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AP News

## Dubai: Hamas operative drugged, suffocated

Feb 28, 2010

Dubai police says forensic tests show a Hamas commander was drugged and then suffocated in his hotel room.

Police officials say tests showed a substantial amount of a fast-acting muscle relaxant called succinylcholine was found in Mahmoud al-Mabhouh's bloodstream.

The analysis was part of tests conducted after al-Mabhouh was killed Jan. 19. Dubai authorities have blamed a hit squad organized by Israel's Mossad secret service.

The drug is sometimes used to administer a breathing tube or anesthesia.

Dubai police on Sunday also said a third Palestinian suspect is in custody. At least 26 other suspects are wanted after being accused of traveling on fake European and Australian passports.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli Cabinet minister says the assassination of a Hamas operative in Dubai last month shows any member of the militant Islamic group can be targeted.

Trade Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer told Army Radio on Sunday that he had no idea who killed Mahmoud al-Mabhouh. But he said the slaying shows Hamas that "none of their people are untouchable."

Ben-Eliezer, a former defense minister, said the killing would deter other Islamic militant groups.

Al-Mabhouh was killed by assassins in a posh Dubai hotel last month. Israel says al-Mabhouh was involved in smuggling weapons into the Gaza Strip. He was also wanted by Israel for the 1989 killing of two Israeli soldiers.

Israel hasn't confirmed or denied involvement. But its Mossad spy agency has widely been suspected.