

# MID-EAST e-NEWS

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An electronic journal of the Middle East, for those who want to be informed.

Issue No. 47 Texas

August 15th, 2005

<http://www.morethantourists.com>

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## Welcome

As you hear about the Israeli “disengagement” from Gaza, refer to the map on page 3 for the locations of the various settlements and refugee camps. Also, how Gaza fruit and vegetables are being preserved, below. I was impressed by Wolfensohn’s willingness to put his own money into the project.

We are seeing the difficulty of the Iraqi groups – Kurd, Shia and Sunni – to agree on the text of a national charter, or constitution. The process of bargaining takes a long time, and in this case we hope they do not leave the table and say “I give up. I can get this product somewhere else!” (See e-NEWS 15 !)

Email your responses to [pkclark@pmbx.net](mailto:pkclark@pmbx.net) & check the web for back issues.

## Iraqi Sheikh

A radar operator, Staff Sergeant Dale Horn has been based in Qayyarah, Iraq. Having been given the task of working with the local population to obtain information about insurgent activity, he developed close relationships with the people of Qayyarah. He began to visit all the nearby villages, chatting with the people about their problems, and was involved in bringing a clean water project into the area.

At a village meeting a local sheikh, Dr Mohammad Ismail Ahmed, suggested that the staff sergeant be named a sheikh. He was given some sheep by the local sheikhs, as well as a small piece of land symbolic of his position.

Each month Dale Horn meets with village leaders to discuss issues such as security and development.

(Houston Chronicle, 8/1/05)

## The New Iraqi Constitution

The deadline of August 15<sup>th</sup> was not met, and shortly before midnight the parliament extended the period for another week.

### Sticking points:

Whether Islam will be a main source of Iraqi law

Federal system with some power to regions.

Women’s rights (which Shia sharia law would erode)

Future of Kirkuk, Electoral system, Oil revenues

### Solutions:

Oil wealth may be shared between govt and provinces

Agreement not to use Federal or Islamic in name, but

*Republic of Iraq.*

### Schedule:

Due to be submitted 8/15, but extended to August 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ratification by Parliament

Referendum on Oct 15

National Elections in December

## Wolfensohn Preserves Gaza Fruit

In issue 39 we reported that the former World Bank president had been appointed by George Bush as his Middle East envoy to Palestine. In issue 45 he was reported as calling on financial donors to contribute as much as \$3 billion towards aid for the Palestinians.

As the Israeli pullout proceeds it has been agreed that the detached (single-family) dwellings in the Gaza settlements will be demolished by Israel. They are unsuitable for the Palestinians, who would require higher-density residences, particularly as many of them are currently living in refugee camps.

In the last few days, however, it was reported that at least one piece of the settlement infrastructure will not be demolished: the Israeli greenhouses that are used to grow fruit and vegetables. The agreement to preserve the Gaza Strip greenhouses was put together by James Wolfensohn, and the \$14 million purchase of the greenhouses was made possible by a group of Americans who want to preserve the industry for the Palestinians.

More than 3,000 Palestinians are employed in the greenhouses. The settlers had threatened to demolish them because they were not receiving sufficient compensation from the Israeli government.

As part of the donor group, Wolfensohn is himself contributing \$500,000 to the project.

(Houston Chronicle, 8/13/05)

## Muslim Jerusalem (1)

Jerusalem was captured by the Muslims in 637 AD, and occupied by them until 1099, and again from 1187 until the Ottoman period (1517-1922) with the exception of a short period from 1229-1244.

Most of the significant buildings in the Haram Al Sharif were constructed during the first period of occupation, before the Crusades. For Muslims the prime significance of the city was its identification with Abraham's sacrifice of his son, and the assumed destination of Muhammad's night journey and his *mijra*, ascension into heaven.

During this time the majority of the population was Christian and Jewish. As many as 70,000 may have lived in the city until the approach of the Crusaders in 1099.

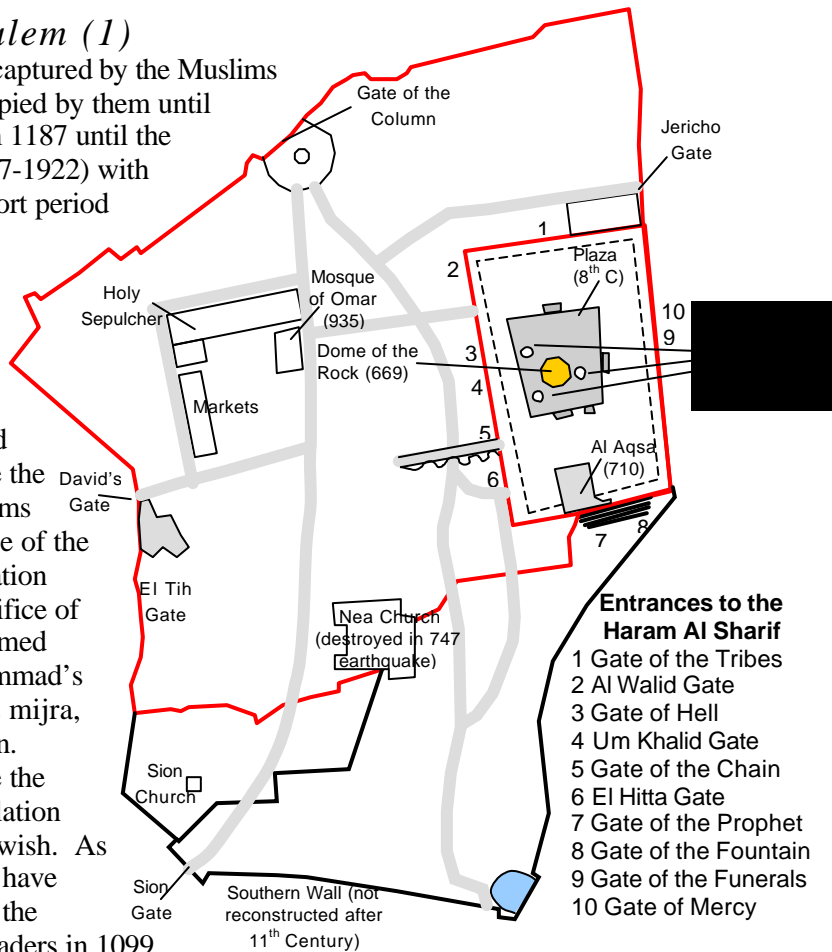
As in the past, Jerusalem was in the middle of the struggle for supremacy between Egypt and Syria, though in this case it was the Seljuks (Sunni) who were competing with the Egyptian Fatimids (Shia) for control. The Fatimid Caliph Hakim attacked Jerusalem in 1009 and destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, as well as a number of other Christian sites.

In 1075 the Seljuks took control of the Holy Land from the Fatimids. The hindrances they placed upon pilgrims were such as to give Pope Urban incentive to proclaim the first crusade in 1095. In 1098 the Fatimids regained Jerusalem from the Seljuks after a 40-day siege. They lost it the following year to the First Crusade. (See e-News 25).

The 'Gate of Mercy' is quite possibly built on the site of the Herodian Golden Gate of Jesus' time. After the Roman

destruction, the current gate was not built until at least the 7th century, and may well have been sealed by the Ottomans even as they reconstructed the walls in the early 16th Century. The Muslims identify the two arches as the Gate of Mercy and the Gate of Grace.

The Damascus Gate is indicated with the column by which it acquired its Arabic name, Bab Al Amoud.



This picture of the Gate of Mercy and Gate of Grace is taken from inside the Haram al Sharaf. The Mount of Olives can be seen in the background. The outer and inner gates are sealed, enclosing the gatehouse which is used as a mosque to which a small door gives entrance.

## History of Islam

### The Five Pillars

Sunni Muslims recognize the five pillars as five key duties of Islam:

**shahada**: "testifying that *There is no god but God and Muhammad is the messenger of God*;

**salat**: praying five times daily;

**zakat**: giving alms;

**sawm**: fasting for Ramadan;

**hajj**: pilgrimage to Mecca.

Methods for performing these duties are prescribed, including the times of prayer, the extent of the fast, and the responsibilities of the hajj.

The five pillars do not come from Shia tradition, which instead emphasizes five *beliefs* the *Usool ad-Din*, ('roots of religion') and ten habits, the *Furoo ad-Din* ('branches').

The first pillar, Shahadah, is included in the five beliefs of the Shia. The ten 'branches' include the other four pillars, followed by...

**amir bil ma'roof**

encouraging what is good

**nahi anil munkar**

forbidding what is evil

**jihad**

striving for God's approval

**khums**

paying tax on profit earned

**tawalla**

love of the *ahl al bayt* –

family of the prophet

**tabarra**

hate the enemies of the *ahl al bayt*.

The traditions in the *hadiths* are significant also in prescribing the Five Pillars. The Five Pillars are quoted in the hadith of Bukhari (Vol.1, Bk.1, No.7)

The USC web site has been a good background resource:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/fundamentals/hadithsunnah/>

The Gaza Strip

This map illustrates 4 types of towns within the Gaza Strip. Palestinians live in the urban cities and towns of Gaza City, Khan Younis, Rafah, etc., in UNRWA refugee camps, or in Israeli-developed refugee housing (labeled alphabetically).

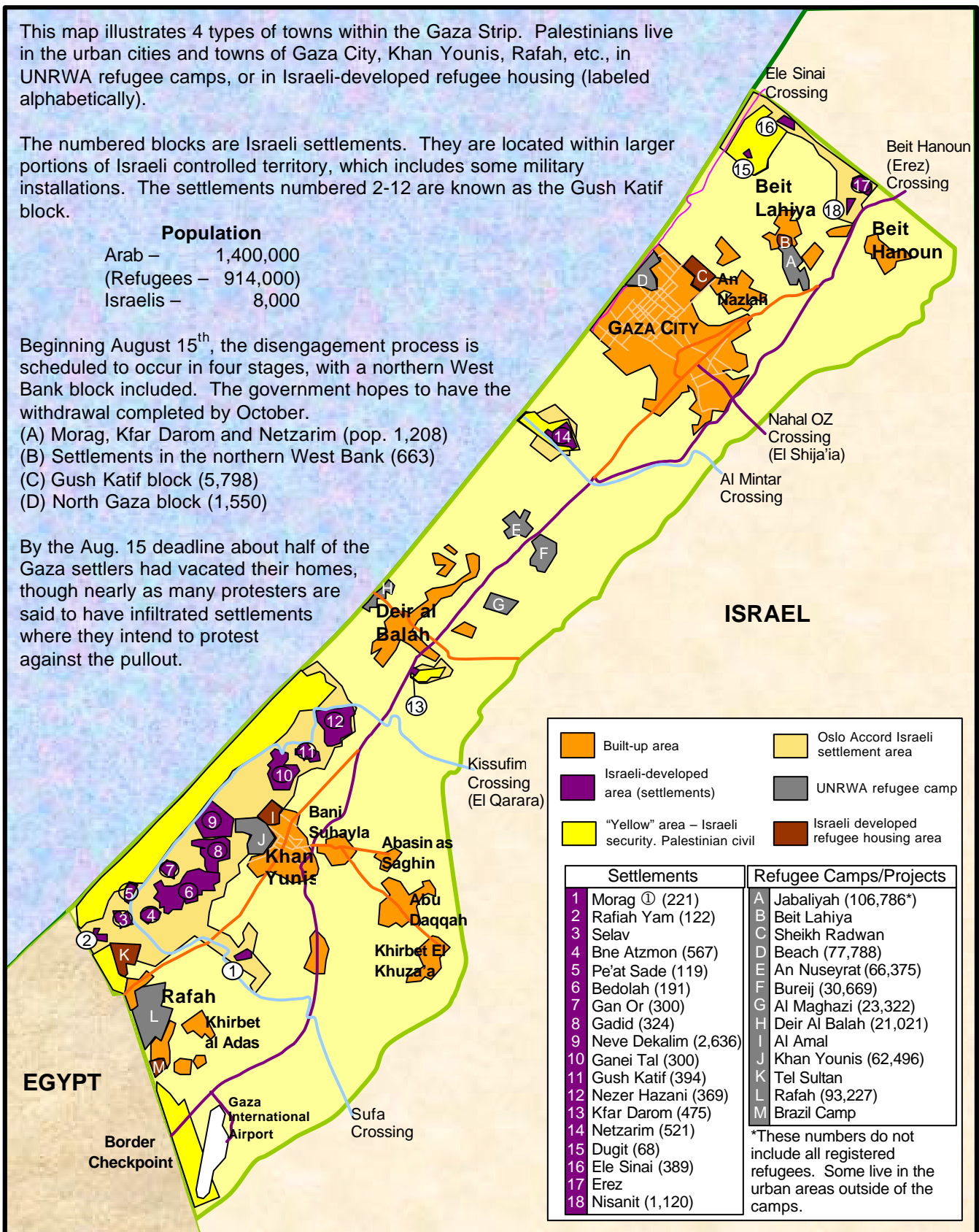
The numbered blocks are Israeli settlements. They are located within larger portions of Israeli controlled territory, which includes some military installations. The settlements numbered 2-12 are known as the Gush Katif block.

Population	
Arab –	1,400,000
(Refugees –	914,000)
Israelis –	8,000

Beginning August 15<sup>th</sup>, the disengagement process is scheduled to occur in four stages, with a northern West Bank block included. The government hopes to have the withdrawal completed by October.

- (A) Morag, Kfar Darom and Netzarim (pop. 1,208)
- (B) Settlements in the northern West Bank (663)
- (C) Gush Katif block (5,798)
- (D) North Gaza block (1,550)

By the Aug. 15 deadline about half of the Gaza settlers had vacated their homes, though nearly as many protesters are said to have infiltrated settlements where they intend to protest against the pullout.



Built-up area	Oslo Accord Israeli settlement area
Israeli-developed area (settlements)	UNRWA refugee camp
"Yellow" area – Israeli security. Palestinian civil	Israeli developed refugee housing area

Settlements	Refugee Camps/Projects
1 Morag ① (221)	A Jabalyah (106,786*)
2 Rafiah Yam (122)	B Beit Lahiya
3 Selav	C Sheikh Radwan
4 Bne Atzmon (567)	D Beach (77,788)
5 Pe'at Sade (119)	E An Nuseyrat (66,375)
6 Bedolah (191)	F Bureij (30,669)
7 Gan Or (300)	G Al Maghazi (23,322)
8 Gadid (324)	H Deir Al Balah (21,021)
9 Neve Dekalim (2,636)	I Al Amal
10 Ganei Tal (300)	J Khan Younis (62,496)
11 Gush Katif (394)	K Tel Sultan
12 Nezer Hazani (369)	L Rafah (93,227)
13 Kfar Darom (475)	M Brazil Camp
14 Netzarim (521)	
15 Dugit (68)	
16 Ele Sinai (389)	
17 Erez	
18 Nisanit (1,120)	

\*These numbers do not include all registered refugees. Some live in the urban areas outside of the camps.

This Month

July	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Aug	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15								
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M									
<b>Europe</b>					Bombs fail to explode on London transport												Italy expels Muslim preachers					Cleric (Bakri) leaves UK for Lebanon						UK expels 10 'clerics' inc Al Qatada										
<b>Sudan &amp; Africa</b>			Southern rebel army dissolved						Sudan continues to pay Jinjawid						John Garang dies in helicopter crash, riots follow, 18 die						Kiir becomes VP after Gaang's death																	
<b>Asia</b>			Thailand declares emergency in South						Kyrgyz & Uzbek govts. give OK to US bases						6 Kashmir rebels killed by Indian military						Mine kills 5 Russian troops in Grozny																	
		Aceh rebels agree draft peace accord																		Aceh peace accord signed (on 15 <sup>th</sup> )						Grozny bomb kills 2												
<b>Pakistan</b>				Elders killed after aiding Musharraf						100 imams arrested in Punjab						Foreigners told to leave madrassas						Border refugee camps to be closed																
<b>Afghan.</b>										Pakistan to aid Afghan election process						Militant arms cache seized in Ghazni						2 US drown 8 rebels die in battle						Woman 'spy' killed						US assault on rebel valley				
<b>Taliban activity increases</b>								US soldier killed in Helmand																		Ghazni doctor killed						Bomb in Kandahar market						
<b>Arabia</b>			Riots over price increases												King Fahd dies-succeeded by Abdullah						Terror threat closes US embassy in Saudi																	
<b>Iraq</b>		Basra oil workers strike												Baghdad hospital bomb kills 5						Mass Shia wedding in Baghdad						11 die in attacks												
<b>Series of attacks on diplomats. Relative peace in South. Constitution process continues - due on August 15<sup>th</sup> but deadline extended to 22<sup>nd</sup>.  US deaths: 6/28: 1,732, 7/24: 1,768, 8/2: 1,787, 8/7: 1,828</b>		13 workers killed on bus						Train oil transport bombed						2 British guards killed nr Basra						3 US die in bombings						30 bodies found in mass grave												
		2 on constitution panel killed						Count of Iraqi war deaths estimated at 23,000						Early draft of constitution curbs women's rights						11 rebels killed nr Syrian border						Baghdad car bomb kills 3+						Constitution deadline extended by 1 week						
		Chalabi wants to remove Saddam trial staff						Algerian diplomats kidnapped, killed						Newlywed shot dead						Baghdad pol. st. bomb kills 25						Op. Quick Strike in Haditha region						W. Baghdad car bomb-7 die						
								Police commander kille						Bomb kills 2 US troops						Journalist-Vincent-killed in Basra						Interior ministry official kidnapped												
								Chalabi wants Sa						Baghdhd car bomb kills 5						Bomb nr Kirkuk kills 4 Shia						Mehdi brigade rescues 4 hostages												
<b>Iran</b>										12 iron workers ki						Mosul bomb kills 40 recruits						Shia consider federal state						Roadside bombs kill 5 US										
<b>Turkey</b>				Istanbul café bomb, 3 hurt						Turkey calls US to deal with Kurd rebels						Small bombs in Antalya injure 6						5 soldiers killed by Kurd rebels						Syrian held over plot to bomb Israeli ships										
																						5 PKK arrested in bomb plot						Erdogan admits errors on Kurd issue										
<b>Lebanon</b>			Sammy Geagea pardoned, (freed on 26 <sup>th</sup> )						Govt. formed						Beirut bomb after Rice visits						Siniora visits Syria to improve relations						Al Bakri arrested											
<b>Syria</b>		Lebanon border closed to trucks						Tunisian insurgents handed over						Syria reopens border for trucks						10 to be deported from UK						Kurds clash with police												
<b>Jordan</b>																				17 Al Qaeda arrested																		
<b>Egypt</b>		Sharm el-Sheikh bombs kill 64						Riots over Mubarak 5 <sup>th</sup> term						Sharm elSheikh bomber killed						9 presidential candidates approved, inc Ayman Nour																		
<b>Israel</b>		Settlers congregate to halt pullout						Pope's sermon criticized						Egypt agrees to patrol Gaza border						Netanyahu resigns to protest pullout						Troops begin enforcing settlement pullout												
		Sniper kills Hamas official						Rice visits Sharon						Sharon son to be indicted for corruption						Settlers protest in Sderot						Gunmen seize UN workers, rescued later												
		2 militants killed in gun battle						Sharon meets with Chirac in Paris						Israeli Jew convicted of aiding bomber						9 soldiers desert to protest pullout																		
<b>Settlers stage demonstrations to protest pullout. Some infiltrate settlements to resist military.</b>		Police prevent Gaza march						Militant killed in Shufa by IDF						150 protesters detained						Hurndall killer jailed																		
		Jewish extremists call for curse on Sharon												AIPAC lobbyists charged						Large Tel Aviv demo against pullout																		
<b>Palestine</b>		Fighting between Hamas & Fateh						2 Israelis killed on Gaza road						Hamas organizes mass wedding in Nablus						Abbas criticizes violence																		
<b>Calls for calm as Israeli pullout begins.</b>		Abbas Criticizes Hamas for breaking truce						Militants kidnap Gaza security chief						Islamic Jihad to halt attacks during pullout																								
		Rice visits Abbas in Ramallah						UN workers held, briefly						Boy killed by stray militant rocket						Elections planned for January																		