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December 13, 2012

Middle East News: World Press Roundup

NEWS: FM Lieberman invokes the specter of Nazi-ism in criticizing Europe's stance towards Israel's settlement expansion policies. Israeli occupation forces clash with Palestinian protesters near Hebron, with a Palestinian youth killed. Sales of a perfume named after a rocket soar in Gaza. An extremist party is banned from campaigning in Israel on the grounds that it is too racist against Arabs. A senior PLO official says there won't be any new peace initiative until after the Israeli election. Pres. Abbas and Hamas leader Mishaal discuss reconciliation in a phone call. Abbas criticizes Hamas for not recognizing Israel and reminds them this was part of an earlier PLO-Hamas agreement. Palestinian labor leaders shut down UNRWA offices following layoffs and reduction of services. Hamas says it is going to start rebuilding its ministries and headquarters destroyed by Israel in the recent conflict.

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank are developing rooftop gardens to grow food. Palestine's anti-corruption commission hopes to use international legal mechanisms in future prosecutions. The Gaza conflict is deterring Christmas religious tourism in Bethlehem.

COMMENTARY: Carlo Strenger joins the chorus of voices saying Mishaal's Gaza speech played directly into the hands of PM Netanyahu. Douglas Bloomfield says while Mishaal openly opposes peace, Netanyahu and Abbas have policies that also undermine it. Abdullah Iskandar says Israel is deliberately keeping both Hamas and the PA weak and divided in order to rule over them. Yaron Ezrahi says the recent UN vote was an important turning point, reminiscent of what Israelis achieved in 1947. Yaakov Livne says Israel desperately needs better diplomacy. Rob Eshman says he's joined those who tire of hearing about a two-state solution. Jerome Segal says a more effective Arab Peace Initiative would center on the Israeli and Arab peoples, rather than their governments.

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Israeli Minister Vents Anger at Europe

Article Author(s): Isabel Kershner

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/13/world/middleeast/avigdor-lieberman-of-israel-v...> [6]

JERUSALEM — Israel's blunt-talking foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, gave vent on Wednesday to the government's anger over recent diplomatic gains by the Palestinians paired with international rebukes for Israel, comparing Israel's situation to that of Czechoslovakia in 1938 before the Nazi invasion.

Israeli troops clash with Palestinian protesters

Article Author(s): Nasser Shiyoukhi

Media Outlet: Associated Press

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/ap/ap/crime/israeli-troops-clash-with-palestinian-prote...> [7]

HEBRON, West Bank —Thousands of Palestinians marched through the streets of Hebron on Thursday, chanting anti-Israel slogans and waving green Hamas flags during a funeral procession for a teenager killed by Israeli troops in this volatile West Bank city.

Dozens of youths clashed with Israeli soldiers throughout the day, throwing stones and bottles while troops responded with volleys of tear gas and rubber bullets. No serious injuries were reported.

Israeli troops kill Palestinian youth in West Bank

Media Outlet: Reuters

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/israeli-troops-kill-palestinian-youth-in-west...> [8]

HEBRON, West Bank, Dec 12 (Reuters) - Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian teenager on Wednesday in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron after the youth threatened them with what appeared to be a pistol, but which may not have been a real weapon, a police spokesman said.

Violence between Israelis and Palestinians in the territory captured by Israel in a 1967 war

has been on the rise in past weeks after a long period of calm. Two other Palestinians have been killed there in clashes with Israelis in the past month.

Gaza perfume sales soar with rocket name

Article Author(s): Nidal al-Mughrabi

Media Outlet: Reuters

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/gaza-perfume-sales-soar-with-rocket-name/> ^[9]

GAZA, Dec 12 (Reuters) - Sales of a citrus-scented perfume marketed in Gaza have soared since it was named in honour of the rockets that Palestinians shot at Israel during a war last month, the manufacturer said.

"M-75" perfume, which comes in men's and women's fragrances, is named for the missiles Hamas Islamist militants shot at Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in an eight-day conflict that killed more than 170 Palestinians and six Israelis, ending with an Egyptian-brokered truce.

Israeli election committee bans far-right campaign due to racism

Media Outlet: Xinhua

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-12/13/c_132039209.htm ^[10]

JERUSALEM, Dec. 13 (Xinhua) -- Chairman of the Israeli Central Elections Committee Judge Elyakim Rubinstein has banned an ad campaign run by a far-right wing party over charges of racist and discriminatory against Arabs.

"The campaign was meant to degrade a single group in the State of Israel, the Arab population," Rubinstein explained Wednesday night.

Interview: Palestinian negotiator rules out declaring new Mideast peace initiative soon

Media Outlet: Xinhua

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-12/12/c_132037094.htm ^[11]

RAMALLAH, Dec. 12 (Xinhua) -- A high-ranking Palestinian negotiator said in an interview with Xinhua on Wednesday that there will be no new peace initiative declared on the Middle

East conflict before February 2013.

Mohamed Ishteya, also a member in the central committee of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah Party, told Xinhua at his office in the city of Ramallah that the Palestinian leadership welcomes any international initiative aiming at resuming the stalled peace talks with Israel.

Abbas phones Mashaal to discuss reconciliation

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=547502> ^[12]

BETHLEHEM (Ma'an) -- President Mahmoud Abbas phoned Hamas chief Khalid Mashaal on Wednesday to discuss ending the division according to prior agreements, a Fatah official said.

Azzam al-Ahmad said Abbas phoned Mashaal to accelerate implementing national reconciliation. Abbas talked with him about his first visit to Gaza, and about Hamas' anniversary celebrations.

Al-Ahmad said he met Mashaal on Wednesday and a member in Fatah's central committee as part of new efforts to see if a reconciliation deal could finally be implemented.

Abbas: Meshal approved an agreement recognizing two-state solution

Article Author(s): Barak Ravid

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/abbas-meshal-approved-an-agreement...> ^[13]

Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas came out on Thursday in criticism of Hamas leader Khaled Meshal, who said last week during his visit to Gaza that the organization will never recognize Israel, and called for its destruction.

Speaking to Turkish reporters in Ankara, Abbas said that he does not agree with Meshal's statements. "We recognized Israel in 1993," he said. "There is an agreement between Fatah and Hamas that recognizes the two-state solution. Meshal approved this agreement."

Abbas blasts Mashaal: We already recognized Israel

Article Author(s): Elior Levy

Media Outlet: Ynetnews

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4319390,00.html> ^[14]

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas blasted Hamas Politburo Chief Khaled Mashaal for asserting that his group will never recognize Israel, hinting that the statement hinders the chances of the two-state solution, according to the Turkish newspaper Hurriyet.

Protesters shut down UNRWA offices after layoffs

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: December 11, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=547108> ^[15]

BETHLEHEM (Ma'an) -- Labor leaders at Palestinian refugee camps on Tuesday shut down all UNRWA sub-offices in the West Bank in protest of the dismissal of 130 employees and reductions of services.

Munthir Amira, director of the youth center of Aida refugee camp, told Ma'an that "it is time that UNRWA's administration realize that the plight of Palestinian refugees can't be a political trade or an opportunity for Western employees to seek livelihood."

Gaza government to rebuild ministries, headquarters

Media Outlet: Ma'an News Agency

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=547374> ^[16]

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- The government in Gaza will start rebuilding ministries and headquarters destroyed in Israel's 8-day bombardment of the Gaza Strip, the cabinet said Wednesday.

A ministerial committee has been appointed to survey the damage and assess reconstruction needs, cabinet secretary-general Abdul-Salam Siyam said.

Offices of ministries destroyed in the war have been moved to apartments and other buildings to continue providing services to citizens, Siyam said in a statement.

Rooftop gardens provide food and hope for cash-strapped Palestinians

Article Author(s): Hugh Naylor

Media Outlet: The National

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/rooftop-gardens-provide-food-an...> [17]

DHEISHEH, WEST BANK // High in the sky above a narrow, noisy and congested street in this West Bank refugee camp is a veritable paradise of green, shade and quiet.

Throat-burning exhaust, blaring horns and clinging dust seem to choke the life from the Palestinians navigating the street below. But atop this overcrowded, dilapidated apartment block is a garden that bursts with cucumbers, bell peppers and strawberries - and hope.

Palestinian anti-corruption body gets boost

Article Author(s): Kafah Zaboun

Media Outlet: Asharq Alawsat

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=32143> [18]

Ramallah, Asharq Al-Awsat - Rafik Natsheh, head of the Palestinian anti-corruption body, has stated that his organization will now resume its pursuit of corrupt government figures who have fled abroad. Given that Palestine has obtained non-member observer status at the United Nations, the anti-corruption body has the right to pursue corrupt fugitives who have court judgments issued against them.

Gaza conflict deters Bethlehem Christmas pilgrims

Article Author(s): Tim Hume

Media Outlet: CNN

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/12/13/world/meast/bethlehem-christmas-pilgrims-drop/> [19]

CNN) -- Authorities in the Palestinian town of Bethlehem are hoping it won't be a silent night this Christmas Eve, following a spate of tourist cancellations due to recent violence in Gaza.

The West Bank town of around 29,000 people, eight kilometers (five miles) south of Jerusalem, contains the Church of the Nativity, venerated by Christians as the birthplace of

Jesus.

How Khaled Meshal's call for Israel's destruction played into Netanyahu's hands

Article Author(s): Carlo Strenger

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Blog

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/blogs/strenger-than-fiction/how-khaled-meshal-s-call-for-...> [20]

Benjamin Netanyahu's most reliable ally is Hamas. That may sound like a strange proposition, but let me explain.

In the last weeks, Benjamin Netanyahu has pulled two of his more expectable stunts.

Washington Watch: Evading peace

Article Author(s): Douglas Bloomfield

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Article Type: Opinion

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Columnists/Article.aspx?id=295700> [21]

It was an "Aha! moment" for Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. When Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal told half a million followers in Gaza on Sunday that "Palestine is ours from the river to the sea" and "Israel has no right in Jerusalem," and when Palestinian Authority chairman Mahmoud Abbas failed to denounce the speech, which one of his aides called "very positive," Netanyahu declared: "I told you so."

Netanyahu between Abbas and Meshaal

Article Author(s): Abdullah Iskandar

Media Outlet: Al-Hayat

Article Type: Opinion

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://alhayat.com/Details/461403> [22]

With the historical visit conducted by Hamas's politburo chief to the Gaza Strip, the Palestinian file is entering a new stage which the Israeli right wing and its leader Benjamin Netanyahu are trying to exploit, in order to undermine Palestinian credibility towards the peace process, end the negotiations with the Palestinians, and eliminate the idea of the two states.

Palestine decision reminiscent of another United Nations vote

Article Author(s): Yaron Ezrahi

Media Outlet: Arab News

Article Type: Opinion

Date: December 13, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://arabnews.com/palestine-decision-reminiscent-another-united-nations-vote> [23]

Late afternoon on Nov. 29, 1947, I was almost eight years old and our home in Tel Aviv was gripped by intense expectations that something big was going to happen. Our large Beethoven radio was on and my parents were already sitting on the couch as my 16-year-old sister, Ofra, and I joined them on the living room rug. My father explained: "The world is deciding if we will be a state".

Israel Needs Diplomatic Iron Dome

Article Author(s): Yaakov Livne

Media Outlet: Al-Monitor

Article Type: Opinion

Date: December 10, 2012

Source Link(s): <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/12/diplomatic-iron-dome.html> [24]

Israel experienced in the past weeks two highly significant events that have far-reaching implications for its future. The first was Operation Pillar of Defense, and the other was the UN General Assembly resolution to grant Palestine the status of an observer state in the international body, which is another step toward recognition of the Palestinian Authority as a full-fledged state.

Two-state attrition

Article Author(s): Rob Eshman

Media Outlet: Jewish Journal

Article Type: Analysis

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s): http://www.jewishjournal.com/rob_eshman/article/two_state_attrition [25]

There are three subjects that Jews in my social circle never tire of: food, movies and the two-state solution.

Consider me officially tired of the third.

The Arab Peace Initiative under review

Article Author(s): Jerome M. Segal

Media Outlet: Foreign Policy

Article Type: Opinion

Date: December 12, 2012

Source Link(s):

http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/12/12/the_arab_peace_initiative_unde... [26]

The Arab League Ministerial Council that convened in Doha Sunday to review the Arab Peace Initiative and reevaluate the peace process concluded without any decisive action. Qatar's Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani maintained that the initiative would "not be on offer for ever." Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas objected saying, "It is not permissible to talk about sidelining the Arab Peace Initiative."

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[13] <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/abbas-meshal-approved-an-agreement-recognizing-two-state-solution.premium-1.484569>

[14] <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4319390,00.html>

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[18] <http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=32143>

[19] <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/12/13/world/meast/bethlehem-christmas-pilgrims-drop/>

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[24] <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/12/diplomatic-iron-dome.html>

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[26] http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/12/12/the_arab_peace_initiative_under_review