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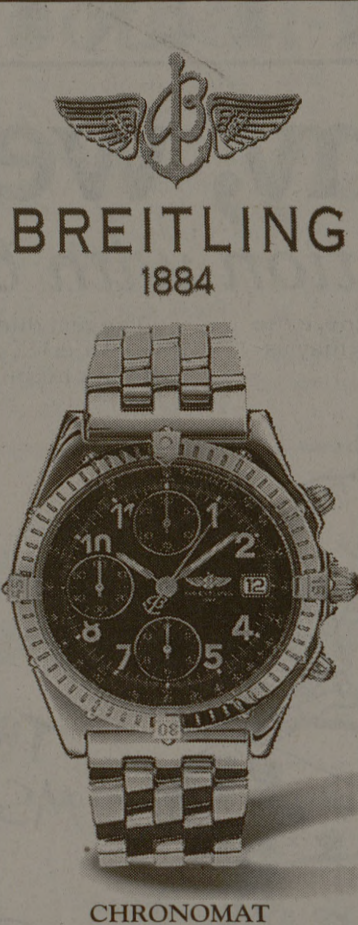
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**INSTRUMENTS  
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## Investigators find bomb-plotting suspects have little in common

*Authorities have charged two Palestinians with conspiring*

JERUSALEM (AP) — Lafi Khalil comes from a West Bank village, accessible only by dirt roads. He had a reputation as a ladies' man, and friends say he dreamed of marrying an American and finding a good job in the United States.

Gazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer, a leftist Palestinian activist with a mercurial temper, lived in the politically charged West Bank city of Hebron. A friend says relatives pooled money to send him abroad, fearing he was headed for trouble at home.

The divergent lives of the two Palestinians ran together in New York, where U.S. investigators say they plotted to bomb a subway station.

Khalil, 22, and Abu Mezer, 23, were arrested Thursday when police raided their Brooklyn apartment. Two potential suicide-style explosive devices were found, according to authorities who have charged them with conspiracy.

Israel has sent secret service agents and police to New York to

look into the alleged plot, an Israeli official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Islamic militants on Sunday suggested that Khalil was an informant for Israel, using his good looks to glean information from Palestinian women.

A picture pieced together from friends, family and official sources indicates the two have little in common except having spent time in Israeli jails. There is no evidence they knew each other before reaching the United States.

Abu Mezer left the West Bank in 1993 — the year the Israel-Palestinian peace agreement was signed. He headed for Canada, telling a friend he wanted a "new life and a new situation."

The friend, who identified himself by only his first name, Hussein, said he and Abu Mezer were active in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which opposes Arab-Israeli peacemaking, before Abu Mezer switched to Yasser

Arafat's Fatah movement.

"We stayed active for a year. We wrote graffiti on walls and threw stones at soldiers. We did a lot during the uprising," said Hussein, 23. "He was courageous ... but is a serious person with a hot temper."

Abu Mezer went to Canada, illegally crossed over the United States and applied for asylum.

A week ago, Abu Mezer called his brother from New York and asked for family permission to marry his American girlfriend and bring her back to Hebron, Noor recalled. The family said that was fine.

Khalil lived at the northern end of the West Bank in Ajou, a poor grape- and olive-growing community 30 miles north of Jerusalem.

He spent part of his childhood in Kuwait, and in 1994 lived for a while with his parents in Jordan. In November 1996, he left his village again, this time for Mexico, later reaching Los Angeles and then New York.

When he got to Brooklyn he was

ill and pressed for money.

"He may have gotten involved with the wrong people who took advantage of his needing a place to stay," said an uncle, Suhail Khalil.

Khalil worked for an American-owned grocery store and told his uncle he wanted to marry an American woman.

Hamas, the Muslim militant group that Israel blames for the Jerusalem market bombing that killed 15 people last week, suggested in a leaflet Sunday that Khalil had formed on Palestinian activists in an Israeli prison and recruited Palestinian women for Israel intelligence.

Two senior Palestinian police officials confirmed that they suspected Khalil informed on Palestinian activists, but lacked evidence to arrest him.

Israeli officials said they doubted Khalil was an informant and was more likely Hamas was using rumors about his reputation to evade blame.

## Spanish climbers die; Alps death toll at 29

AOSTA, Italy (AP) — Seven Alpine mountaineers died this weekend, raising to 29 the total number of people killed in the treacherous peaks in the last three weeks.

Rescuers used helicopters Sunday to recover the bodies of four Spanish climbers who were killed a day earlier. They were part of an expedition of five Spaniards who were climbing in two groups. The survivor, Ivan Muriel Jara, 28, said he watched three of his companions, tied together, plunge to their deaths.

He and his climbing partner went tumbling down the slopes, the Italian news agency ANSA reported. Muriel landed on an ice ledge, but the other man fell to his death.

Helicopters lowered rescuers 260 feet and lifted Muriel to safety.

Police in the Alpine town of Courmayeur, where the bodies of Muriel's four companions were taken, identified the dead as Ignacio Come Duenas, 26; Patricio Guerra Fernandez, 23, and Federico Mera Miranda, 23, all from Seville, and Rafael Castillo Luque, 28, from Cordoba.

A German from another expedition died Saturday in a hospital after he fell from the Italian side of Mont Blanc, authorities reported.

Ulrich Christophe Kinkel, 32, had been climbing Mont Blanc with a Spaniard companion, Juan Luis Fuente, ANSA said. The 25-year-old Spaniard was rescued and is recovering.

Authorities said snow and cold, coupled with exhaustion and inexperience, probably contributed to the accidents.

The 15,750-foot Mont Blanc, on the bor-

ders of France, Italy and Switzerland, is one of Europe's most visited peaks. Even experienced climbers die on its icy cliffs every year, victims of unpredictable weather and hidden crevasses.

Two climbers died July 12 and four more died July 30.

A Russian and a French climber also died in the Alps on Sunday. The 29-year-old Russian woman was crushed under falling rock while climbing at 11,500 feet in France near the Swiss border. The French climber was killed on a Swiss glacier.

The latest deaths bring the total number of people who have died in the Alps to 29 since the middle of July. Last year, 98 people died in the Swiss Alps, according to the Swiss Alpine Club.

## Israel braces for more attacks, detains suspects

JERUSALEM (AP) — On alert for more suicide bombings, Israel mounted a tough blockade on Palestinian areas Sunday and deployed soldiers, bomb squads and extra police in major cities. A Palestinian was shot and killed near a Jewish settlement in the West Bank.

On edge after Wednesday's double suicide bombing that killed 15 people and wounded more than 150, citizens flooded police switchboards with calls Sunday. A TV anchor had urged viewers to report suspicious objects or people.

"We have indications that there will be more attempts at terrorism," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told CBS television. "We are unfortunately prepared for the worst."

The last two victims of Wednesday's attack, Grigory Pesachovich, 15, and Mark Rabinovich, 81, were buried Sunday in Jerusalem.

In a violent incident likely to inflame tensions in the West Bank, a 57-year-old man from the Pales-

tinian village of Yata in the Hebron area was shot and killed Sunday.

Israel's Channel 2 TV quoted eyewitnesses as saying the man was shot from a passing car that had Israeli license plates. He staggered to the entrance of the settlement of Carmel near Hebron, where he died, the report said.

Israel radio identified the victim as Issa Jebriil Missaf and quoted local Palestinians as saying the car escaped into Carmel.

In the wake of Wednesday's bombing in Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda open-air market, Israel has questioned and detained dozens of Palestinians.

The army said Sunday that it had detained 37 Palestinians suspected of "terrorist activity" in a sweep of the West Bank late Saturday and early Sunday.

Soldiers and police maintained a heavy presence in major cities Sunday.

Long lines of cars waited at roadblocks leading into Jerusalem, including a bride in her wedding dress, as soldiers checked identity cards

and peered into trunks. Inside the city, bomb squads and police snarled traffic as they checked out the reports about suspicious objects.

**"We have indications that there will be more attempts at terrorism."**

**Benjamin Netanyahu**  
Israeli Prime Minister

The U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv issued a warning to Americans in Israel, recommending that they avoid downtown areas of Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and other major cities, especially crowded bus stations and markets.

A Palestinian wedding had to be postponed Sunday when the bride was unable to get to the ceremony

in her husband's village of Abot from her home in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

"Maybe I won't meet my husband tonight," said 19-year-old Rubina Moussa, dressed in a white bride's gown as she stood at the roadblock holding a bouquet of flowers.

"It is very cruel of them to prevent a bride from going through a checkpoint. What wrong have we done?"

The army not only barred travel into Israel but also prevented movement between Palestinian cities.

Palestinians criticized the Israeli measures as collective punishment.

"Israel has not identified the suicide bombers ... but has rushed to blame the Palestinian Authority for the attack and imposed a series of collective punishment measures an editorial in the Palestinian Authority daily said Sunday.

Leaflets in the name of the Muslim militant group Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack, but Hamas leaders have cast doubt on the authenticity of the claim.

## Preparations underway for Mir repair mission

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan (AP) — A powerful rocket that will carry cosmonauts and repair equipment to the hobbled Mir space station rolled to the launch pad Sunday — its last stop before Tuesday's liftoff.

A team of some 400 experts will check the rocket and its capsule before it blasts off from Russia's Baikonur cosmodrome.

"The cosmonauts know the work before them and we have no doubt that they'll fulfill the orders they have been given," said Gen. Yevgeny Kulnikov, chief of Russia's military space program.

U.S. astronaut David Wolf will travel to Mir next month via space shuttle Atlantis. He was a late substitute for 5-foot-3 Wendy Lawrence, who was too small to wear the Russian spacesuit she would need if she had to make a spacewalk.

Kulnikov and other top names of Russia's military-run space program were at Baikonur to witness the ceremonial rolling-out of the 300-ton booster rocket that is to send the Soyuz-TM-26 space capsule to rendezvous with Mir.

The rocket and capsule, placed on a transport train, slowly covered the 3-mile distance to the launch pad — the same one from which Yuri Gagarin blasted off for the first manned space flight in 1961.

"Can you believe a mind boggling such a technological creation asked veteran cosmonaut Alexander Serebryakov. "Forty years in operation and still one of the best ways to get to space."

Tuesday's launch could do much to restore confidence in Russia's aging space program and the aging Mir station, a necessary step in restoring the country's reputation as a space superpower.

The mission is aimed at repairing damage to Mir's module which ruptured and lost half its power in a collision June 25 with a cargo ship.

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