By Kate Meyers
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Another suicide bombing in Israel: State refuses Bush’s pleas to halt violence with Palestinians

In the aftermath of yet another suicide bombing attack in Israel, US pleas for an end to the fighting have been ignored. A suicide bomber detonated himself on a commuter bus near Haifa, Israel this week, killing eight people and prompting President George W. Bush to call for an end to the Israeli military attack against Palestinian militants. On Wednesday, however, Israel’s security Cabinet agreed to ignore Bush’s wishes, further complicating US involvement in the issue.

This particular suicide bombing was the second major attack on Israeli civilians since attempts were made on Mar. 29 to crush Palestinian militants. Hamas, an Islamic militant group, has claimed responsibility for the Haifa suicide bombing. Among the eight dead was Noa Shlomo, 18, a niece of Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations. Officials have reported that fourteen others were injured.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer commented that Wednesday’s suicide bombing “reinforces for the president the need for all parties to step back, for Israel to withdraw and for the Palestinians and the Arabs to stop the violence, to stop the killing.”

[Source: www.msnbc.com]

Amnesty International finds convicted foreign torturers residing in the US

Amnesty International has discovered that at least 150 foreign torturers are now living in the United States, despite a US law that allows for prosecution of torturers from anywhere in the world. Apparently, the US Immigration and Naturalization Service has granted citizenship to foreign officials, even in light of the fact that some have been found guilty of torture in US courts.

Amnesty USA’s director, William Schulz, commented, “what message do we send when we use our military to fight terrorism and apprehend terrorists in remote corners of the world and yet refuse to use our judicial system to apprehend torturers right here at home?” He went on to profess that “Amnesty International calls for the Bush administration to arrest and extradite or prosecute torturers in the United States.”

[Source: www.msnbc.com]

Shooting rampage in NJ ends with five dead and a suicide

A veteran police officer in Dover Township, NJ, was found dead Wednesday from a self-inflicted gun shot wound to the head. Edward Lutes, a Seaside Heights police officer for 15 years, reportedly shot and killed six people before shooting himself this week. Lutes was found dead in his 1995 Buick Regal in a shopping mall in Barnegat Township, police have said.

The first shooting occurred at 9:20 pm Tuesday night, and continued throughout the night until five of Lutes’ neighbors were slain. After inquiring of a sixth neighbor, Lutes went to nearby Barnegat Township and shot Seaside Heights Police Chief James Costello. Costello’s gunshot wounds do not appear to be fatal, as he is in stable condition at Jersey Shore Medical Center in Neptune.

This tragedy occurs in the aftermath of another veteran police officer killing four people in February. Neighbor Karen Picht, whose 12-year-old daughter sometimes plays with Lutes’ daughter, commented that she was concerned about the two neighborhood shootings.

[Source: www.msnbc.com]

MA Governor Jane Swift amends budget plan for fiscal year

Massachusetts Governor Jane Swift filed an amendment cutting $700 million from the proposed $23.5 billion budget for the upcoming fiscal year. She anticipates that the budget cut will help with the recession that is gripping the nation this year.

The budget cut, according to her amendment, includes $200 million cut from local aid and $115 million to be cut from human service agencies receiving state funding. The cuts also depend on spending the entire $2.1 billion tobacco settlement fund over the next four years, leaving $440 million in reserves.

[Source: www.telegarm.com]