



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ The man responsible for the suicide bus bombing in Ramat Gan was a known member of Hamas from Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said. He was said to have arrived in Gaza two weeks ago from Abu Dhabi and disappeared several days ago. It was still unclear how he crossed into Israel.

■ Israel and Jordan sent a joint humanitarian relief airlift to Bosnia's besieged Muslims. High-level delegations, flying in separate planes, delivered a message of peace to the war-torn nation one year after Israel and Jordan signed their Washington Declaration, which paved the way for their historic peace accord.

■ Fifty national Jewish organizations issued a statement supporting "civility of debate and behavior" when engaging in discourse in the Jewish community. The Jewish War Veterans of America was the only member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations not to sign onto the statement.

■ Israeli President Ezer Weizman met with politicians and settler leaders to convey his concern about what he called a growing rift in Israeli society caused by the peace process. He said he backed the idea of Israeli and Palestinian negotiators delving into the permanent-status negotiations so West Bank Jewish settlers would know what to expect from the next phase of self-rule.

■ Israel decided to designate representatives from Israel's religious parties as advisers to Israeli peace negotiators in matters relating to future arrangements for Jewish holy sites in the West Bank. The decision came after a controversy erupted over who would oversee Rachel's Tomb. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin agreed that security for the site would remain under Israeli authority.

■ The mother of a 12-year-old Orthodox girl who was freed from a "minor marriage" initiated legal action against her ex-husband in civil court. Rabbis recently ruled that the girl's marriage was void because her father had failed to produce the two witnesses required to make it valid under Jewish law. [Page 4]

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Terror attack could accelerate, not derail, second-phase accord

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — This week's suicide bomb attack on a Tel Aviv bus, intended to derail the peace process, is likely to have the opposite effect.

Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians on extending self-rule in the West Bank are now expected to be accelerated, according to Israeli government sources.

Galvanized by this latest blow from Palestinian terrorists, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Authority head Yasser Arafat are expected to infuse a new sense of urgency into their respective negotiating teams.

Indeed, Rabin, after visiting the site of the bombing Monday, vowed to resume the talks after the funerals of the five Israelis who were killed when a pipe bomb exploded on the No. 20 Dan bus traveling from Ramat Gan to central Tel Aviv.

"A small Israeli-Palestinian team will determine the time and place for continuing the talks," Rabin said. "We must not let the murderers from the Islamic Jihad and Hamas achieve their goal."

The Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas, which vehemently opposes the peace process with Israel, is widely believed to be behind the suicide bombing, the third inside Israel in the past nine months.

Soon after the incident, Arafat condemned the bombing, calling it a terrorist attack aimed at sabotaging the peace process. Arafat phoned Rabin to extend his condolences to the victims' families.

The bombing came as frustrated Israeli and Palestinian negotiators, having recognized that their July 25 deadline for an agreement would not be met, were bogged down in unresolved details.

Large teams from the two sides had spent last week at a secluded hotel in Zichron Ya'acov, south of Haifa, hammering away at a lengthy draft accord without much success. They reconvened Sunday at a hotel in the Dead Sea area, chosen for its distance from the center of the country — and from the hordes of Israeli demonstrators opposed to the talks who had done their best to disturb the talks the week before.

The talks are expected to resume, possibly in a country outside the Middle East, once both sides agree to a venue.

### 'Engineer' may be involved

One of the key issues dividing the two sides is security. After the bus bombing, Israeli sources said the Palestinian side would likely be less rigid over issues pertaining to security.

Monday's bomb may have convinced them that despite the past three months of relative quiet, the terror threat still looms large — both for Israel and the Palestinians.

In his somber comments after Monday's attack, Rabin repeatedly praised Yasser Arafat's efforts over recent months to combat the fundamentalists inside his own camp. Rabin pointed to the recent murder, by terrorists, of two Palestinian Authority police officers as evidence of the grim seriousness with which this struggle is proceeding.

Israeli sources confirmed that the security services of the two sides have been working in increasingly close and effective cooperation in recent months. Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, has scored several successes in preventing terror attacks and in killing or capturing terror gangs, especially in the Hebron area.

Arafat's units have rounded up known Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists in Gaza. They also moved against Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine figures in Jericho, after the group claimed responsibility for the murder of two Israeli hikers near there last week.

But Monday's bus bombing brutally showed that such success is far from absolute. The Hamas master terrorist, Yehiya Ayash, known as "the engineer," probably was behind the meticulous planning of the attack. And he is still at large.

The bomb on bus No. 20 instantly and inevitably brought the entire

country back in time to the horrors of two earlier bus attacks that left an unhealed scar on the national psyche: the Jan. 22 terror attack at Beit Lid Junction near Netanya and the Oct. 19, 1994, bombing of a Tel Aviv bus. More than 20 people were killed in each of those attacks. Dozens more have died in other terrorist incidents in Gaza and the West Bank.

But as Rabin perseveres in his efforts to reach a new peace agreement, he will continue to encounter fierce domestic opposition.

Rowdy but nonviolent demonstrators at the scene of the attack and at roadside sites throughout the country Monday night demanded that the government halt its talks with the Palestinians.

In the Knesset, Likud Party Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu led an opposition assault on the government's policy, urging a lengthy "time out from the talks" as the nation takes stock.

And President Ezer Weizman once again appeared to ally himself with these opposition calls as he has after terror outrages in the past.

Visiting the injured at a Tel Aviv hospital, Weizman called for the "forces in the Knesset to unite" and for the government "to consider all the options."

Rabin met alone with Weizman for more than two hours Monday night, presumably in an effort to head off an intervention by the president that many academic authorities consider unconstitutional.

Government ministers and supporters in the Knesset, however, rallied around Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in their determination to press ahead with the peace process despite the bombing.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal pointed out Tuesday that all those who were calling for an end to the negotiations in the wake of the bombing had been making the same argument before the bombing.

Now they were merely using the bombing to bolster positions that were essentially political or ideological, he argued.

Yossi Beilin, the newly appointed minister for economic planning, said that to stop the talks would be to give Hamas the victory it would be denied if the talks were quickly resumed and an agreement quickly concluded.

Under that evolving agreement, the Palestinian Authority is to take over major towns in the West Bank while the Israeli army redeploys in order to protect roads and settlements in the area.

If the accord can be implemented during the summer and fall, Palestinian elections would be held later in the year — giving the victors, presumably Arafat and his Fatah movement, enhanced local and international legitimacy.

Hamas may have missed the mark this time. But not by much.

Weizman may have been out of line in his statements, but no one here was denying the accuracy of the president's agonized declaration: "The people can't take much more of this. It has to stop." □

#### BEHIND THE HEADLINES

#### First Scuds, then bombs:

#### Ramat Gan asks, 'When will it end?'

By Michele Chabin

RAMAT GAN, Israel (JTA) — Anyone who believes that lightning doesn't strike twice hasn't been to Ramat Gan.

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, one of several Scud missiles that rained down on this sprawling suburb north of Tel Aviv obliterated nearly an entire street. Several people were injured, and scores were left homeless.

On Monday, just three blocks away, a terrorist bomb destroyed a crowded commuter bus, killing five Israelis and maiming many more.

Yet just a day after the latest terror attack, there were few outward signs that the suicide bombing ever took place.

The busy street where the incident occurred was open to traffic, and the adjoining shops and restaurants were open for business. Most of the shattered windows in the nearby Diamond Exchange, the site of the blast, were already repaired. The battered bus had been spirited away, the blood washed from the pavement.

But the lack of physical evidence has not stopped Israelis from visiting the site.

Sometime during the long day and night after the blast, someone had constructed a makeshift memorial from the red-and-white plastic police barricades erected at the site. Dozens of others had placed *yahrzeit* memorial candles and flowers on top of the barricades.

And when the flames flickered out, hundreds of other visitors came to rekindle them.

Although few tears were shed publicly, local residents and those employed in the bustling shopping district were visibly shaken by the latest tragedy.

"I stopped here especially to light a candle," said Izzy Land, a middle-age diamond merchant. "There are no words to describe what happened yesterday. I feel very insecure, and I'm worried about my daughter, who rides the bus every day."

Land, who said he has "always been against the peace process," added: "This gives me another reason to be against it."

"I needed to come, to show my respect," said Racheli Gad, a 13-year-old from the neighborhood.

#### 'When will this all end?'

The shorts-clad teen, placing a red rose on the barricades, said, "What happened yesterday makes me hurt inside. I don't understand how such things can happen."

Nitza Salkov, a nursery school teacher in her 30s, spent hours at the site, staring at the memorial candles.

"My father died recently," she said quietly, "and this just adds to the suffering."

Salkov blasted the government, saying, "We don't have any security in this country. Terrorists who carry out such acts should get the death penalty."

At a hair salon around the corner from the blast site, hairdresser Sharli Idol, 30, recalled how he had come to the aid of the bomb victims.

"I heard the ambulances arriving and I rushed outside," he said.

"The police asked me to bring drinking water, so I ran back and forth to do what I could. There were body parts everywhere, and I saw people dying."

"I'm very disappointed with the peace negotiations," Idol added. "I've never been in favor of the peace process, but I was giving it a chance. We try to touch peace, but somehow it eludes us."

"Remember the Scuds? They fell down the street," Idol said. "It gives you the feeling that everyone wants to kill you. When will this all end?"

But 28-year-old Amos Mazur, the owner of a candy store next door, said he was not ready to give up on the peace talks.

"Things like this happen all the time in Israel," he said. "They have been happening since I was 5 years old. I support the peace process and hope it will make a difference."

Stopping briefly to sell a candy bar to a youngster, he added, "There's no such thing as instant peace, but discussions and negotiations are our only hope." □

## Opponents admit defeat as Palestinian aid bill nears

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Opponents of U.S. aid to the Palestine Liberation Organization have all but admitted defeat as Congress prepares to take up legislation allowing millions of dollars to flow to Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority.

The measure, which would extend the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act for 18 months, has widespread support in the U.S. and Israeli administrations, in Congress and in the Jewish community.

However, at least one influential senator is threatening to hold up the legislation in the wake of Monday's terrorist attack on an Israeli bus in a suburb of Tel Aviv.

"Such behavior should not be rewarded by the U.S. Congress," said Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), who is a co-chairman of the Peace Accord Monitoring Group in the Senate, which was created to assure Palestinian compliance with the peace accords.

Speculating that Arafat's police force knew of the plans for the bombing, Specter called on Arafat to share intelligence with the Israeli government or risk losing American foreign aid.

"Before we extend the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act, we must decide whether the Palestinian National Authority should be entrusted with U.S. aid if it is not fully complying with the agreements already signed to prevent terrorist acts such as the one committed today," Specter said on Monday.

But observers believe that the controversial legislation, which expired June 30 and was extended for 45 days, will ultimately pass Congress.

However, it is expected to encounter some roadblocks along the way — unrelated to aid to the PLO — as it becomes embroiled in disputes over other foreign policy-related legislation.

### 'Mack truck could drive through loopholes'

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby, has embraced the legislation as "a realistic approach," said Neal Sher, the group's executive director.

Opponents, however, are disappointed.

"I've done all that I can," said a frustrated Morton Klein, the president of the Zionist Organization of America, who has led the charge to cut off funds to the Palestinian Authority.

"With the State Department, White House, AIPAC and two governments fighting for this, there's not much we can do," Klein said, all but admitting defeat in his crusade.

But Klein remained critical of the bill for not holding the PLO to a tougher standard. "A Mack truck could drive through the loopholes in this bill," Klein said.

The United States has pledged \$500 million over five years to the Palestinian Authority. About \$100 million has already been delivered. The legislation is necessary because congressional action is required to waive laws that ban American diplomatic contact with the PLO and also prevent U.S. foreign assistance to the Palestinians.

The legislation, sponsored by Sens. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), differs from the earlier Middle East Peace Facilitation Act in that it is meant to tighten the restrictions and lead to greater compliance on the part of the PLO.

Under the new plan, as with the old, the president must certify that the PLO is complying with its accords with Israel and the president must continue to submit compliance reports to Congress every six months in order for the Palestinians to receive U.S. foreign aid.

Under the new version, however, in order for the president to certify compliance, the PLO must have taken the following steps: established a judicial system, cooperated with Israel to pre-empt terrorism and disarmed civilians not licensed to carry weapons.

As for the controversial item relating to the PLO's National Covenant, which calls for the destruction of the State of Israel, the new legislation would not require the PLO to amend its covenant until a Palestinian Council is seated after elections in the territories.

The PLO's failure to amend its covenant, as promised under its 1993 agreement with Israel, has been a major rallying cry for opponents of aid to the PLO.

In negotiations between the Israelis and the PLO earlier this month, Arafat promised Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres that within 60 days of the Palestinian elections, he would move to amend the covenant.

Specifics relating to Palestinian elections are among the issues currently being hammered out by Israeli and Palestinian negotiators who are working to conclude an agreement that would extend Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

The Helms-Pell legislation spells out the PLO's agreements with Israel and calls on the Palestinians to: prevent acts of terrorism, take legal measures against terrorists, abstain from incitement and hostile propaganda, ban armed forces other than the Palestinian police, ban the possession or sale of weapons and extradite criminals to Israel.

Co-sponsors of the legislation include Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kan.), Minority Leader Thomas Daschle (D-S.D.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), Connie Mack (R-Fla.) and Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.).

Although the timing of the legislation remains uncertain, the likely scenario is that in the Senate, Helms and Pell will offer the measure as an amendment to the State Department Authorization Bill as early as the end of this week. If approved by the Senate, the House is expected to vote on the measure as part of the House-Senate conference committee's report on the State Department bill, a version of which the House has already passed.

But President Clinton has vowed to veto the State Department Authorization Bill, including the provision on the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act, unless it is drastically reshaped.

In a move that has drawn the ire of the White House, the current legislation would fold three foreign policy agencies into the State Department — the Agency for International Development, the United States Information Agency and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

If Clinton vetoes the bill, Congress is expected either to pass another short-term extension to enable continuing aid to the PLO or to vote on the Helms-Pell legislation as a separate piece of law. □

## Bodies of officers found; two killed in training accident

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The bodies of two Israeli air force officers killed in a training accident off the coast of Nahariya last week have been recovered from the sea, Israel Radio reported.

Lt. Col. Roni Shlomi and Capt. Yuval Binyamin were killed when their F-16 plane collided with another during the July 18 training exercise.

The crew of the second jet fighter bailed out safely into the sea and were picked up by a navy rescue boat shortly after the accident occurred. □

## After minor marriage voided, girl's mother sues for damages

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA) — Rabbis recently freed 12-year-old Sarah Leah Goldstein from a marriage her father had arranged because he did not produce the two witnesses required to make it valid under Jewish law.

Now her mother has initiated legal action in civil court to force Israel Goldstein to name the witnesses and the groom so that she can sue them, as well as her ex-husband.

In 1993, Goldstein married off his daughter in a ceremony known as "kedusha ketana," or minor marriage, an archaic Jewish ritual which had not been employed in contemporary times.

Goldstein recently said that he was doing it to punish his ex-wife, Gita Goldstein, for going to civil court to obtain a divorce. He has refused to grant her a Jewish divorce.

In September 1993, Goldstein walked into the Tausig religious court in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, N.Y., and announced that he had married off his daughter, Sarah Leah, "according to the laws of Moses and Israel."

He refused to divulge the names of the groom and the two witnesses that are required for the "kedusha ketana."

The rabbinic judges on the court accepted as fact that he had committed his daughter to marriage according to halachah, or Jewish law.

When this marriage and suspicions of other marriages came to public attention in May 1995, through an article in the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the Orthodox Jewish world — even those rabbis who for the preceding year and a half knew of the betrothals — responded with unusual alacrity.

The rabbis ruled that Goldstein was not to be believed because he did not provide the witnesses to verify what he had done.

Therefore, according to prominent rabbis in Israel and North America, Sarah Leah Goldstein was now free to live as an innocent child and to marry the man of her own choosing when the time comes.

### 'Sword hanging over her head'

However, Gita Goldstein and her attorney, A. David Stern, are not so sure that the issue has been laid to rest.

The rabbis' rulings "did not really solve the whole problem," Stern said.

Goldstein "could reveal the witnesses at any time. It's a sword of Damocles hanging over her (Sarah Leah's) head until the entire issue is put to rest," according to Stern.

Stern said he is initiating legal action in civil court "to make sure that people who participate in this type of thing know that there is a price to pay."

He took the first step by filing an "order to show cause" in New York's Supreme Court, which is a trial court.

The order requires Goldstein to appear in court Aug. 16 and respond to the complaint.

In marrying off his young daughter, Goldstein violated Sarah Leah's "basic human, civil and constitutional rights," according to court papers submitted by Stern.

When asked whether he was worried that forcing Goldstein to name the witnesses and groom would put Sarah Leah back into a married state, Stern said, "It's still hanging over her."

"My objective is to remove all clouds from above this girl's head," he said.

Sarah Leah lives in Montreal with her mother and 10-year-old brother.

Stern has also asked the Brooklyn district attorney to prosecute Goldstein as a criminal for endangering the welfare of his minor daughter.

"The matter is under review," according to Patrick Clark, spokesman for the Brooklyn district attorney's office.

Although several messages were left for Israel Goldstein at his home in Borough Park, where he lives with his parents, he did not return the calls.

A civil or criminal trial could raise questions about civil courts being used to decide religious matters.

"There are church-state issues that will be raised," Stern said.

However, there is a precedent for the civil courts dealing with the marriage of a minor in a religious ceremony.

In a 1976 case, a black Muslim man named Ibrahim Ben Benu had married his 13-year-old daughter to a 17-year-old boy in a Muslim ceremony as "his ticket to paradise."

Ben Banu was found guilty of endangering the welfare of a child, according to the court records of that trial.

In the Ben Benu case, as in the Goldsteins', the father was divorced from the mother, who had custody of their children.

In both cases, the mothers had both been granted court orders of protection against their ex-husbands, who had threatened them with harm.

### 'Constantly live with terror'

The court papers filed against Israel Goldstein bring to light the damage that Sarah Leah's mother, and two psychologists, feel has been done to the girl as a result of her father's malicious act.

In an affidavit, Gita Goldstein testified that "what Israel Goldstein has done is to make her a pariah in our community; he has forced her to choose between her freedom to marry and have children, and her desire to continue living in accordance with her religious beliefs."

She continued: "I have tried as much as possible to shield her from the fallout from these events, but I know, and live constantly with terror of the moment when she will realize the full impact of what has happened to her."

Included in the affidavit are excerpts of a report prepared by two Montreal psychologists.

In the report, the psychologists stated that "the psychological and social implications of this act on Sarah Leah will cause her overwhelming hardship and shame in her life."

"It will make her an object of unwholesome attention and scorn in her peer group. She will surely become the object of rejection and ridicule," they continued.

"The anxiety created by this situation is likely to interfere with her academic progress, evoke acting out behavior, legitimize rebellion against her community, make her feel disempowered and abandoned, which may lead to self-destructive acts," wrote the psychologists.

One of the psychologists, who counseled the entire Goldstein family until Israel's separation from Gita, withdrew from working with Gita and Sarah Leah, according to the affidavit.

The affidavit said the psychologist withdrew from counseling because "she began being harassed and receiving threatening phone calls from Israel Goldstein." □