

China inks 'strategic partnership' with Palestinian Authority as it expands Middle East presence

BEIJING: China said Wednesday it has established a "strategic partnership" with the Palestinian Authority during a visit to Beijing by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The announcement marks another step in China's campaign to gain political and economic influence in the Middle East, where it is competing for influence with the United States.

China is seeking energy resources and markets for its military and civilian exports, while promoting its version of authoritarian government in a joint challenge with Russia to the Western-led democratic world order.

Israeli army blames mix-up for fatal shooting of Palestinian toddler

JERUSALEM: An Israeli soldier who killed a Palestinian toddler in a car two weeks ago thought he was shooting at gunmen, the army said on Wednesday, blaming a mix-up caused by another soldier firing in the air in violation of regulations.

Two-year-old Mohammad Al-Tamimi suffered a fatal head wound in the June 1 shooting near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank. His father was hit in the shoulder. The Palestinian foreign ministry demanded accountability, deeming the incident a crime.

Palestinian township reaches compromise over Israeli groups' demands to demolish mosque dome

RAMALLAH: Muslim residents of a town in Jerusalem have come to a compromise solution over pressure from Israeli settler groups and organizations to demolish a prominent mosque's golden dome.

Municipality officials had originally ordered the removal of the structure at Al-Rahman Mosque in Beit Safafa but following months of legal representations and consultations with locals it was agreed that the dome's height would be reduced, and its color changed to silver.

Egypt's grand imam to highlight Islam's peace message at UN session

CAIRO: The head of Egypt's top religious authority will on Wednesday highlight the importance of fraternity, tolerance, and mutual respect in achieving world peace during an address at the UN Security Council.

Sheikh Ahmed Al-Tayyeb, grand imam of Al-Azhar, will speak during a panel discussion on ways to promote and sustain global peace.

In his speech, Al-Tayyeb, chairman of the Muslim Council of Elders, will focus on the significance of promoting the values and their role in spreading the peace message.

Palestinian youth killed during Israeli raid on refugee camp near Nablus

RAMALLAH: A Palestinian teenager was killed and eight people, including a child, were injured when Israeli armed forces raided the Balata refugee camp near Nablus on Tuesday, according to Palestinian medical sources.

Faris Hashash, 19, was not wanted or a target of the raid, local sources told Arab News. The Israeli forces fired at an ambulance to prevent it from reaching the injured, they added.