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Gaza toll climbs as truce bid continues

Cabinet urges UN to stop Israeli offensive

GAZA CITY — Israeli air strikes killed 24 Palestinians Monday, taking the Gaza death toll past 100 as global efforts to broker a truce to end the worst violence in four years gathered pace.

In Riyadh, the Council of Ministers Monday strongly condemned the Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip, and urged the UN Security Council to stand firm and shoulder its responsibility to force Israel to cease forthwith its military campaigns against the innocent besieged Palestinians.

In the latest bloodshed, an Israeli missile killed a senior Islamic Jihad fighter in a strike on a Gaza City tower housing Palestinian and international media.

It was the second time in as many days Israeli warplanes have targeted the building, with Israel accusing the fighters of "cynically (using) those inside civilian-populated institutions as human shields."

As the violence raged for a

“ My son Mohammed refuses to eat. He follows me everywhere because he's so scared and asks me every 10 minutes when we're going to die.

**- Umm Jihad
A Palestinian mother**

sixth day, ceasefire efforts gathered steam, with Hamas officials in Cairo saying Egyptian-led talks with Israel were "positive" but now focused on the need to guarantee any truce.

Desperate for a safe haven, many Gaza families have fled their homes in search of a safe place, with

some seeking haven in the south, which has seen fewer strikes.

But they know nowhere is safe.

"My son Mohammed refuses to eat. He follows me everywhere because he's so scared and asks me every 10 minutes when we're going to die," said Umm Jihad, 37.

"He says he won't go back to school because he's scared he'll be martyred or that he'll come back from school and find that I or his brothers have been killed," she said.

Mourners flocked to the funeral of nine members of one family killed in a weekend strike on a Gaza City home, the tiny bodies of the five children carried through the streets wrapped in Palestinian flags.

"Do children fire rockets?" shouted a man through a loudspeaker, as the crowd roared back: "No!"

The violence, which comes as Israel gears up for a general election on Jan. 22, raised the spectre



A Palestinian woman reacts in front of a destroyed house after an Israeli air strike in Gaza City, Monday. — Reuters

of a broader Israeli military campaign like its 22-day Operation Cast Lead, launched at the end of December 2008.

Analysts say Israel's leadership appears satisfied with the success of Operation Pillar of Defense and that could it be ready for a ceasefire.

But the Jewish state has signalled it is ready to expand the operation.

And Gaza's Hamas rulers have been emboldened after securing the support of the recently installed Islamist governments of Egypt and

Tunisia. The overall death toll from the Israeli raids on the Palestinian territory hit 98, with another 21 people killed Monday.

The Israeli army said that 42 rockets had been fired so far on Monday and another 19 intercepted by the Iron Dome anti-missile system. To date, the Israeli military has struck more than 1,350 targets in Gaza, and 640 rockets have crashed into southern Israel while another 324 were intercepted.

The latest negotiations aimed at ending the conflict, conducted be-

hind closed doors in Cairo, ended without agreement.

But all sides have expressed a willingness to engage in more talks.

The Jewish state has showed little sign of being ready to call off or even briefly halt its campaign, with Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman insisting "the first and absolute condition for a truce is stopping all fire from Gaza." — Agencies

Vandalism of WB mosque condemned — P7

By Fatima Muhammad
Saudi Gazette

JEDDAH – The closure of a leading Jeddah private hospital as part of a medical malpractice investigation has not stopped it from treating patients as usual.

Hospital employees at Dr. Erfan & Bagedo General Hospital, which was closed down Sunday by officials from the Ministry of Health for 60 days in connection with allegations that it committed medical errors, were still working as usual on Monday, Saudi Gazette found.

Admission sections were still treating in-patients normally.

The heart section had 52 cases on Sunday, but this number had dropped to 26 by Monday.

Some patients and their families insisted on remaining in the hospital as they were familiar with their doctors and also could not be transferred easily to other hospitals without their health being compromised.

The pediatric section had almost 30 patients on Sunday, but this number dropped to 10 by Monday morning.

The mental health section, which had over 30 patients before the closure, moved six patients to other hospitals while the others still do not know where they will be transferred to and whether or not they will be admitted to government hospitals.

The hospital distributed a form to all in-patients asking them whether they wanted to stay in the hospital or not.

A female administrator said many cases in the heart section preferred to remain in the hospital, although a nurse supervisor told Saudi Gazette that many patients began to leave after the hospital was closed.

An official at the Ministry of Health said Sunday that the hospital is responsible for finding alternative health care providers for patients who still remain.

Hisham Arif, a patient at the hospital, said he had been treated by the hospital for 10 years.

He preferred to remain as he has just had an operation on his heart and is still being monitored by the hospital's medical team.

He criticized the decision to



The doors of Dr. Erfan & Bagedo General Hospital were still open for visitors and staff members, Monday. – SG photo

close down the hospital, calling it "irrational" and said that it did not take into consideration the critical situation of patients who needed to remain.

Asked if patients have been provided with alternative beds in other hospitals, he said: "We have to be realistic. There is a general lack of beds in Jeddah hospitals. When you go to any private hospital you will find it full, let alone public hospitals."

Another patient who has been

treated at the Ministry of Health's expense for the past seven months at the hospital, Yousuf Mustafa, has also refused to leave.

According to his family, he is old and his condition is critical, so he cannot be left without constant care from his doctors.

An administrative worker at the hospital told Saudi Gazette that two patients involved in automobile accidents that the ER received Sunday have still not been transferred

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Long-term diverse data collection opens medical frontiers

Saudi Gazette report

HOFUF – Prof. Konstantin Korokov, of St. Petersburg National Research University, distilled the essence of day two of the King of Organs heart conference in Hofuf Sunday in a short introduction to delegates.

Drawing on the experience of the preceding day and Monday's presentations he observed: "We should be open to a new type of science, the science of subtle influences."

The remark perfectly bracketed the day with its agenda of chronobiology, the study of the effect of time on biological events, especially repetitive or cyclic phenomena in

individuals. It involves the gathering and collation of vast swathes of data, some empirically produced and some anecdotal.

Chairwoman of the morning session Prof. Germaine Cornélissen when asked the point at which anecdotal evidence became scientifically valid said that the process of collating and cross-referencing the information from multiple disciplines should be systematically analyzed to build a new and scientific picture.

This precisely defines the thrust of the conference: To deliver a greater, holistic understanding of how the heart and humans are connected to and influenced by not simply terrestrial events but also

extra-terrestrial influences and influences yet unconsidered.

In a brief and precise presentation, Lutfallah Gari, engineer and historian, indicated the importance of folkloric and historical sources as suggestions for research. He described in detail the value of timing guides to treatment that Ibn Sina, a Persian polymath, who wrote almost 450 treatises on a wide range of subjects, placed on star, moon and circadian cycles for the treatment of diseases. Ibn Sina, who lived in the 10th century, is widely seen as a founder of empirical medicine based on experience.

Prof. Cornélissen opened the day with a detailed exposition that explained the value of long-term

data gathering – giving examples of medical data tracked from patients over 40 years – that when systematically analyzed gave greater understanding of the rhythms of the heart.

Blood pressure is not, she contended, necessarily an enemy; long-term data about the variables in blood pressure and how they are intimately related to times of day, month and year have led to more effective delivery of medication to a patient based on timing.

Work on the data so gathered for example turned up a surprise. Blood pressure amplitude is known to vary through the day in a

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KINGDOM



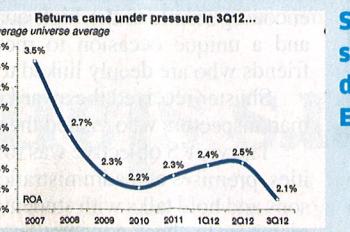
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German School awarded for its excellent standards

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ECONOMY



Saudi banks seen to post double-digit EPS growth

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SPORTS



India trounces England

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Saudi Gazette report

JEDDAH – Islamophobia has grown from an initial phase where it was defended in the name of freedom of expression as seen in the case of the blasphemous Danish cartoon to the stage where it has been institutionalized and politicized, said the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu here Monday.

He was addressing the "The Acts of Defamation Against Islam: Dimensions of Clash and Prospects of Coexistence between Islam and the West" symposium at OIC headquarters.

In the first phase, the world was in denial about Islamophobia. But in the second phase when Islamophobia took on a legal face as seen in the ban on minarets in Switzerland and on mosques in some European countries, there began to be some acknowledgment of the existence of Islamophobia, said the OIC secretary general.

In the current phase Islamophobia is used for political purposes as seen in the recent gains made by

extreme rightists in countries like Holland and France, and people have started speaking up about it. This was evident during the recent blasphemous film issue when US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke out strongly against the film.

Ihsanoglu said that OIC has established an Islamophobia Observatory and publishes reports on the issue. Its fifth report was issued two weeks ago.

Addressing the symposium Ambassador Mohammad Tayeb, Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs branch in Makkah region, said that historical wars such as the Crusades, European colonization, the Palestinian cause, secularism, and failure to understand Islam have contributed to the emergence of the term Islamophobia.

The Western media has also played a major role in advocating this concept, which refers to fear and hatred toward the Muslim people.

US Consul General Anne S. Casper said: "We consider the best

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RIYADH — Members of the Shoura Council have slammed the recent Ministry of Labor decision to fine companies SR200 for each foreign employee not allowed by their Saudization quotas effective from the start of the Hijra year.

Members said the ministry is an executive body, not a legislative one, and does not have the right to increase or reduce any fees for its services without referring to legislative authorities like the Shoura Council.

They said the ministry should have referred such a decision to them so its implications could be studied properly.

negative impact on businesses, they added.

Shoura member Maj. Gen. Abdulla Al-Sadoun said: "As we are a legislative body, any set of fines suggested by the ministry should first be sent to the council so it can be studied and reviewed from all angles. A specialist committee will first study the proposal before submitting its recommendations to the Council," he said.

"This is because the approval or rejection of such decisions comes under its jurisdiction.

"We support the ministry in making any decision to improve the income of Saudi employees in the private sector by fixing the

sALARIES.

Khalifa Al-Dowsary, another Council member, added: "The ministry must give reasons and justification to these businessmen."

"It should first explain the reasons behind such fees and refrain from taking such spontaneous decisions," he said.

Al-Dowsary said such decisions should be implemented gradually in stages in order to avoid any negative impact.

Saudi society, Al-Dowsary claimed, would be the first one to be affected by such decisions because affected businessmen would pass on the cost of such fines to consumers.

of Labor show any consideration with regard to the employment of Saudis or reducing the numbers of foreigners?

"The ministry always doesn't show any tolerance in its decisions and as far as it is concerned, you either take it or leave it.

"This shows that it has no room for diplomacy when it makes its decisions.

"The ministry must differentiate between Saudization and foreign workers.

"Citizens have the right to be employed in decent jobs because the government spends a lot on their education and training."

Opposing the ministry's deci-

Long-term diverse data collection opens medical frontiers

Continued from P1

rhythmic manner — the circadian rhythm — and is traceable with simple technology. The varying amplitude affects glucose tolerance and decreased rate variability — Circadian Hyper Amplitude Tension (CHAT) was found to be a much greater risk to a patient than hypertension. When both conditions coexisted, the increase in risk was larger than the addition of both risks. CHAT and reduced heart rate variability are two separate synergistic disease risk conditions, detected by a chronobiologic approach, even when they occur within the conventional normal range.

Dr. Yashiko Watanabe, Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine, further linked treatment to circadian (daily) rhythm when he presented data on the treatment of a cancerous tumor. Radiation treatment on the tumor proved 60 percent more effective, regression more rapid and remission up to two years longer when the tumor reached its daily peak temperature.

The cross-discipline fertilization extended much further afield than simply within medical sciences. Outer space and seismic events deep underground also made an appearance with varying degrees of success or credibility. The moon has long been seen as an influence on human life, from werewolves to tides. However, it, and the periodic cycles of solar activity from solar flares to magnetic storms are, through the meticulous sifting process of chronobiology and the identification of

patterns via statistical constructs, becoming more fully understood. At many levels, there is a forming realization that the environment affects us, and everything in it, in ways we are just beginning to identify.

Prof. Elchin Khalilov commenting on the progress of the conference said that trans-disciplinary monitoring of cosmic and geophysical effects on cardiovascular function was a new and essential development.

"This is an area of human research that has been overlooked," he said. "It will limit our ability to treat people and the most sensitive organ, the heart. I hope that this conference will begin to change all that."

Prof. Watanabe expanded the geophysical connection by reviewing a study he conducted during the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake in China. He noted that locomotor activity increased considerably in the 3-6 day period before and after the seismic event. This effect repeated itself in another earthquake in 1995. Constant monitoring of animals' heart and activity patterns might have some use as a predictor and has a deep grounding in history.

Fortunately Watanabe had 13 patients on 24-hour/30 minute monitoring when the 2011 earthquake and tsunami struck East Japan. He found significant changes in the systolic blood pressure leading up to the earthquake and peaked a day after, perhaps indicating that in some as yet unknown manner, the patients were unconsciously responding to geophysical changes prior to the event.



Civil Defense teams secure a water-clogged street near Yanbu-Rabegh Expressway.

35 get trapped in he

By Abdul Rahman Al-Ali
Saudi Gazette

JEDDAH — One person drowned while another 35 people were trapped when heavy rains struck many villages in Rabegh, according to the Makkah Region Civil Defense.

Those trapped in Mastourah, one of the villages hit hardest by the heavy rains, were rescued by firefighters, said regional Civil Defense spokesman Col. Saeed Sarhan, adding the drowned person was from the same village and has not been identified yet.

All neighborhoods of Al-Abwa Town were affected while traffic flow on the Yanbu-Rabegh Expressway was disrupted when the streets filled with

rainwater. One floods was provi

Col. Sarhan beg and Al-Ka Civil Defense se the area.

He pointed more aware of hing that people from valleys.

Brig. Muham security aircraft aircraft, one from made short flight save a trapped p

Oman Consulate celebrates

By Samar Yahya
Saudi Gazette

JEDDAH — The Omani Consul-

