



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (L) watches as US President Barack Obama (C) shakes hands with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas before a trilateral meeting at the Waldorf Astoria in New York on Tuesday.

Israeli-Palestinian summit heralds little change

AFP, New York

President Barack Obama managed to get the Israeli and Palestinian leaders together in the same room on Wednesday, and yet they remained as far apart as ever.

There was a sheepish handshake between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, but no announcement of a resumption of peace talks.

George Mitchell had been resolved.

"Our position before and after this summit remains the same," Abbas told reporters, referring to Palestinian demands that Israel halt construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank before resuming negotiations.

"We insisted on the need for Israel to respect its commitments, notably an end to settlement construction in all its forms," he said.

The United States has also pressed Israel to freeze construction, but Netanyahu has offered only

what he called a temporary ease on building.

Netanyahu, for his part, said it was not the settlements that were holding up peace talks, but the Palestinian insistence on talking about them now.

"I think putting on preconditions is a way to make sure that the peace process does not move forward," Netanyahu later told ABC news.

"For 16 years, Israelis and Palestinians have been negotiating. There has been robust construction of communities and settlements throughout," he said.

The Palestinians are also insisting that talks resume where they left off after they were suspended in late December amid an Israeli assault on the Gaza Strip.

"This basis must be a recognition that a withdrawal must be back to the June 4, 1967 borders," the Palestinian president said.

He said the issue had already been settled with the previous Israeli government of Ehud Olmert "with which we identified the occupied territories as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which includes Jerusalem, the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley."

100 dead in south Sudan clashes

AFP, Juba

More than 100 people were killed in weekend clashes in the troubled Jonglei state of south Sudan, where the rate of violent deaths has overtaken that of Darfur, a military spokesman said Monday.

"There is a total of 102 killed, including 51 civilians and 23 of the attackers, and 46 injured," Major General Kuol Diem Kuol of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) told AFP.

Kuol told AFP, when the known death toll stood at 76, that 11 SPLA soldiers and 11 other troops were among the dead.

"This is not a raid for cattle but a militia attack against security forces," he said.

Shaukat Aziz's regime gave birth to hoarding mafia, says PPP

ANI, Karachi

Senior Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Raza Rabbani has blamed the former President Shaukat Aziz's regime for the birth of hoarding mafia in the country.

Interacting with party workers here, Rabbani said 'peoples' rule' will wipe off the hoarding mafia if they continue their nefarious business.

"The democratic government can handle the hoarders and it wants to solve the problems faced by the public," The News quoted Rabbani, as saying.

Commenting on the ongoing conflict between the PPP and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Rabbani said his party was being deliberately targeted by certain quarters.

Honduran de facto leader offers dialogue with ousted president

AFP, Tegucigalpa

Honduras' de facto leader has offered for the first time to hold direct talks with ousted President Manuel Zelaya to resolve a political stand-off even as soldiers surrounded the embassy where he took refuge.

But Roberto Micheletti, president of the interim government that took power after a June 28 coup, added that Zelaya must first accept elections to choose a new president set for November 29.

"I am ready to talk with Zelaya, as long as he explicitly recognises the presidential elections," Micheletti said in a statement read late Tuesday at a news conference by the interim government's foreign minister Carlos Lopez.

The statement said Micheletti was not proposing

Zelaya's return to office, but Lopez suggested the talks could be arranged by a delegation of foreign ministers from countries that belong to the Organization of American States.

The development came at the end of a day of rising tensions in which soldiers fired tear gas to disperse some 4,000 Zelaya supporters who gathered at the Brazilian embassy in support of the ousted president and in defiance of a curfew.

Troops surrounded the embassy and cut off electricity, water and telephone lines.

Airports were also closed and a curfew extended until early Wednesday evening, as human rights organisations accused the interim government of carrying out mass arrests, injuring and even killing Zelaya supporters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

4 Indian soldiers killed in Kashmir

AFP, Srinagar

Four Indian soldiers and five militants have been killed in fresh clashes in the volatile region of Kashmir, police said Wednesday.

Three separate clashes occurred in the northern districts of Kupwara, Baramulla and Bandipora, a police spokesman said, adding that two of the gunbattles that started overnight were still raging.

Woman gives birth to 8.7 kilo boy

AFP, Jakarta

An Indonesian woman has given birth to an 8.7-kilogramme (19.2-pound) baby boy, the heaviest newborn ever recorded in the country, a doctor said Wednesday.

The baby, who is still unnamed and is 62 centimetres (24.4 inches) long, was born by caesarean section Monday at a public hospital in North Sumatra province, a gynaecologist who took part in the operation told AFP.

Mother jailed for killing two teen daughters

AFP, London

An Indian-born woman who murdered her two teenage daughters with kitchen knives while they slept was jailed for 33 years by a British court on Tuesday.

Hotel waitress Rekha Kumari-Baker stabbed 16-year-old Davina 37 times, and 13-year-old Jasmine 29 times in the early hours of June 13, 2007, Cambridge Crown Court heard.

The 41-year-old, whose former husband, David Baker, accused her of "calculated viciousness" by killing their daughters to hurt him, had bought the knives at a local supermarket two days before the attack.



United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (R) meets with Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday at the United Nations in New York.

Gaddafi made to fold NY tent again

AFP, United Nations

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's attempt to pitch a Bedouin tent near the United Nations has failed again after officials intervened, the New York Post reported Wednesday.

A building inspector in Westchester, outside New York, ordered the large white tent be taken down shortly after it was erected on a property belonging to real estate mogul Donald Trump, the Post reported.

If confirmed, this would be only the latest setback for the Libyan strongman's attempt to set up a traditional camp.

Over 300 people killed in Indonesian road rages

AFP, Jakarta

More than 300 people have been killed in road accidents in Indonesia during a mass exodus to celebrate the Muslim holiday of Eid-ul-Fitr, a police spokesman said Wednesday.

"The latest number of road accidents nationwide is 893, in which 312 people were killed," national police spokesman I Ketut Untung Yoga Ana told AFP, using data collected since September 13.



Soldiers and anti-riot policemen clash with supporters of deposed Honduran President Manuel Zelaya at El Pedregal neighbourhood in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on Tuesday. Honduran soldiers surrounded Tuesday the Brazilian embassy where Zelaya is holed up seeking reinstatement, driving off protesters who had massed there overnight.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Government Tendering Commission (BGC) regarding the procurement of goods and services. Includes details on tendering process, dates, and contact information.

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