

**Tan Parsons**

CAMPAIGNERS fighting for human rights in the Gaza Strip spoke out in Hampstead this week to raise awareness of Palestinian suffering.

The speakers were prominent members of Physicians for Human Rights-Israel – a group aiming to secure medical treatment for Palestinians living in Gaza who are denied access to hospitals by the Israeli regime.

Newsreader Jon Snow chaired the debate on Monday night, which took place at the Interchange Studios in Hampstead Town Hall. He called for the world to send a message to Israel. Dr Ruchama Marton, founder and acting president of PHR-Israel, said: "Twenty years ago we were shocked to see the Israeli army breaking hands, legs and sometimes heads with clubs.

"Twenty years later people are killed almost every day by bombs from Apache helicopters or aeroplanes or shelling from tanks with horrible flechette shells.

"These shells contain hundreds of nails and are designed to kill as many people as possible – it is one of the most horrible ways to die."

The audience heard about individual cases where young Palestinian men had legs amputated after suffering gunshot wounds because the Israeli regime would not allow them access to hospitals the other side of the border.

Cancer sufferers in Gaza are regularly denied life-saving radiology treatment, the speakers said, and the Israel Medical Association does nothing to stem the tide.

The director of PHR-Israel's occupied territories department, Miri Weingarten, spoke about the influence of the General Security Services and the Israeli High Court of Justice in deciding whether to allow patients to leave the country to receive medical treatment.

"We try to reverse decisions if patients are refused a pass. But today, if a person gets a rejection

# 'Stop our country, hurting Palestinians'

## Israelis speak out against treatment of people in the Gaza Strip



**Miri Weingarten, director of PHR-Israel's occupied territories department, Jon Snow and Dr Ruchama Marton, founder of PHR-Israel.**

from the rest of the world."

Summing up at the end of the evening, newsreader Mr Snow, who lives in Kentish Town, said: "It's a grave difficulty for Gaza. I think the internet is by far the best chance we have of making progress – through citizen journalism, not the media.

"We have had the pleasure of meeting three extraordinary Israeli women this evening. I think they need a wider audience. People should try to get their MPs to hear what they have got to say. If money is raised, it should be used to bring them back – they need to have bigger opportunities

to speak to the people who need to know."

The evening was organised by the Medical Committee for Palestine. For more information on how to help visit [www.physiciansforhumanrights.org](http://www.physiciansforhumanrights.org).

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## Protesting for prisoners

PROTESTERS blindfolded themselves outside a supermarket in Camden Town to highlight the plight of Palestinian prisoners.

Members of the Camden Abu Dis Friendship Association (Cadfa) held up banners outside Sainsbury's on Camden Road (pictured) to demand the release of 11,000 prisoners they say are being held in Israeli prisons for political reasons.

The stunt on April 17 was part of the group's drive to promote human rights in the Palestinian town of Abu Dis.

The association is raising funds for a visit of young musicians from Abu Dis, to be paid for by people in Camden.

## Antique fair is a real find

HAMPSTEAD folk hoping to find some cash in the attic can come to an antique and collectors' fair on Sunday.

The fair takes place from 10am in the community centre on Hampstead High Street.

Jewellery, porcelain, small collectables, postcards and ephemera will all be on sale.

Admission is 30p (free for children) and refreshments are available.

Vicious muggers leave their victim unconscious after throttling her