

Hamas and Fatah in fight for supremacy



◀ **Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh:** Leader of Hamas-controlled Palestinian government which won parliamentary elections in 2006

President Mahmoud Abbas: ▶ Moderate leader of Palestinian Authority (PA) and Fatah. Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation



■ **Hamas:** Islamic militant group, which calls for destruction of State of Israel, is listed as a terrorist group by West. Hamas gained popularity throughout West Bank and Gaza Strip by establishing extensive welfare programmes, funding schools, orphanages, and healthcare clinics

■ **Executive Force:** Estimated 6,000 fighters, mostly from militant ***Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades*** and ***Popular Resistance Committees***. U.S. says Hamas is backed by Syria, receives Iranian funds and weapons smuggled in from Egypt, and is linked to ***al-Qaeda*** – claim denied by Hamas

■ **Unity government:** Saudi Arabian-brokered agreement – to end fighting between rival Hamas and Fatah factions and to govern jointly – threatened as Hamas seeks control of Palestinian Authority

■ **Palestinian Security Services:** Fatah-dominated state force of about 30,000 personnel, combines 10 services and several rival groups

■ **Presidential Guard:** 5,000-strong. U.S.-backed, officially controls crossings between Gaza Strip and Israel

■ **Force 17:** Abbas' personal security detail. 3,500-strong force. Recently received \$50 million-plus weapons and training programme from Bush administration, with Israeli approval

■ **National Security Forces:** 450-strong group under Abbas's direct command, trained in Egypt

■ **Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades:** Military wing of Fatah, responsible for many attacks inside Israel. Part of ***Palestinian Islamic Jihad***, umbrella group which includes young militant ***Tanzim*** group. Strength around 10,000