



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 79, No. 148

Friday, August 10, 2001

84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Separate shootings kill 2 Israelis

Two Israelis were killed in separate shootings Thursday.

Palestinian gunmen killed a 17-year-old Israeli woman in a drive-by shooting Thursday at the entrance to Kibbutz Merav in the West Bank.

Three other Israelis were wounded, one of them seriously.

And a Palestinian sniper killed an Israeli near the West Bank town of Tulkarm on Thursday. Israel shelled Palestinian police positions in the area after the slaying.

### U.N. wants OK on racism parley

The top U.N. human rights official urged negotiators from more than 100 countries to work beyond their Friday midnight deadline to reach accord on a declaration that will be on the table at an upcoming World Conference Against Racism.

"I make a strong appeal today to everyone" to continue negotiations so that the conference starting Aug. 31 in Durban, South Africa, can be a success, the U.N. high commissioner for human rights, Mary Robinson, said Thursday.

The United States has threatened to boycott the Durban meeting if anti-Israel references in the conference declaration are not removed.

The European Union also is pushing for the removal of references to the Middle East.

Despite international pressure, Arab and Muslim members of the United Nations are forging ahead with language for the upcoming conference that would denigrate Zionism as racism and draw parallels between Israel's treatment of Palestinians and Nazi behavior during the Holocaust.

The Egyptian- and Syrian-led efforts represent "a total delegitimization of the State of Israel and the Jewish people," Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Michael Melchior said.

### British chief rabbi slams cloning

Britain's chief rabbi called planned experiments to clone humans "a new low in playing roulette with human life."

In an article that appeared in Thursday's London Times, Jonathan Sacks said human cloning is dangerous and irresponsible because of the threat that it poses "to the integrity of children so born."

## Deadly lunchtime bombing sows anger, horror, confusion

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — One witness said the streets were filled with blood. Jerusalem's mayor said, "We are in a war."

Those wounded by nails and shrapnel lay sprawled in the streets, bleeding as they waited for medical attention. Others sat in the street and cried. A popular restaurant was a gutted ruin. A few moments earlier, according to Jerusalem police officials, a Palestinian man had wandered in with the lunchtime crowd and detonated a bomb.

Nearby, some young Israelis chanted, "Death to Arabs." Some of them wore T-shirts that read, "No Arabs, No Attacks." A mother of four said she and her children had just recited a blessing over lunch when the blast sent glass flying everywhere.

Police on horseback cordoned off the area while bomb experts searched for more, as-yet-undetected explosives.

The one bomb that did go off Thursday killed at least 14 and wounded more than 100. It was the highest death toll since a June 1 blast outside a Tel Aviv disco killed 21 Israelis and wounded more than 100. The suicide bombing took place at the Sbarro Restaurant on the corner of King George and Jaffa streets, one of downtown Jerusalem's busiest intersections. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack.

The attack occurred around 2 p.m., when the restaurant was filled with customers, many of them parents with children on summer vacation. In the immediate aftermath of the blast, the final death toll was not clear.

There were initial reports of 18 dead, but Israeli officials later lowered the total. With two victims in critical condition, however, and at least 15 others in very serious condition, officials cautioned that the total still was preliminary.

Police described the bomb as large and packed with nails. The names of six of the dead were released Thursday night: Zvika Golomber, 26, of Carmiel; Tehilla Maoz, 20, Jerusalem; Frida Mendelson, 62, Jerusalem; Michal Raziell, 15, Jerusalem; Lili Shmilashvili, 39, Jerusalem; and Tamar Shmilashvili, 8, Jerusalem.

Israel Radio reported that French tourists were among the victims. There also were unconfirmed reports that three Americans were among the dead.

Thursday's bombing brought statements of condemnation from around the world. But one high-ranking Palestinian official said Israel brought the bombing on itself, and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah Party praised the attack.

Arafat later issued a denunciation of the bombing.

As he did following the June disco bombing in Tel Aviv — when a massive Israeli retaliation appeared imminent — Arafat called on Israel to agree to a cease-fire. In a statement read by a broadcaster on Palestinian television, Arafat said the truce should begin Friday.

President Bush issued a statement condemning the bombing.

"My heartfelt sympathies and those of the American people are with the victims of this terrible tragedy and their families," Bush said in a statement. "The deliberate murder of innocent civilians is abhorrent to all."

Bush also urged the two sides "to return immediately to the cease-fire commitments they have previously made and to renew effective security cooperation so this kind of terrorism will not happen again."

A State Department official said the United States expects the Palestinian Authority to find those responsible for the attack.

U.S. officials want the Palestinian leadership to take "resolute action to prevent such things from happening again," the official said.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan was among the world leaders who deplored the

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israeli army faces Torah shortage

Israeli army chaplains reportedly are facing a shortage of Torah scrolls for use by religious soldiers in the field.

In response, the National Council of Young Israel, a U.S.-based umbrella group for 150 Orthodox synagogues, is asking American Jewish communities and synagogues to donate extra Torah scrolls to help solve the problem.

### Reports on int'l informing denied

A spokesman for the international observer force in the West Bank city of Hebron denied reports that some members of the force are providing information to Palestinian gunmen regarding the movements of Israeli troops and Jewish settlers in the city.

The spokesman said the force was operating as an objective observer in accordance with its mandate.

### Collaborator sentenced to death

A Palestinian court sentenced a Nablus area man to death for cooperating with Israel. The man was charged with helping Israel kill a Hamas militant.

### Kurds to be sent back to Lebanon

A group of some 40 Kurds, including women and children, tried to cross into Israel on Thursday from Lebanon. Israeli authorities were expected to return them to Lebanon.

### Israeli satellite TV to debut

A new Israeli satellite television channel will begin broadcasting throughout the Middle East within four months. The channel will include sports, news and current events programming six hours a day in English and Arabic, according to Israel Radio.

In addition to reaching Israeli households, the signal will be beamed via satellite to the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, the Persian Gulf, North Africa and Europe.



## Daily News Bulletin

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JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at [www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org).

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attack. A Palestinian official saw things differently, saying Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's policies were to blame.

The Palestinian leadership holds "Sharon fully responsible for what happened," P.A. Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo told Reuters shortly after the attack.

"The assassinations, the killings and terrorism that he practiced and escalated in recent weeks led to this result."

Arafat's belated cease-fire call came as Sharon's Security Cabinet was to meet Thursday night to consider Israel's response to the attack.

Israel accepted a U.S.-brokered cease-fire following the attack on the Tel Aviv disco, but it was not immediately clear whether there would be another truce now.

Israeli officials reacted coolly to Arafat's latest overture.

He is "attempting to prevent an Israeli response," a senior Israeli official was quoted as saying. "If he really wanted a truce, he would stop the terrorists from the Hamas and Islamic Jihad."

Even Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, among the most dovish members of the government, said Arafat could have prevented the bombing if he had acted more resolutely against Palestinian terror groups. Instead, Arafat is considering inviting the groups into a national unity government.

Differences about how to respond soon were apparent among ministers in Sharon's unity government. Transportation Minister Ephraim Sneh, a deputy defense minister in the former Labor government, said that despite the rage the attack provoked, Israel's response should be "reasoned."

Speaking on Israel Radio, Sneh said Israel should continue its policy of targeting suspected terrorists on their way to attack Israeli civilians. But broader steps would not necessarily be effective, he added.

But Communications Minister Reuven Rivlin, a member of Sharon's Likud Party, said Israel must retaliate for the latest bombing.

Israel Radio quoted security sources as placing full blame for the attack on the Palestinian leader.

Instead of working to thwart terrorists and arrest them, the sources were quoted as saying, Arafat was fostering an atmosphere that encourages attacks.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said he spoke with Arafat shortly after the bombing, adding that he was pleased the Palestinian leader condemned the attack.

"Now he has to find those responsible and bring them to justice," Powell said. "And I hope that both sides will act with restraint."

Powell added that he would be willing to "go anywhere it makes sense to go," but said he believed a trip to the Middle East would be fruitless until Israel and the Palestinians reduced the violence.

"We're trying to mobilize the international community to give that message once again — that the solution to the problem rests with the parties in the region."

U.S. Jewish groups roundly condemned the attack.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs encouraged U.S. Jews to urge Bush and the U.S. Congress to impose sanctions on the Palestinian Authority.

"It is not enough to express outrage and offer condolences," JCPA Chairman Leonard Cole said. "The Palestinian Authority and its Chairman Yasser Arafat must be held accountable."

Also on Thursday, two Israelis were killed in separate attacks in the West Bank.

In the first, Palestinian gunmen killed an Israeli soldier near the city of Tulkarm. Israel shelled Palestinian police positions in the area after the slaying. In another attack, Palestinian gunmen killed a 17-year-old Israeli woman in a drive-by shooting at the entrance to Kibbutz Merav.

Three other Israelis were wounded, one of them seriously.

Thursday's bombing came as Israeli security forces were on high alert for possible terror attacks.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said there had been warnings of an imminent attack in the capital.

Hours before the blast, Peres said Sharon's refusal to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority while violence continues puts the region's future in the hands of extremists.

"If we say we won't talk under fire, it means that every gunman can decide there will be no dialogue," Peres said. □

(JTA correspondent Matthew E. Berger in Washington contributed to this report.)

## JEWISH WORLD

### Birthright grads get free stuff

Alumni of free 10-day trips to Israel are being offered two free Jewish-themed books and a year's subscription to a Jewish publication.

In a new project funded by the New York-based Avi Chai Foundation, the 22,000 young adults who have participated in Birthright Israel trips — as well as future alumni — will be able to choose from 170 fiction and nonfiction titles and 14 publications.

### Jewish job Web site launched

The North American Jewish federation system, its educational arm and 13 national Jewish organizations are launching a comprehensive Web site listing Jewish communal jobs. JewishJobFinder.com, which will debut next month, will offer information on Jewish communal careers and feature a database of job openings, as well as resumes posted to the site by job seekers.

### U.K. official quits; Jews pleased

The policy director of Britain's Federation of Small Businesses was forced to resign Wednesday over allegations of anti-Semitism. Jewish leaders welcomed the resignation of Donald Martin from one of the top positions of the 160,000-member lobbying group. Martin told JTA he is "neither anti-Semitic nor racist," but a source close to the FSB said that Martin had "defended anti-Semitism" at the closed-door meeting at which he was forced to resign.

### Tombstone vandals arrested

Ukrainian police arrested two men in connection with the recent vandalism of Jewish tombstones in the city of Shepetovka, according to Ukrainian media reports. One of the vandalized tombstones marks the grave of Rabbi Pinkhas of Korets, a successor of the founder of Chasidism, the Ba'al Shem Tov.

The grave is listed by UNESCO as a historic site and is visited annually by Jewish pilgrims from all over the world.

### Mid-career rabbis: the movie

The Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary is making a documentary film on the growing number of people who decide to become rabbis and cantors for second careers. "Faith: Second Career Clergy" is scheduled to air early next year on ABC stations in the United States.

### Anti-Holocaust diplomat dies

Howard Elting, a U.S. diplomat who was among the first to inform the U.S. State Department about Nazi plans to kill European Jewry, died July 1 at 93. Elting was posted in Geneva in 1942 when he forwarded to Washington a cable from Gerhart Riegner, a representative of the World Jewish Congress.

## With intifada raging, U.S. Jews seeking to revoke Arafat's Nobel

By Michelle Dardashti

NEW YORK (JTA) — Frustrated by what they consider Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's embrace of violence, a group of young American Jewish professionals has launched an Internet petition to revoke Arafat's Nobel Peace Prize.

Located at [www.revoketheprize.org](http://www.revoketheprize.org), the petition asks "all people of morality and good faith to stand up and express their anger and disappointment in Mr. Arafat by calling for the revocation of his Nobel Peace Prize."

One of the organizers, Mark Semer, said the petition, which has been up since the end of June, has almost 10,000 signatures.

"We believe that the peace prize gives Arafat legitimacy as a peacemaker that he does not deserve," Semer said, adding that the site is not affiliated with any political organization or religious denomination.

The desire to strip Arafat of his Nobel was born almost as soon as he received it.

Together with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Arafat received the peace prize in December 1994, a year after he agreed to renounce decades of violent opposition to the State of Israel and resolve Israeli-Palestinian differences peacefully.

The decision to reward Arafat was harshly criticized in the Jewish community — and beyond.

One member of the Nobel prize committee even resigned in protest.

Americans for Peace Now was one of the few groups in the Jewish world to back Arafat's prize in 1994. Lewis Roth, the group's assistant executive director, called the new petition — and similar attempts to discredit Arafat since the Palestinian uprising began last September — "unproductive."

"Problematic though he is, he is still the only address that Israel has to pursue negotiations," Roth said.

But one long-standing Arafat critic, Zionist Organization of America President Morton Klein, backs the petition drive.

"It is a perpetual stain on the Nobel Peace Prize until he is removed from the list of peace prize winners," Klein said.

It's not clear what practical effect the petition could have. Semer, a New York public relations consultant, is hopeful that the Nobel Commission will be compelled at least to consider the proposal if the petition reaches a "critical mass."

Arafat is not the only one of the 1994 winners to come in for criticism.

Last spring, shortly after Labor Party leader Peres agreed to serve as foreign minister in Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's unity government, an Israeli Arab lawmaker said his Nobel should be revoked. Sharon is reviled in the Arab world for his role in the 1982 massacre of Palestinians by Lebanese Christians at two refugee camps in Lebanon.

An Israeli inquiry commission found Sharon indirectly responsible because, as defense minister, he failed to foresee and prevent the killing.

"The sooner both sides can get past the name-calling and finger-pointing, the sooner there will be improvements" for both Israelis and Palestinians, Roth said.

Semer maintains that his primary goal is peace — but his current concern is the welfare of the Jewish people.

"Right now there's a great deal of pain and suffering in Israel," Semer said. The petition "is something that, as American Jews, we believe is a constructive effort in support of the state — in support of Israel." □

## Man wants Russian church sued

MOSCOW (JTA) — A Russian Jewish leader wants criminal charges brought against a diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church for allegedly distributing a book that includes excerpts from the infamous anti-Semitic tract "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," according to the Union of Councils for Jews in the FSU.

Mikhail Oshtrakh of Yekaterinburg says the church there is distributing copies of the book, which claims there is a Jewish conspiracy to rule the world. □

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

**Even though violence is flaring, yeshiva students going to Israel**

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jennifer Kessler of Los Angeles always knew she would spend a year between high school and college studying at a girls yeshiva in Israel.

Her modern Orthodox day school, Shalhevet, usually sends at least a third of the graduating class to Israel, and among the children of her parents' friends, "everyone" goes to Israel.

But when it came time this year for Kessler, 17, to firm up her plans to attend Midreshet Lindenbaum, a prestigious program in Jerusalem, it wasn't easy.

Her parents, who canceled a family trip to Israel due to concerns about the violence, started worrying. Several other L.A.-area teen-aged girls who Kessler knew had been planning to study in Israel decided not to go.

And a close friend studying in Gush Etzion, a bloc of settlements near Jerusalem that have long been an outpost of the English-speaking modern Orthodox community, complained to her that the drive-by shootings on the road to Jerusalem kept him virtual hostage at his yeshiva for days on end.

Nonetheless, Kessler remains cautiously committed to her upcoming year in Israel — and is scheduled to depart at the end of August. In the Orthodox world, she is fairly typical.

While American Jewish tourism to Israel is way down, and American enrollment has dropped sharply at secular institutions like Hebrew University of Jerusalem, post-high school yeshiva programs in Israel are — so far — an exception to the trend.

- Almost 2,400 American yeshiva and seminary students will be departing for Israel in the next month, according to Sheryl Stein, a spokeswoman for El Al Israel Airlines. The number is "a drop" from last year, "but not significant," Stein said. However, she could not provide statistics for last year.

- Yeshiva University, centrist Orthodoxy's flagship institution, reports that almost 1,000 recent male and female high school graduates will be under its auspices in Israel at Bar-Ilan University and 36 yeshivot and seminaries, the same as last year. Y.U. officials said very few people left in the middle of the last school year, and virtually no students registered for this year have canceled their plans.

- Yeshivat Har Etzion, a boys' yeshiva in the Gush Etzion settlement bloc, expects 45 students this year — the same as last year — and had to turn away a number of applicants.

Of course, these numbers could still decrease if the violence intensifies or there is a major bombing targeting young adults — and as a result, the yeshivot are still "on pins and needles," said one official in modern Orthodox academia.

Rabbi Shalom Berger, a teacher at Midreshet Lindenbaum and a faculty member at Bar-Ilan University's Lookstein Center for Jewish Education, said he recently spoke to a Yeshivat Har Etzion teacher who, commenting on the expected American students, said, "Let's see if they really come."

But these potential changes aside, why, at a time when Israel's tourism industry is on the rocks, are Orthodox students still flocking to the Jewish state?

After all, unlike Birthright Israel participants — one of the only other steady sources of young travelers to the Jewish state

since the Palestinian uprising began last September — yeshiva students are not getting a free trip. And a year at a post-high school yeshiva program costs an average of \$10,000 plus airfare, according to Berger, an expert on such programs.

Kessler said she decided to stick with her plans, in part because she's not the type to "back out of things" and, having already deferred admission at the University of Pennsylvania for a year, wasn't sure what she would do if she stayed at home.

But ideology also played a part.

"My mother has always said if people stop going to Israel, then the Palestinians have won," she said.

Rachel Singerman, of Baltimore, said, "It makes a difference that we're going to be with people in a time of crisis. I wish more people would." Singerman, who will attend Orot Israel College, which is in the West Bank, 20 minutes outside Tel Aviv, grew up in a family that commemorated Israeli Independence Day with a special meal each year. She says she has wanted to make aliyah since she was a small child.

The Israeli-Palestinian violence did not affect Singerman's decision, nor did it deter her acquaintances who had already decided to go to Israel for the year.

However, she said, she knows people who had "been wavering over tuition and other issues, and the situation pushed them over."

Singerman's day school, Yeshivat Rambam, is sending 13 of this year's 15 graduates to study in Israel. In addition to ideology and idealism — and studies have shown centrist Orthodox Jews have stronger feelings of connection to Israel than liberal and unaffiliated Jews — other factors have kept enrollment fairly stable at post-high school yeshiva programs, say observers.

For one thing, pre-college Israel study has become a standard rite of passage for modern, or centrist, Orthodox Jews. In a 1999 study, Berger found that close to 90 percent of modern Orthodox young adults spend a full year studying Torah in Israel following high school graduation.

The fact that yeshiva programs are the communal norm means that most potential participants have either friends or family members who recently attended them and can vouch for their safety. Another reason Orthodox study programs aren't affected the way other Israel programs are, say yeshiva officials, is because their primary focus is on study, rather than traveling.

That may explain why at Kessler's high school in Los Angeles, the numbers of students planning to spend a year in Israel did not drop significantly this year, but the school's 10th-grade trip to Israel was decimated by cancellations.

Unlike travel programs, many yeshivot — particularly the academically elite ones — have demanding study schedules that last from morning to night and allow little free time for travel.

And most programs have restricted travel further with intensified safety procedures. Many programs brief students regularly on the situation, have extensive sign-out procedures and — in some schools — require that students who are traveling call in to the school after major terrorist incidents, so that the school can notify parents that everyone is safe.

"My Israel experience is going to be really different from other people's experience in the past," Kessler said. "I'm not going to be able to explore and not going to have" freedom.

However, she is looking forward to the intensive education.

"I think the entire year will be more focused on learning than has in the past," she said. "I don't know if that's a bad thing — that's a good thing." □