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Middle East News: World Press Roundup

NEWS: Palestinian leaders say they will skip forming an interim unity government and go directly to elections. Israel may be considering releasing withheld Palestinian tax revenue, as PM Fayyad says the sanctions are taking their toll. Deputy FM Ayalon says the collapse of the PA "would not be the end of the world" for Israel. Supporters of Israel intensify outreach efforts aimed at the African-American community. A majority of Palestinians once again say they do not support armed struggle against the Israeli occupation. PM Netanyahu is strongly critical of the pro-democracy Arab uprisings. Christian groups are quarreling over who gets to repair the roof of the Church of the Nativity. Palestinian children create a human sculpture for peace. Israel delays controversial demolition plans for a bridge at a holy site. COMMENTARY: Akiva Eldar says Netanyahu has personally "won," but Israel has lost, many diplomatic battles. Chemi Shalev says the kind of support Israel is getting from most Republican candidates isn't worth having. The Jordan Times says Palestinians should remain united against Israeli bullying. Uri Avnery says Israel is paying a historic price for the consistent policy of blocking Palestinian statehood. Amira Hass outlines what she thinks Palestinian national reconciliation should accomplish. Karl Vick says Hamas is moving closer to the international mainstream. Neil Steinberg interviews the Israeli consul general in Chicago. Dan Ephron reviews a new documentary about Israeli military tribunals in the occupied territories. Amir Oren says there are two legal processes set for January that could bring down the Israeli government. Gershom Gorenberg says "price tag" violence, extreme segregation and other occupation phenomena are coming home to Israel itself.

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Hamas: Palestinians to skip interim government

Article Author(s): Mohammed Daraghmeh

Media Outlet: The Associated Press

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 27, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/hamas-palestinians-to-skip-interim-governme...> [6]

The Palestinians' rival leaders have quietly decided to keep their respective governments in the West Bank and Gaza in place until elections, a senior Hamas figure told The Associated Press. This proposal would remove a major obstacle to efforts to reconcile the factions: the need to form an interim unity government.

A representative of Hamas' rival, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, denied that such a deal was struck. Abbas envoy Azzam al-Ahmed insisted there was no agreement and "no possibility of holding elections without a unity government."

Israel to reconsider PA tax freeze

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=440095> [7]

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Monday that Israel was considering the release of Palestinian tax revenues, which it has frozen for over a month.

Netanyahu is expected to announce the proposal during a Monday discussion in the Knesset's foreign affairs and defense committee, the Israeli daily Haaretz reported.

Netanyahu's aide said that the change in policy would be in the interest of preventing the collapse of the Palestinian Authority.

Palestinian PM: Israeli sanctions starting to bite

Article Author(s): Mohammed Daraghmeh

Media Outlet: Associated Press

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 27, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/palestinian-pm-israeli-sanctions-starting-t...> [8]

Israeli economic sanctions against the Palestinians, in retaliation for their bid to win world recognition of a state of Palestine, have started to bite: officials said Sunday that they won't be able to pay the next round of public sector salaries that support nearly one-third of Palestinians, and that the damage to a fragile economy is devastating.

PA collapse 'not the end of the world' for Israel

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=439710> [9]

An Israeli official said Saturday evening on live television that if the Palestinian Authority collapses it would not be the "end of the world for Israel."

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon, Yedioth Ahronoth columnist Shimon Sheffer, former Palestinian minister Sufian Zayda, and Dove Viziglas, who was former adviser to Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, were analyzing the possibility of the PA disbanding on the television show "Face the press."

"The Palestinians have to know that they can't scare us by threatening to disband the PA," Ayalon said.

Israel's backers step up efforts to win African-American support

Article Author(s): Heather Higgins

Media Outlet: CNN

Article Type: Blog

Date: November 26, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://religion.blogs.cnn.com/2011/11/26/israels-backers-step-up-efforts-to-win-...> [10]

The aroma of allspice wafted through the air as calypso melodies and gospel voices brought more than four dozen people to their feet, a typical community gathering in the heavily West Indian neighborhood of East Flatbush, Brooklyn.

But no one could remember a meeting like this happening before. Inside a former Seventh-day Adventist church, there were the beginnings of what some hope is a budding relationship between American blacks and Jews, with a major assist from some Christian Zionists.

Palestinian poll: 56% oppose armed struggle against Israel

Article Author(s): Elior Levy

Media Outlet: Ynetnews

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4153900,00.html> ^[11]

A new poll carried out by the Palestinian Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC) reveals that support for Fatah among residents of the Palestinian Authority has not been hurt by the Shalit deal, which was completed between Hamas and Israel last month.

And yet, the Hamas-led Shalit deal still receives wall to wall support? 86% of those questioned expressed their satisfaction with the results of the deal? the satisfaction rate is close to that of the Israeli satisfaction rate with the deal.

Binyamin Netanyahu attacks Arab spring uprisings

Article Author(s): Harriet Sherwood

Media Outlet: The Guardian

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 24, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/nov/24/israel-netanyahu-attacks-arab-spring> ^[12]

Binyamin Netanyahu has launched a scathing attack on the uprisings in the Middle East, saying that Arab countries are "moving not forward, but backward" and support from the US and European countries was naive.

The Israeli prime minister said the Arab spring was becoming an "Islamic, anti-western, anti-liberal, anti-Israeli, undemocratic wave".

Speaking to the Israeli parliament amid renewed protests and violence in Egypt, Netanyahu said concessions to the Palestinians were unwise in a period of instability and uncertainty in the region.

O little church in Bethlehem? basilica decays as sects squabble over who pays

Article Author(s): Catrina Stewart

Media Outlet: The Independent

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/o-little-church-in-bethlehem...> [13]

When it comes to fixing the church roof, rarely has it been so difficult to reach agreement as at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. But, after a centuries-old stand-off between rival religious sects, it looks as if the reputed birthplace of Jesus may finally get the renovation it so badly needs.

Palestinian kids create human sculpture for peace

Article Author(s): Tovah Lazaroff

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 27, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/Features/InTheSpotlight/Article.aspx?id=247055> [14]

?One more person at the bottom left of the A,? American aerial artist John Quigley yelled out.

He looking down at the desert valley next to the Mount of Temptation, 11 km. northwest of Jericho, on Friday.

Below, 1,000 Palestinian children were busy forming a human mosaic in the shape of the dove peace symbol popularized by Pablo Picasso in 1949.

First, Quigley had a team of adults sketch out in the sand a large outline of the dove, including an olive branch and the words ?Love All.?

Israel delays bridge razing at volatile holy site

Article Author(s): Maayan Lubell

Media Outlet: Reuters

Article Type: Analysis

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/11/28/us-palestinians-israel-bridge-idUSTRE7...> [15]

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has delayed demolition of a footbridge at Jerusalem's holiest and most volatile religious site, fearing the work could spark Muslim anger, government officials said on Monday.

The wooden ramp, now deemed unsafe by engineers, was erected by Israeli authorities as a stopgap after a snowstorm and earthquake in 2004 damaged the stone bridge leading up from Judaism's Western Wall to the sacred compound where the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of

the Rock shrine stand.

Netanyahu won, Israel lost

Article Author(s): Akiva Eldar

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/netanyahu-won-israel-lost-1.398150> [16]

PARIS - Had Benjamin Netanyahu served in the French army 200 years ago, he would have had a splendid career. Napoleon, who preferred lucky generals to smart, good and loyal officers, would have easily recognized that Bibi had fortune on his side.

Republicans and Israel: Too much love can kill you

Article Author(s): Chemi Shalev

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/west-of-eden/republicans-and-israel-too-much-love-c...> [17]

In the first Gulf War in 1991 and once again in the war against Iraq in 2003, Israel was asked by the U.S. administration to maintain a "low profile," in order to avoid the perception that America was fighting with Israel, or on its behalf. Both George Bushes, senior and junior, considered it prudent to relegate Israel to the sidelines - even when it was under direct attack, as was the case in 1991 - in order to help establish international coalitions and to maintain public support for the war, especially in the Muslim world. In both cases, Israel complied.

Standing united

Media Outlet: The Jordan Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.jordantimes.com/?news=43713> [18]

Israel is once again using the tax axe against the Palestinians; it is threatening the Palestinian Authority to withhold tax revenues due to them if Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas goes

ahead with his reconciliation efforts with Hamas leader Khaled Mishaal. The two Palestinian leaders succeeded in striking a reconciliation accord during their recent meeting in Cairo. This progress on the Palestinian front displeases Israel, prompting Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman to warn the Palestinian Authority not to go ahead with the plan to form a unity government with Hamas.

In November, a day to remember

Article Author(s): Uri Avnery

Media Outlet: Arab News

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://arabnews.com/opinion/columns/article539552.ece> [19]

A day in November. A day to remember.

On Nov. 29, 1947, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted, by 33 votes against 13 (with 10 abstentions), the Palestine Partition Plan. This event has become a subject of endless debates, misinterpretations and outright falsifications. It may be worthwhile to peel away the myths and see it as it was.

Where reconciliation could fail or succeed

Article Author(s): Amira Hass

Media Outlet: Bitterlemons

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 21, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.bitterlemons.org/inside.php?id=165> [20]

My crystal ball shattered long ago, so I cannot predict whether or not a Palestinian reconciliation government will indeed come into being. All I can do is offer a few thoughts and questions, and emphasize that it is not my Israeli identity that is responsible for them but rather my left-wing identity.

Hamas Edges Closer to the Mainstream: Agreeing to Nonviolence, Opening the Door to Recognizing Israel

Article Author(s): Karl Vick

Media Outlet: Time

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 27, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://globalspin.blogs.time.com/2011/11/27/hamas-edges-closer-to-the-mainstream...> [21]

The leaders of the two biggest Palestinian parties met in Cairo on Thanksgiving, and just going by the headlines afterward, you'd have thought nothing had happened. "Palestinians talk unity, no sign of progress," said Reuters. AP: "Palestinian rivals talk, but fail to resolve rifts." But read the stories, and it becomes clear that a great deal is going on, with immense implications for the future of peace talks with Israel.

Israel shares the Palestinian plan

Article Author(s): Neil Steinberg

Media Outlet: Chicago Sun Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.suntimes.com/news/steinberg/9099573-452/israel-shares-the-palestinian...> [22]

One of the odder aspects of the endless Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that the side you would expect to be the more active and effective of the two participants ? the Israeli government ? seems frequently sunk into passivity. The Palestinians cook up creative public relations ploys like running the Israeli naval blockade or appealing to the United Nations to declare it a state, while Israeli leaders sit around, waiting to see what the Palestinians do next.

When the Judge Is Your Enemy

Article Author(s): Dan Ephron

Media Outlet: The Daily Beast

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 28, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/11/27/israel-s-military-courts-expose...> [23]

War has a way of testing a country's commitment to civil liberties like nothing else. It's easy to be high-minded when you're Switzerland. But when terrorists are flying planes into your buildings, as the U.S. discovered after 9/11, the impulse to deny some suspects even the right to be brought before a judge, a core tenet of any fair legal system, can be powerful.

Netanyahu's day of reckoning is nearing

Article Author(s): Amir Oren

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 27, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/netanyahu-s-day-of-reckoning-is-nea...> [24]

Two separate legal processes in the area of public law that are finally nearing completion will rock Israel's political establishment in January, possibly even to the point of bringing down the government.

The first is State Comptroller Micha Lindenstrauss versus Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the matter of the Carmel forest fire of last December. The second is Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein versus Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, whose indictment for money laundering, fraud, breach of trust and harassing a witness, among other charges, is a near certainty.

Israel's Other Occupation

Article Author(s): Gershom Gorenberg

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: November 25, 2011

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/27/opinion/sunday/israels-other-occupation.html? ...> [25]

“CLEARLY, there’s a war here, sometimes even worse than the one in Samaria,” the yeshiva student said. “It’s not a war with guns. It’s a war of light against darkness.”

We were sitting in the mixed Jewish-Arab town of Acre in Israel. The war he described was another front in the struggle he knew from growing up in a settlement in the northern West Bank, or Samaria: the daily contest between Jews and Palestinians for control of the land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River.

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