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Middle East News: World Press Roundup

Pres. Abbas signals willingness on proximity talks. Roger Cohen sees reasons for hope. Lara Friedman and Daniel Seidemann list the top 10 myths on settlement activity promoted by Israel's Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, who is interviewed by the LA Times. Two Palestinian children are being tried in a military court for stonethrowing. Abbas issues a decree banning settlement goods. Israel reprimands soldiers in "avoidable" deaths of four Palestinians. Palestinian girls participate in Intel's youth science fair. AP profiles PM Fayyad's new brand of politics. More reports suggest Israel has instituted a de facto settlement freeze in Jerusalem, and has demolished 10 settler houses. Palestinians agree to reshuffle the cabinet. Bradley Burston says hating Pres. Obama is becoming a religion in Israel. Haggai Alon says the siege of Gaza spurs Muslim anger.

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Israel: Abbas Signals Readiness for Indirect Peace Talks

Media Outlet: Associated Press

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/middleeast/27briefs-Israel.html?ref=midd...> [6]

Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian president, signaled Monday that he was ready to start indirect peace talks with Israel. Mr. Abbas, left, told Israeli television that he would present the

American proposal for talks to the Arab League this week, and we hope that the reply will be positive. The talks were derailed last month after Israel announced a new housing development in East Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as their capital. Jerusalem officials have said the government has effectively frozen new Jewish construction in East Jerusalem.

Beating the Mideast's Black Hole

Article Author(s): Roger Cohen

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/opinion/27iht-edcohen.html?ref=opinion>
[7]

The U.S. Middle East envoy, George Mitchell, has come and gone, again, with peace talks still on hold and one Israeli commentator, Yossi Sarid, musing that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a black hole that swallows up goodwill ambassadors through the ages.

I can't argue with that. Cold wars come and go, new technologies transform the world, but the clash of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism in the Holy Land defeats resolution.

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat on Jewish housing

Article Author(s): Edmund Sanders

Media Outlet: The Los Angeles Times

Article Type: Interview

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.latimes.com/news/custom/topofthetimes/topstories/la-fg-jerusalem-bark...> [8]

When Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat took office 18 months ago, he was heralded as a secular, progressive high-tech entrepreneur who would apply his business savvy to modernizing the ancient city, particularly after five years under an ultra-Orthodox leader.

Barkat hired the same consultants as Disney for advice about crowd management and stood up to ultra-Orthodox demonstrators who demanded that he close city parking lots on the Sabbath.

Children stand trial for stone throwing

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=279823> [9]

Fourteen and 15-year-old brothers stood trial at Ofer's military court on Monday, facing charges of throwing stones at Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank.

The boys, Nadim and Jihad Basim Kawazba from Bethlehem's Al-Minya neighborhood, were recommended for sentences of three and four months detention but the judge's decision was delayed when lawyers Eyhab Al-Ghaleith and Iyad Misk requested that the hearing be postponed until Thursday.

Abbas signs anti-settlement legislation

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=279636> [10]

President Mahmoud Abbas on Monday signed into law a ban on Israeli settlement goods in Palestinian markets.

The move officially makes trade in settlement goods a criminal offense, and follows weeks of deliberations and declarations.

Abbas legal advisor Hasan Al-Ouri was quoted by the official Palestinian news agency Wafa as saying the regulations would target "the cancers found in the Palestinian body, which target the Palestinian people's humanity, soil, and fate."

Israel commanders reprimanded for W.Bank shootings

Article Author(s): Ori Lewis

Media Outlet: Reuters

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LDE63Q0TZ.htm> [11]

Israel's army chief has reprimanded two senior officers over the killing of four Palestinians in two separate shooting incidents in the West Bank last month, the military said on Tuesday.

Lieutenant-General Gabi Ashkenazi determined after military investigations of the incidents that commanders and soldiers could have behaved differently to avoid the killings.

In the first incident, two teenagers were shot dead in the village of Iraq Burin on March 20 as troops moved in to protect Jewish settlers from Palestinians protesting against Israeli settlement policy.

Palestinian girls get ticket to Intel science fair

Article Author(s): Grant Slater

Media Outlet: The Statesman

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/palestinian-girls-get-ticket-to-intel-scienc...> [12]

Watching her blind aunt and uncle struggle to navigate the steep slopes and scant sidewalks of this hilly city, one Palestinian girl decided to reinvent the stick.

Armed with spare parts that are hard to find in the West Bank, Asil Abu Lil and two classmates patched together an obstacle-detecting cane that has won them a trip to San Jose, California, for Intel Corp.'s international youth science fair.

The three girls are the first Palestinians to participate in the prestigious event.

A new style of politics in the West Bank

Article Author(s): Mohammed Daraghmeh

Media Outlet: The Statesman

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/a-new-style-of-politics-in-the-west-628598....> [13]

Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad is quietly changing the rules of the Arab-Israeli conflict with a simple credo: Palestinians have to build their state now and cannot wait for an elusive peace deal with Israel.

He is moving ahead with an ambitious plan to get the Palestinians ready for statehood by August 2011 by trying to build it from the ground up: paving roads, reforming the judiciary, planning new cities.

APNewsBreak: Israel halts east Jerusalem building

Article Author(s): Amy Teibel

Media Outlet: Associated Press

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/apnewsbreak-israel-halts-east-jerusalem-bui...> [14]

Israel's prime minister has effectively frozen new Jewish construction in east Jerusalem, municipal officials said Monday, reflecting the need to mend a serious rift with the U.S. and

get Mideast peace talks back on track.

The move comes despite Benjamin Netanyahu's repeated assertion he would never halt construction in east Jerusalem and risks angering hard-liners in his government. One lawmaker from Netanyahu's Likud Party warned the governing coalition could collapse over the issue.

Fatah okays cabinet reshuffle in exchange for more key portfolios

Media Outlet: Xinhua

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-04/27/c_13269687.htm
[15]

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party agreed that Prime Minister Salam Fayyad reshuffles his government but said that Fatah should enjoy more presentation in the cabinet, an official said on Tuesday.

Fatah's Revolutionary Council, which convened for three days in Ramallah, "agreed that amendments should be applied on the structure of the government in a way giving the movement (Fatah) more sovereign roles," Ameen Maqboul, a council member, told Voice of Palestine radio.

Israel razes 10 settlement houses built after freeze

Article Author(s): Nir Hasson
Chaim Levinson

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1165709.html> [16]

Israel Defense Forces troops on Tuesday destroyed at least 10 structures built by Israeli nationalists in the West Bank following Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's declaration of a temporary settlement freeze last year.

As security forces and Civil Administration officials arrived in the various outposts - which included East Ba'al Hatzor, Maoz Esther and Ramat Migron - settlers youths barricaded themselves in the structures to protest their demolition.

Some of the teenagers also hurled burning tires at the security forces, leading to two arrests.

Ritual terrorism: Hating Obama as a new form of religion

Article Author(s): Bradley Burston

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1165443.html> ^[17]

When I was young, I was taught that the purpose of religion was to foster compassion through lovingkindness, to seek peace by example, to perform with human hands the work of angels.

Then I moved to the Holy Land.

Gaza is the fuel for Muslim world's anti-Israel struggle

Article Author(s): Haggai Alon

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1165652.html> ^[18]

The events of the past few days have created two illusions. One is that Israel and the United States are equal; the other is that the problem is Jerusalem. These illusions are dangerous for Israel, in that they create a dangerous diplomatic perception and self-image.

Abbas 'ready' for proximity talks

Article Author(s): Khaled Abu Toameh

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=174002> ^[19]

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's readiness to enter proximity talks with Israel, which he announced during an interview with Channel 2 Monday evening, follows assurances the Palestinians received from US special Middle East envoy George Mitchell that the Israeli government would effectively freeze construction of new homes in some of Jerusalem's neighborhoods, a PA official in Ramallah told The Jerusalem Post.

Is there a de facto east Jerusalem construction freeze?

Article Author(s): Abe Selig

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Date: April 26, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/Israel/Article.aspx?id=173984> [20]

The government has imposed a de facto freeze on new Jewish construction projects in east Jerusalem despite Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's public insistence to the contrary, Jerusalem Municipality officials said on Monday.

While whether the slowdown actually constitutes a moratorium, or how long it will last, remains unclear, the apparent freeze likely reflects Netanyahu's need to mend the current rift with the US regarding construction over the Green Line, on lands the Palestinians claim for a future state, and to bring the Palestinians back to the negotiating table.

Top 10 Myths Likely to be Heard from Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat in Washington this week

Article Author(s): Lara Friedman

Media Outlet: Americans For Peace Now

Date: April 27, 2010

Source Link(s): http://peacenow.org/entries/top_10_barkat_myths [21]

This week Jerusalem mayor Nir Barkat will be in Washington. He will be holding meetings with Members of Congress, Administration officials, think tanks, and the press.

These interactions offer an excellent opportunity to hear the mayor's views about the Jerusalem-related issues of contention right now between his government and the Obama Administration.

While Mayor Barkat has a right to hold any opinions he wishes, the facts are important and, when and if he deviates from them, he should be challenged.

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