

# Israel Pushes In Gaza, Expanding Ground Operation

BY IBRAHIM BARZAK AND ARON HELLER  
Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israeli troops pushed deeper into Gaza on Friday in a ground offensive that officials said could last up to two weeks as the prime minister ordered the military to prepare for a "significantly" wider campaign.

The assault raised risks of a bloodier conflict amid escalating Palestinian civilian casualties and the first Israeli military death — and brought questions of how far Israel will go to cripple Gaza's Hamas rulers.

Officially, the goal remains to destroy a network of tunnels militants use to infiltrate Israel and attack civilians. In its first day on the ground in Gaza, the military said it took up positions beyond the border, encountered little resistance from Hamas fighters and made steady progress in destroying the tunnels. Military officials said the quick work means that within a day or two, Israeli leaders may already have to decide whether to expand the operation.

With calls from Israeli hard-liners to completely crush Hamas, it remains unclear how far Israel will go in an operation that has already seen 299 Palestinians killed in 11 days of intense Israeli bombardment of the densely populated coastal strip, a fifth of them children.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he had ordered the military to prepare for a "significant expansion" of the ground offensive.

"It is not possible to deal with tunnels only from the air. It needs to be done also from the ground," he told a special Cabinet meeting in Tel Aviv. "We chose to begin this operation after the other options were exhausted and with the under-

standing that without the operation, the price we will pay can be very high."

Frustrated by Hamas' refusal to accept an Egyptian-brokered truce agreement and the failure of a 10-day campaign of more than 2,000 airstrikes to halt relentless rocket fire on Israeli cities, Israel launched a ground offensive it had previously been reticent to undertake to further weaken Hamas militarily.

"It won't end that quickly," said Yitzhak Aharonovitch, Israel's minister of public security. "Anything can happen. If we need to keep going, we will keep going. We won't stop. We need quiet for the citizens of the south and the citizens of Israel."

In a fresh effort to broker a truce, U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon was to leave Saturday for the Middle East to help mediate the Gaza conflict, U.N. officials said. A ceasefire is "indispensable" for urgently needed humanitarian efforts to succeed, the under-secretary-general for political affairs Jeffrey Feltman told an emergency meeting of the Security Council.

The Israeli military said it had killed nearly 20 militants in exchanges of fire since the ground offensive started on Thursday night.

Gaza health officials said more than 50 Palestinians have been killed since then, including three young siblings from the Abu Musallam family who were killed when a tank shell hit their home.

At the morgue, 11-year-old Ahmed's face was blackened by soot, and he and his 14-year-old sister, Walaa, and 16-year-old brother, Mohammed, were wrapped in white burial shrouds. Their father, Ismail, said the three were sleeping when the shell struck and he had to dig them out from under the rubble.

Israel says it is going to great lengths

to avoid civilian casualties and blames them on Hamas, accusing it of firing from within residential neighborhoods and using its civilians as "human shields." On Thursday, the U.N. refugee agency for Palestinians, UNRWA, said a routine check in one of its vacant Gaza schools found about 20 hidden rockets and called on militants to respect the "sanctity and integrity" of U.N. property.

Critics say it is the intense fire itself in such a densely populated area that leads to the deaths of innocent civilians. The U.N. children's agency, UNICEF, said at least 59 — or one in five — of the Palestinians killed children were under the age of 18. UNRWA said 40,000 Palestinians were seeking refuge in 34 of its shelters throughout the Gaza Strip.

Most countries have expressed support for Israel's right to defend itself, while urging it to minimize civilian deaths in its ground assault. President Barack Obama spoke with Netanyahu Friday and expressed his concern "about the risks of further escalation and the loss of more innocent life."

The operation also brought Israel its first military casualty. The circumstances behind the death of Staff Sgt. Eitan Barak, 20, were not made clear: Hamas's military wing said it ambushed Israeli units in the northern town of Beit Lahiya. A military spokesman said Barak was likely killed by friendly fire from a tank but it was not confirmed yet. The army said a number of soldiers were also wounded. Earlier in the week, an Israeli civilian died from Palestinian mortar fire and several others have been wounded.

"The ground offensive does not scare us and we pledge to drown the occupation army in Gaza mud," Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said in a statement.

## US Appeals Court Tosses Oklahoma Gay Marriage Ban

BY SEAN MURPHY AND TIM TALLEY  
Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — A federal appeals court ruling Friday that Oklahoma's ban on gay marriage is unconstitutional spurred celebration among gay rights activists but sparked sharp anger among Republican leaders in a conservative state that prides itself on being the buckle of the nation's Bible Belt.

The decision by a three-judge panel of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver upholding a federal judge's ruling is the latest in a decade-long legal battle. That fight was launched by two couples — Sharon Baldwin and Mary Bishop, and Gay Phillips and Susan Barton — shortly after 76 percent of Oklahoma voters backed the ban in 2004.

"There are so many gay

and lesbian Oklahomans who are celebrating, and they have every right to, because this is a victory for all of us," Baldwin said. "We may be the people at the front of the line holding the flag, but never think for one minute that there's not a huge army behind us. We are far from alone in this."

Friday's decision marks the second time the federal appeals court has found the U.S. Constitution protects same-sex marriage, after its June ruling in a Utah case. As in the Utah case, the court put its 2-1 ruling on hold pending an appeal, meaning same-sex couples won't be allowed to marry in Oklahoma for now.

Baldwin and Bishop, who met while working at the Tulsa World newspaper, have been together 17 years. After an appeals court ruled in 2009 that they lacked standing, they filed an amended complaint listing as the defendant the Tulsa County Court Clerk, since that person issues mar-

riage licenses.

"We could have been married by now in a number of other places," Baldwin said. "(But) we are Oklahomans. This is where we're from and we really have no intention of leaving, and we want to be married here."

Attorneys representing the Tulsa County clerk said Friday they were considering their options. They noted the panel's dissenting judge argued that changing the definition of marriage should belong to Oklahoma residents, not a federal court.

Conservative leaders in Oklahoma agreed, saying the court overstepped its bounds and waded into an issue that is for states to decide.

"Today's ruling is another instance of federal courts ignoring the will of the people and trampling on the right of states to govern themselves," Republican Gov. Mary Fallin said in a statement. "In this case, two judges have acted to

overturn a law supported by Oklahomans."

She said she hoped the decision would be overturned and pledged to "fight back against our federal government when it seeks to ignore or change laws written and supported by Oklahomans."

State Rep. Sally Kern, a longtime critic of gay marriage who drew national attention in 2008 when she said homosexuality posed a greater threat to the U.S. than terrorism, urged Fallin to be an example for other states.

"It's time that we the people begin to stand up for morality and God's standards," said Kern, R-Oklahoma City. "If our governor would be bold and take a stand for the 76 percent of the people in Oklahoma who voted ... I think she would be a hero and I think she would set the stage for other states to say: 'You know what? We're not going to let these judges bully us around.'"

## Car Talk

# What's In A Wheel Size?

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI  
King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Dear Tom and Ray:

I drive Lincoln Navigators. I like as good a ride as possible for this size vehicle. If I remember correctly, the one I bought in 2008 had 16-inch wheels. I think my 2010 also had 16-inch wheels, but you could get optional 18s. By 2012 year, they still offered 18-inch wheels, but no one had them, so I had to get 20-inch wheels. Lincoln Navigators have not changed much over the years, but there was supposed to be a major change in 2015, so I thought I would wait. The big change: 22-inch wheels. When the wheel size goes up and the sidewall of the tire gets smaller, doesn't the ride get worse? My thinking is that the smaller wheel with more sidewall will get a better ride — right or wrong? Thanks. — Arlon

RAY: Right. Generally speaking, you are correct. With more sidewall to absorb bumps, the ride will feel softer.

TOM: But the handling will be sloppier. That's what they're trying to combat with larger wheels and shorter sidewalls.

RAY: Usually, the total diameter of the wheel/tire combination stays the same,

regardless of which wheel size you choose. The larger the wheel, the shorter the sidewall. This is so that they all fit in the same wheel well. They wouldn't want to redesign the wheel well, because that costs what? Money.

TOM: But the shorter the sidewall, the less "flex" there is in the tire when you change direction. So shortening up the sidewall is a cheap way of improving the handling without modifying the truck's suspension — which costs what? Money.

RAY: And if Lincoln believes that most potential buyers would prefer crisper handling to that living-room-sofa feel, that's an easy way to accomplish it.

TOM: On a vehicle like a Lincoln Navigator, where the ride already is designed to be Barcelona-esque, you often can "afford" the ride penalty of larger wheels and lower-profile tires. But on a car that is already tuned for handling rather than a cushy ride, like a BMW 3-series, for instance, we encourage people to avoid the larger wheels, because they may turn what had been an acceptable ride into an unacceptably harsh one.

RAY: But lots of people are going for the larger wheels these days anyway, for styling reasons. Wheel aesthetics have

changed in the past 10 years, as your history of Navigator wheel sizes illustrates. These days, if you see 16-inch wheels on a Navigator, they'll probably look tiny and out of scale.

TOM: But if you prioritize a pillow ride over crisp handling, then you're right to opt for the smallest wheels that the manufacturer makes available — if you can find 'em, because even the dealers rarely order them. Good luck, Arlon.

Why do unmitigated cheapskates like Tom continue to buy nothing but old clunkers? Find out by ordering Tom and Ray's guide "How to Buy a Great Used Car: Secrets Only Your Mechanic Knows." Send \$4.75 (check or money order) to Used Car, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

Get more Click and Clack in their new book, "Ask Click and Clack: Answers from Car Talk." Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or email them by visiting the Car Talk website at www.cartalk.com.

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## East Coast Oil Exploration Reopened

ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The Obama administration is reopening the Eastern Seaboard to offshore oil and gas exploration, approving seismic surveys using sonic cannons that can pinpoint energy deposits deep beneath the ocean floor.

Friday's announcement is the first real step toward what could be a transformation in coastal states, creating thousands of jobs to support a new energy infrastructure. But it dismayed environmentalists and people who owe their livelihoods to fisheries and tourism.

The cannons create noise pollution in waters shared by whales, dolphins and turtles, sending sound waves 100 times louder than a jet engine reverberating through the deep every ten seconds for weeks at a time. Arguing that endangered species could be harmed was the environmental groups' best hope for extending a decades-old ban against drilling off the U.S. Atlantic coast.

The U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management acknowledged that thousands of sea creatures will be harmed even as it approved opening the outer continental shelf from Delaware to Florida to exploration. Energy companies need the data as they prepare to apply for drilling leases in 2018, when current congressional limits expire.

"The bureau's decision reflects a carefully analyzed and balanced approach that will allow us to increase our understanding of potential offshore resources while protecting the human, marine and coastal environments," acting BOEM Director Walter Cruickshank said in a statement.

## Children Shift Immigration Politics

The surge of Central American children crossing the U.S. southern border has shifted the politics of immigration, weakening one of the most potent arguments Democrats plan to make against Republicans in November and in the next presidential election.

In the past month, the number of Americans who rank immigration as the nation's top problem has tripled in surveys conducted by Gallup — putting the issue on par with the economy and unemployment as the most frequently named issues facing the country.

And this past week, a poll from Pew Research Center found a 5 percentage point drop in support for the Democrats' long-stalled immigration fix, which would beef up border security while at the same time creating a path to citizenship for many of the 11 million people living in the United States illegally.

That idea remains popular, backed by 68 percent of those polled, having gained support in the past few years as the recession and a surge of Border Patrol agents quieted the border. But Roberto Suro, a former director of the Pew Hispanic Center, said that when the media focuses on trouble at the border, support for such a citizenship effort drops. In the same recent Pew survey, a plurality of Americans said they favor swifter deportations of migrant children and trust Republicans more than Democrats to fix the issue.

"The most potent imagery in immigration politics has been when things are out of control," said Suro, now a journalism professor at the University of Southern California. "Those three words often spell a turn toward restriction, regardless of what the actual circumstance is."

## Wildfire Destroys About 100 Homes

PATEROS, Wash. (AP) — A fire racing through rural north-central Washington destroyed about 100 homes, leaving behind smoldering rubble, solitary brick chimneys and burned-out automobiles as it blackened hundreds of square miles in the scenic Methow Valley.

Friday's dawn revealed dramatic devastation, with the Okanogan County town of Pateros, home to 650 people, hit especially hard. Most residents evacuated in advance of the flames, and some returned Friday to see what, if anything, was left of their houses. There were no reports of injuries, officials said.

A wall of fire wiped out a block of homes on Dawson Street. David Brownlee, 75, said he drove away Thursday evening just as the fire reached the front of his home, which erupted like a box of matches.

"It was just a funnel of fire," Brownlee said. "All you could do was watch her go."

Next door, the Pateros Community Church appeared largely undamaged.

## Iran Nuke Talks To Be Extended

VIENNA (AP) — Diplomats say Iran and six powers have extended nuclear talks until Nov. 24 after realizing that differences were too big to reach a deal by the Sunday, the informal deadline.

The decision was expected, with much of Friday spent on debating not obstacles standing in the way of an agreement but how long the add-on talks should go on and other related details.

Two diplomats who divulged the development demanded anonymity because they were not authorized to talk publicly about the confidential negotiations.

The biggest obstacle is uranium enrichment, which can make both reactor fuel and the core of a nuclear warhead. Iran says it does not want such weapons but demands it be allowed to keep its present program. The United States and its Western allies want deep cuts.

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## MENUS

Menus listed below are for the week of July 21, 2014. Menus are subject to change without notice. All meals are served with milk.

### Summer Food Service

Monday — Pizza  
Tuesday — Chicken Sticks  
Wednesday — Chicken Fajita  
Thursday — Mac & Cheese  
Friday — Tavern

### The Center/Yankton

Monday — Chicken Fried Steak  
Tuesday — Pork Roast  
Wednesday — Chicken Sand.  
Thursday — Beef Tips  
Friday — Autumn Chicken

### Tabor Senior Citizens Center

Monday — N/A  
Tuesday — Salisbury Steak  
Wednesday — Cheeseburg. Pie  
Thursday — Pork Cutlets  
Friday — N/A

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### Holdt-Somer

Sarah Juliet Holdt and Bryce Allen Somer were married May 31, 2014, in Pensacola Beach, FL, with Rev. Chuck Randle officiating. Parents of the couple are David and Sylvera Holdt of Scottsbluff, NE, and Hal and Cindy Somer of Yankton, SD. Maid of honor was Tanisha Lewis. Bridesmaids were Emily Leatherman, Tara Newcomb, Becky Somer Palu, Amanda Swanson and Stephanie Larson.

Flower girl was Cadie, pet Begle of the couple.

Anthony Oberle was best man. Groomsmen were Mike Ekeren, Adam Holdt, Alex Holdt, Joe Wheeler and Jason Vitek. Ring bearers were Zane and Riley Walter. Ushers were Andrew Newcomb and Jason Palu. Special music was provided by Dan Leatherman.

The couple's wedding trip will be to Cancun, Mexico.

The bride is a 2005 graduate of Scottsbluff High School, 2009 graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BA in psychology, and a 2014 graduate of University of Nebraska Medical School with her MD. She is currently doing her residency in OB-GYN in Tampa, FL. The groom is a 2006 graduate of Yankton High School, 2010 graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BS in nutrition and exercise science, and a 2014 graduate of University of Nebraska Medical Center with his MD. He is currently doing his residency in Internal Med-Pediatrics in Tampa, FL. The couple resides in Tampa, FL.



### Somer-Palu

Rebecca Somer and Jason Palu were married June 21, 2014, in Lincoln, NE, with Father Mike McDermott officiating. Parents of the couple are Hal and Cindy Somer of Yankton, SD, and Mike and Vicki Palu of Grand Island, NE. Matron of honor was Tara Newcomb. Bridesmaids were Kristin Fluit, Sarah Scofield, Jessica Palu and Allison Struck. Flower girl was Kaitlyn Trautman.

Kyle Uhing was best man. Groomsmen were Bryce Somer, Nate Glass, Kevin Palu and Josh Meyer. Ring bearer was Will Hagen. Ushers were Jeff Ostermiller, Aaron Blender and Andrew Newcomb. Special music was provided by Kevin Palu and Bryce Somer.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held at Pla Mor Ballroom in Lincoln, NE. Music and entertainment were provided by Complete Music. The couple's wedding trip will be to Cancun, Mexico.

The bride is a 2006 graduate of Yankton High School and a 2010 graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BS in biochemistry. She is currently working on her PhD in genetics at the University of Utah.

The groom is a 2006 graduate of Northwest High School in Grand Island, NE, and a 2011 graduate of University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a BS in geology. He is currently working on his Master's degree in geology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The couple resides in Salt Lake City, UT, and Lincoln, NE, while they finish their education.

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