



Palestinian policemen take on a protester during Baradei's funeral in Hebron on Wednesday.

26 wounded as police loyal to Abbas clash with funeral procession

ISRAELI AIR STRIKE KILLS 2 HAMAS MILITANTS

Nasser Shiyokki
Associated Press
HEBRON: Occupied West Bank Palestinian police loyal to President Mahmoud Abbas fired automatic weapons and beat marchers with clubs during a funeral for Hisham Baradei, 36, shot and killed by Palestinian police Tuesday.
The procession turned violent when marchers refused to keep to a route agreed in advance with police, who then opened fire over their heads. Protesters hurled rocks at police, who clubbed demonstrators.
Abbas' government announced a ban on public protests ahead of the Annapolis summit to keep Hamas under control.
Abbas leads an emergency government based in the West Bank, formed after Hamas seized control of Gaza in June.
The Liberation Party, a tiny, unarmoured Islamic group, organised Tuesday's protest. But Hamas activists joined the funeral procession on Wednesday in Hebron, waving their green Islamic flags and stoning police.
In Gaza, Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum condemned the police action as part of a "conspiracy in Annapolis." Hamas itself has shown little tolerance for dissent in Gaza, killing eight unarmed protesters at a November 12 rally organized by Abbas' Fatah Movement.
The ban and heavy-handed police tactics could undermine Abbas as he tries to rally support for the peace talks with Israel. Human-rights groups have accused him of suppressing legitimate dissent.
Palestinian Cabinet Minister Ashraf Ajlani, an Abbas ally,

and mortar fire from Gaza.
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FIRST PERSON

Transforming the breakthrough for Israelis and Palestinians in Annapolis

On the evening of President George W. Bush's election for a second term on November 2, 2004, I was the host of celebrated Arab TV journalist Marcel Ghannem. More important was the presence of a State department spokesman, who expressed the Bush administration's full support to a Palestinian state.
Because two UN Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR) had by then unanimously endorsed "the Quartet Permanent Process Roadmap to a Permanent Two-State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," I was not totally surprised, and I tried to have him commit to a timeframe, asking whether the Palestinian state could not be declared within a year. The treaty was to no avail. Here we are, three years later, at the exact same place.
Why has the implementation of the US "Palestinian state" policy not taken place despite the genuine commitment of Bush? Here is my explanation. Part of it is the second. The only window of opportunity takes place at the end of the classic term of a US president. He is then less concerned by domestic electoral concerns. This is not always necessary, not always true, but its pattern is confirmed in the Clinton and second Bush presidencies.
The second part of the explanation is that in Israel, and is more circumstantial. Until a stroke removed Premier Ariel Sharon from power at the beginning of 2006, his strong personal prevention of American diplomacy from moving on the Palestinian state, which he opposed. His policy was

characterised by a contradictory proposal: one was negative, "we have no partner," and one positive, "let's pull out of Gaza, Jewish settlements included." The idea of the absence of a partner is ingrained in the old Zionist belief in a "land without people for a people without land," and is evidently false.
The policy turned out to be counter-productive for Israel and the peace process generally. Palestine is no Antartica, and Palestinians no penguins.
As a result of the Sharon policy, nobody dared move in Washington, and the comprehensive international plan of the Quartet was shelved, together with UNSCR 1397 (March 12, 2002) and 1515 (November 19, 2003). Paradoxically, the travails of Mr Sharon's successor in the Lebanon war, and the collapse of Gaza, have allowed American diplomacy to jumpstart the process. The Quartet is back in place, together with a determined support from the US Administration on the "roadmap to the Palestinian state."
In the wider Arab-Israeli conflict, the Syria-Israel front, and the Lebanon quandary are, by comparison, easier to solve than Palestine, because the fight over land between Palestinian and the Israeli (Jewish) communities for over a hundred years has led to a highly imbricated population. The fight over land between Palestinian and the Israeli (Jewish) communities for over a hundred years has led to a highly imbricated population.
This is also will not be sufficient. Together with the question of the rights-ensured citizenship, nonviolent remedies must be made available.
Over forty years of occupation, the Is-

Sudan charges Briton in flap over teddy bear

KHARTOUM: Sudan on Wednesday charged a British school teacher with insulting Islam and inciting religious hatred by allowing young children to name a teddy bear Mohammed. The teacher, who is now in jail, 40 lashes and a fine.
In London, a Foreign Office spokesman said that Gibbons had been charged with "inciting religion and inciting religious hatred."
British Premier Gordon Brown's office said Foreign Secretary David Miliband wanted to see the Sudanese ambassador "as a matter of urgency."
"we are surprised and disappointed by this development," a spokesman said.
The purpose of the meeting

was "so we can get a clear explanation for the rationale behind the charges."
"it is up to six months in jail, 40 lashes and a fine."
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visit despite a reported complaint from her ex-husband in Britain the case that Gibbons had not been allowed to go to Sudan.
Sudan's Education Ministry will also conduct an inquiry into the Christian-run Unity High School, where Gibbons taught since leaving England in July, to determine whether it was guilty of a cover-up, Zammari said.
Gibbons, in her 50s, allowed boys and girls as young as 6 to name the bear Mohammed several months ago. Gibbons has said she never meant to cause offense. -AFP

Convoy of Iraqi refugees arrives back in Baghdad

BAGHDAD: A convoy of buses transporting 385 families from Syria was due in Baghdad on Wednesday. The convoy was met by a government official to assist Iraqi refugees return home, a government official said.
"Six caravans are planned in the next few days," government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh told a news conference, adding that a total of around 800 people were on board the state-sponsored buses.
"we are preparing to welcome all Iraqi people who migrated from Iraq," said Dabbagh.
"The Iraqi government would like all Iraqis to come home," he said.
Transport Ministry officials said the convoy of 20 buses left Damascus late afternoon on Tuesday and was joined by an Iraqi military escort from the Iraqi border.
Each family would be given one million dinars (\$800) in their resettlement, said Dabbagh, who declined to specify how and when the buses would arrive in Baghdad for "security reasons."
"Iraq needs all those who left the country to return, particularly the intellectuals and the elite," he added.
Asked about warnings by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other refugee agencies that it was too early for families to start returning because of the security situation in Iraq is not yet stable, Dabbagh insisted all those coming home were doing so voluntarily.
"people are free to return and they have contacted their relatives," he said. "The Iraqi government will do its best to protect these families."
He said that some 60,000 Iraqis had returned to the country in the past few months and more were on the way.
Asked what would happen if people arrived to find their homes were occupied, he said the law would be enforced, but declined to say whether physical force would be used to evict the occupiers.

UAE judge throws rape victim's mother out of courtroom

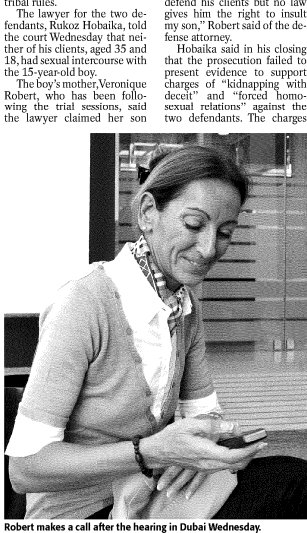
Barbara Sark
Associated Press
DUBAI: A judge removed the mother of a Swiss-French teenager from a Dubai courtroom after an outburst from her following the closing arguments by the defense Wednesday in the trial of two Emirati men accused of kidnapping and sexually attacking her son.
The development was the latest drama in a highly charged case that has raised questions over treatment of sex-crime victims in this rapidly growing but deeply conservative Gulf city-state, with a legal system that is a mix of Islamic laws and tribal rules.
The lawyer for the two defendants, Rokoz Hobaiha, told the court Wednesday that neither of his clients, aged 35 and 18, had sexual intercourse with the 15-year-old boy.
The boy's mother, Veronique Robert, who has been following the trial sessions, said the lawyer claimed her son had behaved provocatively with the defendants.
Robert said the lawyer "verbally attacked" her son in his closing statement, provoking her outburst.
"I got up and said 'Shame on you. Stop talking like that,'" she said.
The judge instructed two police officers to escort her out of the courtroom.
"Understand he is there to defend his clients but no law gives him the right to insult the trial sessions," said the defense attorney.
Hobaiha said in his closing that the prosecution failed to present evidence to support charges of "kidnapping with deceit" and "forced homosexual relationship" against the two defendants. The charges

carry a life imprisonment or a death penalty in the Emirates' legal system.
A third defendant in the case is under the age of 18 and could face up to 10 years imprisonment on same charges if convicted in a juvenile court.
Earlier this month, Robert's son testified in court, saying he was kidnapped by the three Emirati men and held on the back seat of a car.
Hobaiha said the public prosecutor did not present evidence to support his testimony.
Neither a stick nor the knife, allegedly used to threaten the boy, was found, Hobaiha said.
"Something is missing," Hobaiha asserted, adding that "no violence" and "no deception" were used against the boy.
Hobaiha also spoke about an "intimate friendship" between the alleged victim and the teenage defendant, and said Robert's son and his friend had entered the under-aged defendant's home in Dubai because Emirati law does not allow a child to be prosecuted for homosexual acts, a crime here.
But after authorities said he would not be charged, the boy returned to testify on November 7. His testimony was closed to the public.
When the case came to light, Robert also accused Emirati authorities of lying about the older defendant's positive HIV status to cover up the fact that AIDS exists in Dubai.
Said al-Ghathani, another member of the defense team, claimed Wednesday that because Robert's lawyer is still negative that was "in itself proof he had not been assaulted" by the older defendant.
Robert said her son's HIV tests, taken every month since the alleged attack, have so far been negative, but that a decisive test is due January.
The verdict in the case is expected on December 12.

Iran launches second homegrown submarine

TEHRAN: The Iranian Navy announced on Wednesday that it had launched a new home-produced submarine, the first in a class named "Ghadir" and Tehran's latest claim of military progress at a time of mounting tensions with the West.
"This advanced submarine is equipped with the latest military and technological equipment," state media quoted the commander of the navy, Rear Admiral Habibollah Saryari, as having said.
"It was built after 10 years of design work," he added, and "its capabilities are equal to those of foreign types."
State television pictures showed a submarine submerging and then resurfacing. It was not clear if the pictures were of the Ghadir or an another submarine Iran has produced.

In March 2006, the Iranian Navy deployed a submarine named "Narfang" (Whale) but the pictures broadcast by state media at the time showed it was a minsub.
According to foreign military experts, Iran's inventory of submarines patrolling Gulf waters already includes up to three Russian-built Kilo-class submarines.
Iran has been extolling its military prowess amid increasing tensions over its nuclear program, which the United States charges is aimed at making a nuclear weapon. Tehran denies the allegation, insisting that its goal is a peaceful one to produce electricity. The Atomic Energy Agency says it has thus far found no evidence to support the American accusation.



Robert makes a call after the hearing in Dubai Wednesday.