Israel threatens more action in Gaza Strip

Abbas asks Rice to halt Jewish state’s ‘military escalation’

GAZA’s strike Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip on Friday and intensified its more strident actions to stop rocket attacks while Palestinians launched back each other in renewed veering on civil war. Palestinians President Mahmoud Abbas, called US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and asked her to halt all Israeli “military escalation”. Abbas was quoted by Wafa news agency as asking Rice “to stop the rocket attacks and all suffering of civilians and soldiers”.

A Palestinian hospital official said at least one man was killed and others were wounded when Israeli helicopters opened fire in east Gaza. The military said it attacked a rocket site in southern Gaza and that 15 minutes had struck Hamas checkpoints in the town of Khan Yunis, saying there were said to be only minor injuries. Israeli warplanes hit a small area near a post manned by Hamas in Khan Yunis, killing two fighters and wounding five civilians. The army said it had targeted a “vehicle carrying Hamas cell and weapons”.

An Israeli police said a Hamas post left no casualties but five fighters were killed in an early morning raid in Gaza City.

Three other air strikes hit three Palestinian homes, one of them in Khan Yunis and others in the east of Gaza. Field and Hamas forces battled again in Gaza City. Three rockets fired from the protesters were fired at the pro-Hamas Islamic University campus.

Two fighters — one from each side — were killed, hospital officials said. A fighter was also wounded after being caught in crossfire. Hospital officials said two people were wounded from wounds sustained during the clashes.

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Oases in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar can do wonders

By Hamza Qubeirat

MUSCAT: Oman, like the area in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar is a unique geographical oasis. Oases should be protected and promoted as like tourism, said Professor Andreas Buerkert of the Department of Geography and Agro-Ecosystem Research in the Ruhr and University of Kassel, Germany.

In an exclusive interview to Oman Tribune on the sidelines of the exhibition “Oases of Oman”, Professor Buerkert said: “The connection of Al Jabel Al Akhdhar with the modern transport system, competition with the world market and lack of well-trained labour would lead to the extinction of 143 plants in the oases.”

Buerkert and a team of researchers from three German universities, the Ruhr and University of Kassel, Germany and the University of Wuppertal has been studying the transformation process of Oman’s oases during the past five years. Wheat, barleys, pomegranates, sour lime and sour oranges are some of the 22 different fruit and vegetable species, which grow in the Oases in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar.

Oman products such as pomegranates, walnuts, wheat and rose water in the world market,” said Buerkert.

To promote fruits and vegetables produced in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar, Buerkert proposed a market for special products like jam made from pomegranate, apricots, dates, dates and dates.

According to him, there are 300 hectares of wheat crop in the Oman’s Hajar mountains, which is a again a unique phenomenon in the world.

“Certified eco-agriculture is popular all over the world, why not make it a reality in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar? Products should be launched in the world market only in small quantities,” suggested Buerkert while stressing that farming in Al Jabel Al Akhdhar is already an organic farm.

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Bouteflika’s allies sweep Algeria poll

ALGERIA’s three factions allied with President Abdelaziz Bouteflika have retained their clear majority in Algeria’s parliament, the government said on Friday as it declared the outcome of an election decision pending.

The National Liberation Front (FLN), the Democratic National Rally (RND) and the National Rally (RND) and Front (FLN), the Democratic as it declared the outcome of government said on Friday in Algeria’s parliament, the

National Assembly, said Interior Minister Yazid Zerhouni.

The nationalist FLN garnered 42 of the 200 seats, the RND took 61 seats, and the MSP won 52 seats, said Prime Minister Ismail Haniya.

Fatah and Hamas forces battled again in Gaza City. Three rockets fired from the protesters were fired at the pro-Hamas Islamic University campus.

Two fighters — one from each side — were killed, hospital officials said. A fighter was also wounded after being caught in crossfire. Hospital officials said two people were wounded from wounds sustained during the clashes.

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Barwani

Tariq Hilal Al Barwani, the Omani Spring Festival’s host, has announced that the festival will be every Saturday and visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair appealed to all parties in the Palestinian Authority to stop the violence and working for peace. "We strongly call on parties to work toward a two-state solution," Bush said.

In a phone call with Abbas, Bush congratulated him on his transfer to power in Palestinian Authority and visiting British Prime Minister Tony Blair appealed to all parties in the Palestinian Authority to stop the violence and working for peace. "We strongly call on parties to work toward a two-state solution," Bush said.

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Nine killed in Iraq attacks

Five U.S. soldiers killed in separate blasts

BAGHDAD—Attacks on Iraq’s deadly roadways killed several people on Friday, in an unmistakable commitment to launch attacks outside Baghdad, where U.S. troops are pursuing a three-month-old security plan.

Three policemen were killed and two wounded when a car bomb plowed into a checkpoint they were manning south of the capital, police officials said.

Five U.S. soldiers were killed and 10 more were wounded in three separate attacks in and around Baghdad, the U.S. military said on Friday. Thursday’s attacks came as thousands of American soldiers occupied a region south of the Baghdad province, where U.S.-led forces were pursuing a three-month-old security plan.

Wounded in three separate incidents, five people were killed and 10 more were seriously wounded, according to the director of Kirkuk General Hospital. He added that six people were shot dead in the immediate vicinity of Kirkuk and a roadside bomb near a police station.

A truck driver was killed when a suicide car bomber plowed into a bridge in Kirkuk, and a roadside bomb near a police station south of Kirkuk wounded three people, including two women.

In a separate attack, insurgents stopped a car near a bridge inside the city and dragged the passengers— including a brother and a seven-year-old child—out of the car and shot them.

One of the two men was seriously wounded, according to the director of Kirkuk General Hospital. He said a hospital employee was shot and wounded in the attack.

Another truck driver was killed when a roadside bomb exploded near a bridge in Kirkuk, and a roadside bomb in the city suburb wounded three people, including two women.

Agence France-Presse

Israel to escalate army action in Gaza

Couple detained for internet death threats

The Israeli security forces arrested a couple in the city of Be’er Sheva on Friday evening for threats made online.

The couple, a man and a woman in their 30s, were charged with threatening to kill a teacher at a school in the southern city of Be’er Sheva.

The couple was arrested after a complaint was filed with the police.

The teacher was reportedly threatened with violence on social media.

The investigation is ongoing.

The couple could face up to five years in prison if convicted.

Agence France-Presse

Deeper emission cut sought

Oslo: Israeli industries in the country’s Portland cement sector have been backed into a corner, with some companies facing potential bankruptcy, according to the head of a UN group said on Friday.

In addition, Israeli businesses have been pressing for a reduction in the amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the country, and the country’s port authority is considering a plan to reduce emissions by 20% by 2020.

OSIO, which represents the Portland cement industry in Israel, said on Friday that the country’s cement sector has a large share of the country’s greenhouse gas emissions, and that reducing emissions is crucial for the country’s energy security.

The industries are pushing for a reduction of 30% to 40% in emissions by 2020, and for a long-term reduction of 80% to 90% by 2050.

The industries are also calling for the establishment of a government-led task force to address the issue of emissions, and for the implementation of a comprehensive plan to reduce emissions.

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