



PAGE 4



PAGE 5

WEEKLY NON-VIOLENT PROTEST IN BIL'IN VILLAGE

PAGE 6



# PALESTINE TIMES

Palestine's Daily Newspaper

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PURCHASE

### BRIEFING

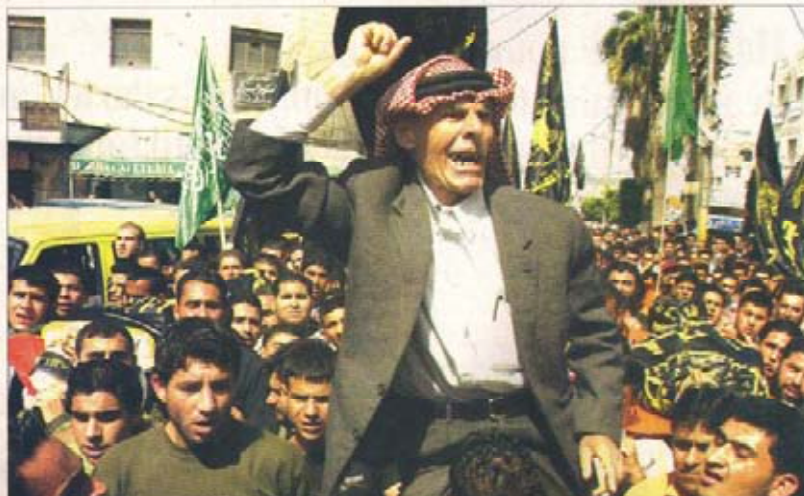
suicide bomber gets tribal recruits  
Iraq security forces



page 3

Turks protest against government in 2 western cities

More than 10,000 Turks gathered in two western cities yesterday to protest against the government, calling for



## Palestinian unanimity in rejecting American document

by Ola al-Madhoun

GAZA - Mustafa Barghouti, the Minister of Information and official spokesman for the Palestinian government, says the new American proposal for easing travel restrictions on Palestinians to ensure Israeli security aims to diminish the Palestinian cause in the eyes of the international community. In a speech at the al-Najah National University in Nablus yesterday, he called for an increase in popular resistance and for the Palestinian people to make use of international solidarity while strengthening their own national unity.

The document in question was presented by the United States to both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, and details confidence-building steps for both sides. The plan calls on Israel to ease travel restrictions in the West Bank, and for the Palestinians to take steps to end rocket fire from Gaza and weapons smuggling on the Egyptian border, stipulating that the steps be completed within

humanitarian issue that is solely concerned with checkpoints, economic demands, and security issues for Israelis."

A spokesperson for the movement added, "The Palestinian issue is a political one; it is an issue of a nation fighting for freedom and cannot be solved by experimental processes which risk the fate of an entire people."

"The resistance, with all its sacrifices, is paying the price of the Palestinian people's freedom." The representative went on to ask the western world, and the United States in particular, to stop dealing with the Palestinian issue with the closed-mindedness that portays the problem as a humanitarian matter, rather than that of a nation under occupation fighting for its freedom.

"We refuse the attempts to divide the Palestinian people by supporting one group over others, as mentioned in the document, by giving military support to a certain group so that it can fight the resistance. Also we reject America's insistence that the National



# Israeli checkpoints a daily reality in West Bank

by Mustafa Sabri

ILIA - Samir Abu Al-  
Minister of Planning  
the West Bank city of  
His office is located  
by Ramallah in the  
nian Legislative Coun-  
ding, yet he must cross  
ber of Israeli check-  
and turnstiles in order  
between the two.

Minister in question  
ed us in his wide lux-  
office located on the  
floor. His office was  
iously furnished by  
governments during  
irs in which the Fatah  
ment led the authority  
e consecutive Pales-  
governments.

with a smile, Minister  
Abu Aisha quietly told us  
that he had to cross several  
checkpoints on a  
basis. "I have to pass  
through the Beit Iba check-  
point, then the Za'atara  
checkpoint and then the At-  
ara checkpoint," he noted.

Concerning the possibility  
of sleeping in Nablus  
during the continuous  
of commuting, Abu  
stated, "I decide to  
to Nablus every night  
at sleep in Ramallah  
the office is located  
e I feel the necessity  
ring home. Living at  
psychologically com-  
e and my family."



I have to pass through the Beit Iba checkpoint, then the Za'atara checkpoint and then the Atara checkpoint, Abu Aisha says.

two months during an Israeli  
military operation in which  
ministers and members of  
the PLC were arrested.

"These checkpoints are  
swords not only against the  
ministers' and legislators'  
necks, but against the necks of  
all Palestinians," he said. "We

connectedness with Pales-  
tinian residents while cross-  
ing the checkpoint. This is a  
mutual feeling and it is my  
pleasure to be within the  
circle of suffering of my  
people," he stated.

Palestinians are respond-  
ing to these circumstances,

that are aimed at supporting  
the infrastructure of Pales-  
tinian cities, villages and re-  
fugee camps, Abu Aisha op-  
timistically stated. "We are  
promoting these projects to  
donors and funding sources  
so they can be implemented  
on the ground."

# Swedish writers examine the truth of Israel's actions

by Abdel Rahman al-Haj

JERICHO - "The state of Israel is challenging the United Nations through its occupation of the Palestinian territories. Few countries are treated with the preference and tolerance that Israel receives from the international community. Few people realize the size of the political and moral compromises the Palestinians offered in the Oslo accords, where they gave up their legitimate right to 43% of their land. Palestinians have the right to resist under International Law."

The above passage is an introduction to a book that deals with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the writers of which have no Arab or Islamic ideological background or any previous stance towards Israel. Donald Bostram, a Swedish journalist, wrote the introduction. He met with the late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat in 1985 and was horrified by the scene of the young boy Nafeth Radwan, who was shot in his head with six bullets in the first year of the Intifada. Bostram described the impact it had. "It was the first instance of a real crime that was talked about in Sweden, even though the country had no clear vision concerning the conflict."

Journalist Jorgen Rosenbari said in the same book that, "Israel looks at its statehood as the national and religious homeland for millions of the Jews around the world, but at the same time refuses to recognize the millions of Palestinian residents or those deported by force according to its concept of citizenship."

Par Garton, the Swedish parliamentarian in the European Union, writes of the right to return. "Israel should apologize to the Palestinians for expelling them and allow them to return and facilitate the establishment of a Palestinian state on part of the land of historic Palestine," approving at the same time, the Palestinian right to compensation.

Journalist Sibo Sinima, examining his notes on the actions of settlers and the treatment of those with confiscated lands, noted that many suffer terribly from these actions, particularly those in the West bank city of Hebron.

The journalist Cordilia Advanson, who won an award for journalism in 2002, monitored the impact of the second intifada on the Israeli community, concluding that she believed both sides would return to negotiations eventually.

Cilia Audin, who works as a radio journalist, spoke of the



Bostram was horrified by the scene of the young boy Nafeth Radwan, who was shot in his head with six bullets in the first year of the Intifada.

status of Jerusalem for the Israelis and Palestinians, stating that, "Israel is number 24 on the list of occupiers. Every one who occupies Jerusalem thinks they are the last one."

Thomas Hamarbari, secretary general of the international Olef Palme Center, tries to avoid cynical and pessimistic points of view, arguing, "Swedish public opinion should support holding a dialogue between the peace supporters of the two sides."

Donald Bostram concludes the book in an article entitled "Wall," in which he discusses the economic impact of the Wall, the financial embargo, closures and the killings that continue to this day, arguing that the Wall is working for the "evaporation" of the Palestinians. Yet the Israelis refuse to take responsibility for losses incurred in job opportunities, in sectors of both the economy and education.

None of the contributors to this book are Palestinian, they are all Swedish. In over 420 pages and 200 pictures, they attempt to inform the reading public of the reality of the Palestinian situation.

The book is translated by Amal Abbas Kiswani and published by Donald Bostram Media, Stockholm, Sweden.

ARAB FINANCIAL MARKETS (for May 04, 2007)

<b>Amman Index</b> 5973.59 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%	<b>Dubai Index</b> 3838.55 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%	<b>Bahrain Index</b> 2,123.51 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%	<b>Saudi Index</b> 7,533.11 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%	<b>Abu Dhabi Index</b> 3,067.93 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%	<b>Kuwait Index</b> 10,845.60 (CLOSE) 0.00 (POINTS) 0.00%
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Currency exchange rates for (NIS) as of 04/05/2007

Unit	Country	Rate	Daily Change
Dollar	USA	4.0420	-0.049%
Pound	Great Britain	9.0294	-0.338%
Yen	Japan	3.3594	-0.261%
Euro	EMU	5.4832	-0.389%
Dollar	Australia	3.3098	0.854%
Dollar	Canada	3.6533	0.968%
Krone	Denmark	0.7358	-0.366%
Krone	Norway	0.5747	-0.426%
Rand	South Africa	0.5767	-0.500%
Krona	Sweden	0.5093	-0.300%
Franc	Switzerland	3.3209	-0.428%
Dinar	Jordan	5.7058	-0.048%
Pound	Lebanon	0.0288	No Change
Pound	Egypt	0.7117	0.028%

Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE)  
TA-25 is the TASE's flagship index.  
Table provided by TASE, as of 03/05/2007

Index	Symbol	ISIN	Opening Price (NIS)	Change (%)	Turnover (NIS)
AFRICA	AFIL	IL0006110121	53050	-5.05	262953.56
BEZQ	BEZQ	IL0002000114	648.7	2.42	20875.44
GLOBAL INSURANCE	GLIS	IL0002240148	12050	-0.99	4787.35
ELKOR GROUP	ELKOR	IL0010841281	66010	1.41	17077.34
MSCOUNT	MSCO	IL0006111108	881	1.11	36144.45

# Asian ministers agree on currency pact overhaul

KYOTO (AFP) – Asian finance ministers agreed yesterday to pool part of their huge foreign exchange reserves to shield themselves against a repeat of the financial crisis that rocked the region a decade ago.

Finance ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as well as China, Japan and South Korea also voiced optimism about prospects for their economies while noting such risks as slowing global growth.

A decade after the regional financial crisis, ministers are now concerned about a tide of capital flowing into the smaller economies, whose exporters are struggling with stronger currencies that damage their competitiveness.

While in 1997 many countries in the region were running current account deficits, several now have large surpluses and swelling foreign exchange reserves because of their export-driven expansions. "The major risk facing

a country like Thailand today is very similar to the risk back in 1997, i.e. the risk of volatile capital flows," said Thailand's Finance Minister Chalorngphob Sussangkarn. "The difference is that the risk at that time was on capital outflows while the risk today is on capital inflows. This is probably something that a single country will find difficult to deal with alone," he said.

In an effort to bolster their defenses, ministers agreed in principle on a system of pooled foreign currency reserves to replace the existing bilateral emergency currency swap system. Japanese Finance Minister Koji Omi hailed the agreement as "a very large step going forward."

In the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the 10 ASEAN nations plus Japan, China and South Korea agreed to set up a bilateral currency swap scheme known as the Chiang Mai Initiative in a bid to prevent a repeat of the turmoil. Although the full details have

yet to be thrashed out, the idea of the overhaul is to enable a country to borrow foreign currency from another more quickly to shore up its international reserves until a crisis passes. Ministers also welcomed "the continued strong growth" of their economies, which are enjoying rapid growth driven by powerhouse China.

At the same time they noted such risks as spillover effects from slowing overseas economies, large global economic imbalances, greater financial market volatility, rising signs of protectionism and resurgent oil prices. "We recognized the increased globalization of economies and agreed on the importance of policies that strengthen the region's resilience," the ministers said in a joint statement after the meeting in Kyoto, Japan.

Asia now holds the bulk of the world's foreign reserves at some 2.7 trillion dollars, led by China, which alone has more than one trillion dollars. Economists warn



Finance ministers and journalists listen to the opening speech by Thailand's Finance Minister Chalorngphob Sussangkarn (4th L.) while attending the joint press conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plus three Finance Ministers meeting in the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) 40th annual board of governors meeting in Kyoto yesterday.

that the reserves are far in excess of what is needed to ensure stability, leaving the risk of asset bubbles.

But China for one is reluctant to relax its currency regime too quickly so as to reduce its huge current account surplus which is behind the build-up of the huge reserves. "We want to manage Chinese capital flows very

carefully," said Yu Yongding, director of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. "We don't want speculators to attack China like they have been doing in the rest of Asia," he told a seminar on the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank's annual meeting where the finance ministers gathered.

Last year, the 10 ASEAN

nations along with China, Japan and South Korea agreed to study the creation of a single Asian currency akin to the euro, but ministers said the issue was not even discussed this time around. ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.