

Violence continues while Israeli Prime Minister visits U.S.

By the Associated Press INTERNATIONAL

JERUSALEM — An Israeli motorist was killed in a drive-by shooting early today, and Palestinians fired mortar shells into Israel overnight in the latest outburst of violence that has persisted for almost six months.

The attacks came while Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was in the United States, seeking American backing for his policy of refusing to negotiate while under fire.

Brig. Gen. Benny Gantz, the Israeli commander in the West Bank, said the Palestinians were not doing enough to stop attacks.

The Israeli man, a resident of the Jewish settlement of Efrat, was killed by Palestinian gunmen who fled into Palestinian-controlled Bethlehem, Gantz said. Following the shooting, the army reimposed its closure on Bethlehem.

Palestinian militants on Sunday night fired three mortar bombs from the Gaza Strip into Israel, slightly injuring one Israeli soldier at a military base, an army spokesman said.

NATIONAL

SPACE CENTER, Houston — The first crew of the international space station is on its way back to Earth.

The three-man crew — Commander Bill Shepherd and Russian cosmonauts Yuri Gidzenko and Sergei Krikalev — left space station Alpha late Sunday night aboard space shuttle Discovery. They and the shuttle crew are scheduled to return to Earth early Wednesday.

Shepherd, a 51-year-old Navy captain, and his Russian crewmates spent 4 1/2 months on Alpha, transforming it from a spartan, three-room outpost to a sophisticated four-room complex capable of scientific research.

"We hold you in admiration as we prepare to bring you home," Discovery Commander James Wetherbee said of Alpha's first crew. "This has been an arduous duty for you. This ship was not built in a safe harbor, it was built on the high seas."

During a short ceremony before leaving, Shepherd formally handed over control of Alpha to Russian cosmonaut Yuri Usachev, who along with astronauts Jim Voss and Susan Helms will remain on board for the next four months. Alpha's second crew was brought to the orbiting outpost on the shuttle.

LOS ANGELES — Songwriter John Phillips, who penned "California Dreamin'" and other hits of the 1960s

as co-founder of the pop-folk quartet the Mamas and the Papas, has died of heart failure. He was 65.

Phillips, who helped organize the seminal Monterey Pop Festival and wrote for legendary groups including the Grateful Dead and the Beach Boys, died Sunday morning at the University of California, Los Angeles Medical Center, a spokesman for the hospital said.

Phillips was the principal songwriter for the Mamas and the Papas, writing such favorites as "I Saw Her Again Last Night" and "Creeque Alley." In 1966, the band won a Grammy for best contemporary group performance for the single "Monday Monday."

Phillips received a liver transplant in 1992 after years of abusing alcohol and illegal drugs.

He is survived by his wife, three daughters, two sons and two stepdaughters.

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii — A key crewman on the USS Greeneville was set to take the stand today to explain why he failed to tell officers he had detected a nearby boat six minutes before the submarine surfaced beneath a Japanese trawler, killing nine people.

Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick Seacrest, the Greeneville's fire control

technician, was the last witness in a court of inquiry scheduled to testify before attorneys for the three officers present their cases.

The inquiry has focused on whether Greeneville Cmdr. Scott Waddle, with his ship running behind schedule, rushed preparations for surfacing and whether he failed to look long enough or high enough to detect the Ehime Maru during his periscope search.

Also under investigation are the executive officer, Lt. Cmdr. Gerald Pfeifer, and the officer of the deck, Lt. j.g. Michael Coen.

Seacrest told investigators he had data indicating another vessel was 4,000 yards from the submarine but that he assumed it was wrong when Waddle and Coen reported seeing no ships during their periscope scans. Seacrest also said he didn't speak up because civilian guests blocked his access to the officers.

MOORESTOWN, N.J. — A high school basketball coach who allegedly smoked marijuana with four students before a state playoff game will face charges in two municipalities.

Adrian Matthew, a physical education teacher who coaches the boys varsity team at Lenape High School, was

arrested Saturday at his home in Moorestown.

Pat Milich, a district spokeswoman, said Sunday that Matthew was suspended with pay.

Authorities said Matthew attended a pre-game meal with his team on Feb. 28, then invited the students — a 15-year-old boy, a 16-year-old girl and two 17-year-old girls — to his home. After Matthew allegedly smoked the marijuana with them, he drove them to Lenape for a game against Cherry Hill High School East.

Moorestown police filed drug possession and distribution charges against Matthew after they allegedly found marijuana and ecstasy at his home.

Medford police charged Matthew with four counts of luring or enticing children.

Milich said the four students will not be disciplined by the district.

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON — New Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is looking for President Bush to strongly endorse his position that peace talks should remain on hold until there is a cessation of Mideast violence.

The former general, who arrived in Washington on Sunday night, was

elected last month on a platform of restoring security to Israel, and he has demanded an end to the six-month Palestinian uprising before sitting down at the negotiating table.

"An attempt to achieve a diplomatic arrangement can be done only when there will be quiet," Sharon told reporters aboard his flight from Jerusalem. "I want to conduct negotiations, and it's possible, but we can't when there is terror."

Sharon expressed willingness, however, to give the Palestinians time before escalating Israel's response to the violence.

Sharon is slated to meet with Bush on Tuesday.

While Sharon says he is prepared to renew peace talks, his stated aim is a measured, interim accord rather than the kind of sweeping, comprehensive peace pact which was sought by his predecessor, Ehud Barak.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senators are making few predictions as they prepare to open debate on campaign finance reform.

"It's going to be a free-for-all," said Sen. Don Nickles of Oklahoma, the second-ranking Senate Republican. "We don't often legislate like that."

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