

Political

update: Gaza crisis: Number Ten calls for restraint and urges soldier's safe return

Key points:

- **Number Ten urges restraint and calls for safe return of kidnapped soldier**
- **Israel arrest 64 members of Hamas in overnight raid**
- **Body of missing teenager Eliyahu Asheri found in West Bank**
- **Parts of Southern Gaza remain without electricity**
- **Pressure on Syrian President Assad to help**
- **Hamas reiterates conditions for release of Corporal Shalit**

Latest developments:

- In a press conference on Wednesday 28 June, the Prime Minister's Official Spokesman reiterated calls for Corporal Gilad Shalit to be returned unharmed while urging for all sides to act with restraint.
- Israel launched an overnight operation, arresting 64 Hamas officials and politicians from the West Bank and Gaza including 3 cabinet members - Finance Minister Omar Abdel Razeq, Minister Samir Abu Aysha, and Jerusalem Affairs Minister Naef Rajoub, brother of senior Fatah official Jibril Rajoub.
- An IDF spokeswoman has said that these arrests are not 'bargaining chips' to use in exchange for Shalit but an anti-terror operation planned several weeks ago.
- Egyptian President Mubarak and Palestinian President Abbas have urged President Assad of Syria, one of Hamas's main sponsors, to act to help release of Corporal Gilad Shalit.
- The body of Israeli teenager Eliyahu Asheri who went missing on Sunday has been found in the West Bank. The Popular Resistance Committee appeared on television yesterday threatening to kill Asheri if Israel did not withdraw its troops. Intelligence has suggested that he was already dead when the threat was made.
- The Hamas government has reiterated demands made by Palestinian militants offering a prisoner swap in exchange for Shalit. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has rejected the offer calling for unconditional release of the soldier.