and captured Shalit. The abduction triggered a five-month Israeli offensive in Gaza, but Shalit has not been publicly seen or heard from since his capture.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said he is prepared to release some of the more than 9,000 Palestinian prisoners Israel is holding, but only after Shalit returns home. Egypt has been trying to mediate a deal, and during a recent trip to Israel, the Egyptian foreign minister said Shalit is still alive.

Abu Mujahid said the militants haven't softened their demand for the release of 1,000 prisoners, as well as all **women**, elderly and minors being held by Israel. "These demands won't change, in a day or two or a month or a year," he said.

Israel and the Palestinians agreed to a truce in Gaza in late November, just as internal Palestinian tensions erupted into violence.

More than 30 people have been killed in factional violence between <u>Hamas</u> and Fatah in the past month, including a **Hamas** militant who died Tuesday from wounds sustained in fighting last week, medical officials said.

Captured Israeli soldier in good health: Palestinians

The rival Palestinian groups have been locked in a power struggle since the Islamist <u>Hamas</u> defeated the more moderate Fatah in parliamentary elections last year.

Hamas controls the legislature and most government functions, while Fatah holds the powerful presidency.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas favours peace talks with Israel, while <u>Hamas</u> rejects the Jewish state's right to exist.

Abbas tried for months to persuade <u>Hamas</u> to join Fatah in a more moderate unity government, but negotiations collapsed in late November, touching off the latest round of infighting. He hopes a more moderate government could induce the West and Israel to lift crippling economic sanctions on the Palestinian Authority.

Load-Date: January 10, 2007



2 Killed in Second Day of Clashes Between Palestinian Factions

The New York Times
October 3, 2006 Tuesday
Late Edition - Final

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

Length: 864 words

Byline: By GREG MYRE; Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza.

Dateline: JERUSALEM, Oct. 2

Body

<u>Hamas</u> and Fatah, the two main Palestinian factions, on Monday traded gunfire and recriminations for a second day in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, leaving 2 people dead and about 20 wounded.

The Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, of <u>Hamas</u>, appealed for calm, and the clashes were not as intense or as widespread as on Sunday. Still, several shootouts erupted as Palestinian officials struggled to end the internal fighting.

"We reiterate to our people to be responsible, not to spread the circle of disagreements and conflict," Mr. Haniya told his cabinet.

However, in the southern Gaza town of Rafah, Fatah supporters held a large demonstration on Monday evening and clashed with members of the Executive Force, a security body established earlier this year by the <u>Hamas</u> government. A policeman and a demonstrator were killed, and more than a dozen people were wounded. In an effort to reduce tensions, the Executive Force pulled back from the main streets in Gaza City, where on Sunday it battled other security units and gunmen aligned with Fatah. In both Gaza and the West Bank, many shops, schools and government offices were closed.

Sunday's fighting, which left seven people dead and dozens wounded in Gaza, came at a time when <u>Hamas</u>, a militant Islamic group, and Fatah, a secular nationalist movement, were struggling to form a national unity government. After the clashes, the effort appears to have become even more complicated.

The Palestinians have a history of fierce but brief internal battles, often followed by relative calm. While Mr. Abbas and Mr. Haniya called for a halt to the bloodshed, officials on each side blamed the other for starting the violence.

The <u>Hamas</u> government "moves from failure to failure and from crisis to crisis," Ahmed Abdel Rahman, a senior Fatah official, said Monday in the West Bank city of Ramallah. "The <u>Hamas</u> government is now endangering the Palestinian people."

Ahmed Yousef, a top adviser to Mr. Haniya, said that recent Fatah-led street protests were part of a broader effort to undermine the government. "We realized there was a plan by Fatah to occupy all government institutions, and we had to send a message," he said, but added that *Hamas* was prepared to restart talks on the unity government.

2 Killed in Second Day of Clashes Between Palestinian Factions

In other fighting Monday, Fatah and <u>Hamas</u> gunmen briefly traded fire at Gaza City's main hospital, Shifa, when a family came to retrieve the body of one of those killed Sunday. The shooting caused panic inside the hospital, but no serious injuries were reported.

Also in Gaza, militants set fire to the Agricultural Ministry, causing damage, although no one was hurt. In the West Bank city of Nablus, Fatah gunmen shot and wounded two bodyguards of Nasser al-Shaer, the deputy prime minister, who was not present. In Jericho, a shopkeeper who refused to take part in a general strike called by Fatah militants was shot and seriously wounded, Palestinians said.

In a speech Sunday night on Palestinian television, Mr. Abbas said, "These confrontations have crossed the red line, which we have avoided crossing for four decades."

Mr. Abbas also called for renewed negotiations on a unity government, though there was no immediate sign that more talks were planned. The discussions have been going on for months, and Mr. Abbas and Mr. Haniya announced an agreement in principle on Sept. 11. But since then, the talks have stalled.

A Palestinian fisherman was killed Monday just off Gaza's Mediterranean coast, in what Palestinian officials said was a shooting by an Israeli gunboat. The Israeli military said that naval vessels fired in the air several times to drive fishing boats back toward the shore, but that it was not aware that anyone had been hit.

Israel has imposed tight restrictions on Palestinian boats in recent months, accusing Palestinians of smuggling in weapons by sea.

The internal Palestinian fighting erupted Sunday when the Executive Force clashed with Fatah supporters in Gaza City and Khan Yunis, a town in southern Gaza.

Tensions have been building in recent weeks, as many government workers staged demonstrations to protest unpaid salaries. Many protesters are linked to Fatah, which controlled the Palestinian Authority government for more than a decade, until *Hamas* won parliamentary elections in January.

The <u>Hamas</u> government has been unable to pay salaries or govern effectively because the United States and the European Union, regarding <u>Hamas</u> as a terrorist group, have taken steps to cut off aid funds, and Israel has refused to turn over customs and other fees that it collects for the Palestinians.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, on a Middle Eastern trip, plans to meet with Palestinian and Israeli leaders on Wednesday and Thursday, though her agenda appears relatively modest, diplomats in the region said.

Ms. Rice, who will visit Saudi Arabia and Egypt first, will seek to find ways to ease the travel restrictions Israel has imposed on Palestinians and their goods, particularly in Gaza, the diplomats said. She brokered an agreement on Palestinian movements last November, but it quickly broke down.

http://www.nytimes.com

Graphic

Photo: A <u>women</u>'s center founded by <u>Hamas</u> was damaged in an attack near the West Bank town of Nablus. (Photo by Alaa Badarneh/European Pressphoto Agency)

Load-Date: October 3, 2006



Israel evacuates refugees from Gaza

The Advertiser (Australia)

June 22, 2007 Friday

Metro Edition

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Section: FOREIGN; Pg. 36

Length: 236 words

Byline: HOSSAM EZZEDINE, RAMALLAH, WEST BANK AND AGENCIES

Body

ISRAELI authorities yesterday evacuated more than two dozen Palestinian men anxious to flee the <u>Hamas</u>-run Gaza Strip into Egypt after several days waiting at a border, an army spokesman said.

Israel, with Cairo and the Palestinian Authority, decided to evacuate people holed up at the Erez border crossing between Gaza and the Jewish state, Lieutenant Shady Yassin said.

The authorities transported 60 Palestinians, including three <u>women</u>, to the Kerem Shalom crossing between Israel, Egypt and the Gaza Strip, he said.

Thirty-two were members of the preventive security force, one of the mainstream forces routed by <u>Hamas</u> last week.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak yesterday invited the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders to a peace summit next week, Palestinian officials said. The regional gathering is the biggest show of support yet by moderate Arab states for beleaguered Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in his bitter showdown with the Islamic militants, who took control of Gaza last week.

Meanwhile, 75 per cent of Palestinians support holding early elections, a poll published last night shows.

Taken by the independent Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research, it was conducted during and after the takeover and pegs support for Mr Abbas at 49 per cent, with deposed Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of <u>Hamas</u> on 42 per cent.

More than half, 59 per cent, say *Hamas* and Fatah are equally to blame.

Load-Date: June 22, 2007



Israeli Shelling Kills 18 Gazans; Anger Boils Up - Correction Appended

The New York Times

November 9, 2006 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

Correction Appended

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Section: Section A; Column 1; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1402 words

Byline: By IAN FISHER and STEVEN ERLANGER; lan Fisher reported from Beit Hanun, and Steven Erlanger from

Jerusalem. Taghreed El-Khodary contributed reporting from Gaza.

Dateline: BEIT HANUN, Gaza Strip, Nov. 8

Body

Israeli tank shells killed 18 Palestinians, including 8 children and 6 **women**, at a cluster of houses here on Wednesday, one of the largest single losses of life in Gaza in years.

Some <u>Hamas</u> leaders called for a suicide-bombing retaliation inside Israel and, unusually, for the United States to be taught "hard lessons" as well.

"Nothing happened," mumbled Isra Athamnah, 5 years old, who was pocked with shrapnel and in shock. The news that her widowed mother, Sanaa, 35, was dead and that she was now an orphan did not sink in.

Others described how a tank shell had hit a home here in northern Gaza, sending members of the extended Athamnah family outside before dawn. The next volleys struck them as they crowded in a narrow alley between the houses. The dead ranged from less than a year old to 70 years old, witnesses said.

Israeli leaders expressed regret. They have been on the defensive over their performance in the war against Hezbollah in Lebanon and the more than 300 Palestinians killed in operations in Gaza since the summer.

Defense Minister Amir Peretz ordered a halt to artillery attacks in the densely populated Gaza Strip, which are intended to prevent Palestinians from launching rockets into nearby Israeli cities, and an immediate investigation. Initial findings suggested a misfire, the commander of the south, Gen. Yoav Galant, told Israel's Channel 2 television.

After largely observing a unilateral truce that it declared a year and a half ago, <u>Hamas</u> called for renewed suicide bombings. Khaled Meshal, the leader of <u>Hamas</u>'s political bureau exiled in Syria, said <u>Hamas</u> would answer the deaths with "deeds, not words."

<u>Hamas</u>'s military wing also said in a statement that the United States should be taught "hard lessons" for supporting Israel. The threat, though vague, was an unusual escalation for <u>Hamas</u>, an Islamic-based militant group

that has pointedly portrayed its fight as being against Israel alone. It was immediately disavowed by Ghazi Hamad, the spokesman for the *Hamas*-led Palestinian government in Gaza.

The Israelis had just pulled out of Beit Hanun on Tuesday morning after a six-day operation in which they effectively occupied the town and fought battles with militants, many of them from <u>Hamas</u>. At least 52 Palestinians were killed, some 22 of them believed to be civilians, and one Israeli soldier was killed in the operation, which was aimed at stopping Palestinian rocket fire into Israel.

Nonetheless on Wednesday, according to the army, 13 rockets were fired into Israel.

The Israeli military said it had launched a preventive artillery barrage in response to about 10 rockets fired in the previous 24 hours.

This is not the first time Israeli shelling has gone awry, hitting houses in Beit Hanun and nearby Beit Lahiya. And it is not the first time that errant rounds have led to a halt or delay in efforts to find new paths of dialogue between Israel and the Palestinians, and among the Palestinian factions themselves.

The Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, and Prime Minister Ismail Haniya, both of whom gave blood for the victims and visited them in hospitals, have been engaged in two days of supposedly climactic talks on a government to replace the one run by *Hamas*, which is isolated internationally.

The intention is to have a government of "national unity," made up of experts and technocrats approved by the various parties, in the hope that Western aid and Palestinian tax money will again begin to flow. The Palestinian Authority has been unable to pay full salaries for nine months.

The idea was also to have the new government release an Israeli soldier captured on June 25, which would prompt Israel to free hundreds of Palestinian prisoners and to arrange a long-delayed meeting between Mr. Abbas and Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

But this latest shelling, on top of the Beit Hanun operation, which Mr. Abbas and Mr. Haniya had already called a "massacre," caused Mr. Haniya to request a pause in the talks for three days of mourning.

In June, a similar cycle followed another apparently errant Israeli shell that killed Palestinian civilians, including seven members of a single family, the Ghaliyas, who were enjoying a day at the beach. The Israelis said they were shelling areas where rocket teams had fired into Israel, and denied that the shell that killed the Ghaliyas was theirs.

But no Palestinian believed the Israeli denial, there was never any conclusive alternative explanation and the military wing of <u>Hamas</u> announced that it was ending the cease-fire against Israel. The <u>Hamas</u> government belatedly went along, and <u>Hamas</u> started firing rockets again toward Israel, instead of simply supplying them to others.

More important, the <u>Hamas</u> military wing took part in the capture of the Israeli soldier, Cpl. Gilad Shalit, later in June, setting off the political crisis that surrounded -- and has outlasted -- Israel's summertime war against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Only days before the June shelling, Mr. Abbas and Mr. Olmert met together informally in Petra, Jordan, and promised to have a formal meeting within two weeks, actually setting a date for June 28, to begin their relationship afresh. Mr. Olmert promised Mr. Abbas to release 600 prisoners then. But with the capture of Corporal Shalit, the *Hamas* government found itself unable to repudiate the actions of its own military wing, apparently directed from Syria by Mr. Meshal.

<u>Hamas</u> later said it would reinstate the truce with Israel, but it might now break it again, and more decisively, because its experiment in government appeared to be foundering.

"I don't believe in the rockets, but their reactions cannot be justified," Mr. Abbas said of the Israelis. "We totally condemn the international silence and any acts that can be used as justification for the Israeli massacres."

Israeli Shelling Kills 18 Gazans; Anger Boils Up

Leaders at the United Nations and the European Union, and in Russia, Britain and Italy, did condemn the incident. "It is hard to see what this action was meant to achieve and how it can be justified," said the British foreign secretary, Margaret Beckett.

Gordon Johndroe, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council, called for restraint by all parties, adding: "We deeply regret the injuries and loss of life in Gaza today. We have seen the Israeli government's apology and hope their investigation will be completed quickly."

A similar statement was issued in President Bush's name.

Witnesses said the shelling began about 5:30 a.m. Ali Athamnah, 29, a doctor, said he heard the crash of a shell, then glass from a window spattered on his face. He looked down from his second-story balcony and saw one relative, Ahmad, wounded and scores of other family members running outside.

Then the other shells hit, and he did not see the crowd standing anymore. "They just left -- they withdrew," he said, walking over puddles filled with blood, spattered human remains and sandals, many belonging to children.

"Children! <u>Women!</u> Parents!" said Abu Ahman, 42, a rescue worker who lives on the street and arrived right after the rockets hit. "I can't find the words that describe this action -- legs of children, head of a small girl."

At the Kamal Adwan Hospital, Maali Athamnah, 27, the aunt of the newly orphaned Isra and two other siblings who survived, Islam, 14, and Muhammad, 3, who broke both his legs, broke into tears reading a list of the dead, nearly all of them relatives. Another 80 people were wounded.

Ms. Athamnah said she did not support the militants' firing rockets into Israel. But she said: "Just think who is firing them: those who lost family members to Israel. And think about these kids now. They will be the rocket firers in the future. No mother, no father. No house. They will be the next ones to fire the rockets."

On Wednesday night, Israeli rockets killed Ahmed Awad and another <u>Hamas</u> member in Gaza City. Mr. Awad was said to be a rocket maker and the son-in-law of the **Hamas** foreign minister, Mahmoud Zahar.

In the West Bank on Wednesday, Israeli soldiers killed four gunmen and a civilian during a raid near Jenin, Palestinian security officials said.

Israeli forces also killed a <u>Hamas</u> gunman and a 17-year-old civilian near the Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza, hospital officials said. The Israeli Army said soldiers had shot three gunmen after being attacked with an antitank missile.

http://www.nytimes.com

Correction

A front-page article last Thursday about an Israeli military attack in the Gaza town of Beit Hanun that killed 18 Palestinians misstated the type of munitions used. They were artillery shells, not tank shells.

Correction-Date: November 16, 2006

Graphic

Israeli Shelling Kills 18 Gazans; Anger Boils Up

Photo: Palestinians in Beit Hanun carried a boy yesterday from the site of an Israeli attack that killed 18, including eight children, in a residential area. (Photo by Ibraheem Abu Mustafa/Reuters)(pg. A24)Map of Gaza Strip highlighting Beit Hanun: Soon after troops left Beit Hanun, rockets were fired into Israel. (pg. A24)

Load-Date: November 9, 2006



U.S. offers Palestinians aid, meetings

The Record (Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario)

July 17, 2007 Tuesday

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Section: FRONT; Pg. A5

Length: 308 words

Byline: New York Times News Service

Dateline: WASHINGTON

Body

Citing a pivotal "moment of choice" in the Mideast, U.S. President George W. Bush yesterday sought to reinvigorate his push for the creation of a Palestinian state by offering a package of money and meetings.

At the heart of the plan is a fall conference chaired by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that will include leaders from Israel, the Palestinian Authority headed by President Mahmoud Abbas, "and their neighbours in the region."

"This is a moment of clarity for all Palestinians, and now comes a moment of choice," Bush said, referring to the struggle between Abbas's Fatah and the militant Islamic group *Hamas* for control of Palestinian leadership.

He noted that the moment follows five years of change -- "some hopeful, some dispiriting."

The deteriorating situation in Palestine suffered a significant blow in June when <u>Hamas</u> took control of Gaza by military force. That left Fatah controlling only the West Bank.

Bush, in remarks at the White House, called the <u>Hamas</u> action a "lawless and violent takeover," and the U.S. actions announced yesterday were clearly intended to bolster Abbas and isolate <u>Hamas</u>. "Only the Palestinians can decide which of these courses to pursue," Bush said. "Yet all responsible nations have the duty to help clarify the way forward."

Rice's fall conference will review progress toward creation of democratic institutions in Palestine and provide international support for creation of a Palestinian state. Bush urged Arab states to "show strong support for" Abbas and reject *Hamas*'s "violent extremism."

Bush announced \$80 million in aid to help Palestinians shore up their security systems. He noted the U.S. had previously announced \$190 million for humanitarian relief in Gaza and had authorized the Overseas Private Investment Corp. to participate in a \$228-million lending program for Palestinian businesses.

Graphic

U.S. offers Palestinians aid, meetings

Photo: ASSOCIATED PRESS, Palestinian <u>women</u> hold framed pictures of relatives yesterday reported to be held in Israeli jails. Israel has pledged to free 250 Palestinian prisoners while President George W. Bush is renewing a push for the creation of a Palestinian state.

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PM vows continued air strikes after Israeli man killed by rocket

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

May 28, 2007 Monday

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Length: 515 words

Byline: Matthew Fisher, CanWest News Service

Dateline: JERUSALEM

Body

JERUSALEM -- Moments after learning an Israeli had been killed by a homemade Qassam rocket launched from the Palestinian territory, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declared yesterday that his government has no timetable to end retaliatory air strikes in the Gaza Strip whether or not <u>Hamas</u> and Islamic Jihad stopped the attacks.

"There will be no immunity for anyone involved in terror," Olmert said after the weekly cabinet meeting. "We are not subject to any timetable dictated by external bodies. We will decide when, where, and how we act."

Olmert's remarks seemed to be in response to hints late last week from <u>Hamas</u> that it was interested in establishing a new ceasefire and attempts by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, of the Fatah Movement, and Egyptian mediators to convince <u>Hamas</u> and Islamic Jihad to honour such a truce and to also consolidate a ceasefire between each other to avert a civil war. <u>Hamas</u> had formally expressed its willingness to participate in such talks late yesterday, according to the Jerusalem Post.

The Israeli air force and army were prepared "for a long confrontation that was intended to hit anyone involved in the shooting, anyone providing means to commit the attacks, and everyone involved," the prime minister added.

However, because of the random nature of the rocket barrages from Gaza, Olmert said that did not "want to create expectations that Qassam attacks might be stopped completely."

If the attacks continued, Defence Minister Amir Peretz said Israeli Defence Forces were prepared to go after a longer list of potential targets in Gaza and would consider limited ground operations. A small number of additional Israeli troops moved just inside Gaza late yesterday evening, joining others who have been there for nearly a week.

So far, more than 200 rockets have landed in Israel's so-called Gaza Belt including 16 that were fired during the weekend and two after Olmert vowed that Israel would continue its counter-attacks.

Oshri Oz, 35, died yesterday in the southern Israeli town of Sderot from shrapnel wounds caused when a rocket exploded beside his car, causing it to crash. An Israeli woman died of similar wounds after another rocket attack in Sderot last Monday.

PM vows continued air strikes after Israeli man killed by rocket

According to Israeli figures, 59 Palestinians including nine civilians have died in air strikes, which began after *Hamas* and Islamic Jihad resumed their rocket attacks against Israel after a lull of several months.

Seven <u>Hamas</u> members died during 10 attacks carried out on Saturday and yesterday by Israeli jets and helicopters on buildings and cars belonging to <u>Hamas</u>.

Meanwhile, 100 kilometres away, security was tight across Jerusalem yesterday after two Palestinians shot and wounded an Israeli border policeman and a security guard in the Sheikh Saad neighbourhood late Saturday. The gunmen, who had Israeli citizenship, rather than West Bank or Gaza papers like most such attackers, were killed when other guards returned fire, as was a Palestinian passerby.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which is the Fatah Movement's armed wing, claimed both dead men were its members.

Graphic

Colour Photo: Ammar Awad, Reuters; Palestinian <u>women</u> mourn at a funeral in Jerusalem yesterday. A passerby was killed late Saturday as Israeli security forces engaged in a shootout with two Palestinian gunmen in the Sheikh Saad neighbourhood of Jerusalem. An Israeli border policeman and a security guard were wounded.;

Colour Photo: Ehud Olmert: 'No immunity for terror';

Load-Date: May 28, 2007



Hundreds in Gaza Strip seek safety in West Bank

Telegraph Herald (Dubuque, IA)
June 20, 2007 Wednesday

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Section: C; Pg. 8 Length: 436 words

Byline: The Associated Press

Body

EREZ CROSSING, Gaza Strip (AP) - Trapped by Israeli tanks and <u>Hamas</u> gunmen, hundreds of terrified Palestinians holed up in a stench-filled concrete tunnel at a border crossing Tuesday, desperate to flee the Islamic militants now ruling the Gaza Strip.

Israel took in two people hit by <u>Hamas</u> gunfire, 24 hours after they were wounded in an assault on the tunnel, but officials remained steadfast in rejecting pleas to throw open the border. Three people wounded in the Gaza fighting last week also were allowed into Israel.

Israeli officials permitted a food shipment into Gaza for the first time since <u>Hamas</u> seized control in five days of fighting with the Fatah movement of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. That eased concerns about a humanitarian crisis in the impoverished coastal territory.

The crowd at the Erez crossing included dozens of Fatah fighters, who Israeli officials feared could destabilize the West Bank, which is separated from Gaza by about 30 miles of Israeli territory. Officials said most of those seeking to cross were not in danger.

As the standoff stretched on, the scene inside the 900-foot-long tunnel grew increasingly desperate.

<u>Women</u>, children and young men sat between two high concrete walls forming a corridor about 30 feet across, looking tired and grimy. Suitcases and trash were strewn about. Some people sat on mats, others on bare asphalt, including several men with bloody bandages on their legs.

A breeze barely stirred in the passage, which is lighted on the Israeli side. The tunnel has no toilets, and reeked of urine and sweat.

"It's disgusting. People are using the walls as toilets. The <u>women</u> are suffering," said one man, refusing to be identified out of fear for his safety. He said people were on edge and fighting over food.

In one instance, a crowd attacked a food cart, "and only the strong got the food," the man said. Later, Israel sent in five cartons of food, he said. "There was order because they made everybody sit down," he said.

The man said some in the tunnel feared *Hamas* members had infiltrated the crowd to spy on them.

Hundreds in Gaza Strip seek safety in West Bank

Late Monday, gunmen from a small <u>Hamas</u>-allied group, disguised as civilians, pulled guns and grenades out of their luggage and killed the nephew of a notorious Fatah militia leader who had been slain by a <u>Hamas</u> mob last week, witnesses said. Fifteen people were wounded.

Nearly 24 hours after the attack in the tunnel, Israel allowed in two of the wounded Tuesday, army and medical officials said. Three other Gazans wounded last week also were let in. The army did not identify the wounded, who were taken to Israeli hospitals.

Load-Date: July 19, 2007