

## WORLD IN BRIEF

MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES



## NETHERLANDS

## ICC Seeks Libyan Arrests

THE International Criminal Court's chief prosecutor announced on Wednesday he is seeking arrest warrants for three Libyans. Prosecutor Luis Moreno-Ocampo has been investigating crimes against humanity in Libya. He did not name the three Libyans in question. "The evidence shows that security forces have been systematically shooting at peaceful protesters, following the same modus operandi in multiple locations," the prosecutor wrote to the United Nations Security Council on Wednesday. The number of deaths in just February was 500-700 people, with the larger number difficult to estimate as the corpses were removed from the streets and hospitals. According to Moreno-Ocampo the crimes against humanity continue to be committed in Libya. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is an independent permanent court aimed at investigating and prosecuting serious crimes.

## THAILAND-CAMBODIA

## Border Crossings Reopen

SUCCESSFUL talks between Thai and Cambodian officials prompted the reopening of two border crossings, two weeks after they were closed amid armed clashes between the armies. Fighting erupted April 22 around the Ta Moan and Ta Krabey temples. Three districts in Thailand's Northeast—Phanom Dong Rak, Kab Choeng, and Prasat—were declared disaster zones. Red Cross officials report that about 60,000 people have been displaced in the fighting and that there have been over a dozen deaths. The dispute involves competing claims of ownership over the ancient temples ruins, similar to the deadly clashes in February at Preah Vihear temple, 125 miles away. The reopened crossings are busy trade routes for local sellers. One fruit seller told the Bangkok Post that his family would have starved if it had stayed closed much longer.

## UNITED STATES

## Bin Laden Escape Plan Exposed

IN the two days after al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's death, a wealth of information has emerged about the last several hours of his life. Information that was acquired by the team of Navy SEALs was sent to an FBI lab on Wednesday, coinciding with their return to the United States, reported ABC News. Bin Laden looked poised to run at a moment's notice as he had around 500 euros and two phones stitched into his clothing, people close to the intelligence matter told ABC. Also seized from the compound near Islamabad were around 100 digital media items, disks, DVDs, pen drives, and other things, the report said. They were transported to an FBI facility for examination.

## SYRIA

## Al Jazeera Seeks Journalist's Release

AN English-language journalist with Al Jazeera was captured in Syria last Friday, the day she arrived to cover the protests. Her family, friends, and employer are pressing Syria for her release, but so far Syrian authorities have only confirmed that they have her. "We are worried about Dorothy's welfare, security, and safety. Syria should release her immediately," said an Al Jazeera spokesman in a statement. Dorothy Parvaz, a citizen of America, Iran, and Canada, has had no contact with anyone outside of the country since her disappearance, reported The Canadian Press. Her previous assignment was in Japan, with her last story being published on April 26, three days before arriving in Syria. As of Wednesday afternoon, a "Free Dorothy Parvaz" Facebook page had more than 4,400 fans.

## MEXICO

## Hopes Fade for Trapped Coal Miners

HOPES are becoming grim for those trapped in a northern Mexico coal mine following a gas explosion on Tuesday. In a panic-stricken effort to reach 14 trapped miners who are 197 feet underground in San Juan de Sabinas in the state of Coahuila, rescuers used shovels, picks, and their hands to dig through debris and have so far dug out five miners—all dead, according to BBC News. About 60 anxious relatives of the miners waited overnight Wednesday outside the mine in three tents supplied by local authorities. The Associated Press reported. To prevent the relatives from going into the mine, they are kept away from the mine shaft by a metal fence. Labor Secretary Javier Lozano reassured the relatives that he would update them on the rescue every hour.

## TURKEY

## PM Narrowly Misses Attack

SEVERAL gunmen launched an attack on a police escort near an election rally for Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan in northern Turkey Wednesday, media reports say. One police officer was killed and two were wounded. Erdogan already left the Kastamonu rally by the time the attack occurred, according to the Reuters. The attack occurred on a road south of the city, when the assailants threw an explosive device and shot at a vehicle carrying police. It was with a bus carrying campaign workers with the AK party, which Erdogan belongs to. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, but Erdogan said that separatist militants were responsible. Over the past three decades, the PKK militants have waged a war against Turkey, claiming thousands of lives.

## Palestinian Factions Sign Peace Accord

PPM VIA GETTY IMAGES

BY JACK PHILLIPS  
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

The leaders of the two opposing Palestinian factions, Fatah and Hamas, signed an accord of reconciliation on Wednesday, ending their four-year split, but drawing ire from Israeli leadership, and skepticism from the United States.

The agreement, signed by Hamas head Khaled Meshaal and Fatah chief Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Cairo, makes way for a joint transitional government over the Palestinian territories. Elections for the new unity government will be held within a year to bring together Hamas, which has ruled the Gaza Strip since it violently took it over in 2007, and the Fatah-ruled West Bank.

The agreement was summarily panned by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who spoke with reporters in London on Wednesday.

"What happened today in Cairo is a tremendous blow to peace and a great victory for terrorism," he said, reported the Jerusalem Post. "Three days ago, terrorism was dealt a resounding defeat with the elimination of Osama bin Laden. Today, in Cairo, it had a victory."

In the days leading up to the pact, Israel said that it would

likely cut next month's funding to the Palestinian Authority to the tune of \$90 million. The Israeli government said that with the inclusion of Hamas—a terrorist organization that rejects Israel's existence—it would not be able to continue the funding.

Abbas called the deal a step forward. "We announce to Palestinians that we turn forever the black page of division," he said, according to Al Jazeera television.

Meshaal added that the aim of the agreement "is to establish a free and completely sovereign Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, whose capital is Jerusalem, without any settlers and without giving up a single inch of land, and without giving up on the right of return," reported the television station.

Now that the deal is signed, the United States is taking a wait-and-see approach, but early signals were a concern.

At a speech in Washington, D.C., to the National Conference of Editorial Writers on Wednesday, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, "Already today, we had a statement from Hamas condemning our action killing bin Laden, which is a very unusual development because they were moving in this last week toward reconciliation with Fatah."

State Department spokesman Mark Toner reiterated at



**DONE DEAL:** Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal (R) meets with President of the Palestinian National Authority and Fatah leader Mahmoud Abbas (L) on May 4, in Cairo, Egypt. The rival factions signed a reconciliation accord after reaching common ground.

a briefing on Wednesday that any Hamas element in the government will have to adhere to certain principles, including the "recognition of the state of Israel, a commitment to nonviolence, and an acceptance of the previous agreements and obligations between the parties."

The United Nations has backed the deal, but noted in a statement from Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the two factions should commit to the two-state principle, of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace within recognized borders.

## Canadian Woman Sues Over Flammable Tap Water

BY HELENA ZHU  
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Jessica Ernst, a 54-year-old scientist and oil patch consultant in southern Alberta, Canada, has launched a CA\$33-million (US\$34.6 million) lawsuit alleging that natural gas drilling has contaminated her well water—making it flammable.

Ernst, who lives in Rosebud, a small community north of Calgary, claims that hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, taking place in her area has caused her tap water to contain so much methane and other chemicals that she can set it on fire.

Even though fracking—a method that blasts water, sand, and chemicals into the ground to break up coal formations and release natural gas—has caused problems in the area, Ernst said in her statement of claim that the Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board and the province's Environment Department have "consistently failed" to enforce regulations designed to protect the groundwater.

"We've been lied to about hydraulic fracturing. We've been told it was safe. We were told in my community it wasn't even happening," she said at a press conference on April 27.

An outspoken critic of experimental drilling methods, Ernst is seeking over CA\$10 million (US\$10.5 million) each from Encana Corp., the provincial government, and the Energy Resources Conservation Board, Alberta's energy regulator.

In the statement of claim, Ernst said that in or around 2001, Encana "began a risky and experimental drilling program for shallow coal bed methane at dozens of wells in the area around Rosebud" without informing local residents.

"In at least one instance, Encana negligently injected chemical fracturing fluids directly into the aquifer that local residents depend upon for access to safe, clean drinking water," the statement reads.

The statement also says that no company has disclosed what toxic chemicals were used to break open the shallow coal formations, nor has the government

regulator recorded the original state of the groundwater prior to the drilling.

Ernst claims Alberta Environment and the Energy Resources

statement of claim include the water in Ernst's toilet fizzing and giving off a thick white vapor, sinks and toilets taking on a constant, unnatural shine, and an inability on Ernst's part to produce suds with soap or shampoo. Ernst's dogs also refused to drink the water.

A 2008 Alberta Research Council (ARC) report found that methane occurs naturally in well water in the community and stated that energy development projects in the community most likely did not negatively affect the wells.

"ARC found no evidence of contamination caused by coalbed methane production in four water wells," reads the report. "Methane and small amounts of ethane were found to be naturally occurring from the coal zone in which the water wells were drilled."

The report did say in one well, there was evidence of impact from conventional gas, but the cause could not be determined. "It is unclear whether it was caused by an energy well or a natural pathway, such as a fault," reads the report.

Conservation Board "served as a government coverup of environmental contamination caused by the oil and gas industry."

Other problems cited in the

**'We've been lied to about hydraulic fracturing.... We were told in my community it wasn't even happening' —Jessica Ernst**

## NATO, Allies Likely to Fund Libyan Rebels

FUNDING REBELS CONTINUED FROM A1

Clinton, while in Berlin, suggested using some of Gadhafi's frozen assets to fund the rebel forces.

Rasmussen said that funding rebels "goes beyond the NATO operation," but added he is "definitely in favor of taking all necessary measures to put the maximum pressure on the Gadhafi regime with the aim to protect civilians in Libya."

"I do believe that it would be protection of civilians in Libya if Gadhafi was forced to step down," he said. "And in that respect I think it would be helpful to make sure that the opposition can be financed properly," adding that this issue will likely be discussed on Thursday in Rome, when Western coalitions and Arab nations meet on Libya.

In a press conference on Monday, State Department spokesperson Mark Toner said, "one of the things they're talking about, obviously, is this financial

mechanism that would help get funding" to the rebels.

Mustafa Abdel-Jalil, a leader in Libya's Transitional National Council opposition bloc, will be attending the Rome conference.

In recent weeks, Qatar has proposed helping fund the Libyan rebels in various ways and also proposed giving them arms.

The call to fund rebels was also proposed by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. "It's not easy. There are Libyan assets that are frozen and for legal reasons unfreezing them is difficult," he said, according to the Reuters news agency.

There has been criticism regarding NATO's Saturday attacks on a compound that killed one of Gadhafi's sons and several of his relatives. Some have interpreted the raid as NATO deliberately attempting to take out Gadhafi himself.

"We target military capabilities solely, including command and control centers," Rasmussen said.



SAAED KHAN/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

**SUPPORT FOR REBELS:** Libyan tribal men on horseback escort a rally to show solidarity with the uprising against Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi in Benghazi, Libya, on May 3. Western and Arab leaders will likely agree in Rome on Thursday to help arm rebels in their bid to overthrow Gadhafi.