



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Bush blames Arafat for violence**

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat brushed off U.S. criticism for failing to end violence with Israel, hinting Sunday that the Bush administration was partially to blame for the continued bloodshed.

His comments came after President Bush blamed the Palestinians last Friday for failing to break the deadlock in the Middle East conflict, saying Arafat could end the violence if he tried harder. [Page 1]

### **Bush vows to skip racism forum**

President Bush said the United States will not send a delegation at any level to this week's scheduled World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, unless language that denigrates Zionism as racism is changed.

"We will have no representative there so long as they pick on Israel, so long as they continue to say Zionism is racism," Bush said last Friday at a news conference in Texas.

### **P.A. fails to get U.N. resolution**

Palestinian officials failed for a third time in less than a year to get a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel and ordering monitors to the Middle East.

A split council postponed any action after a closed session last Friday.

The United States made clear that it would block the Palestinian draft resolution, which it found unworkable and one-sided.

In an attempted compromise, Britain and Norway suggested that the council go with a statement appealing to both sides to take measures to restore calm. But Palestinian representative Nasser al-Kidwa said he wouldn't accept such a statement, which is not legally binding.

### **E.U. seeks leading role**

The European Union is taking a leading role in international efforts to bring peace to the Middle East, according to its foreign policy chief.

"The European Union has worked actively in recent months to an increasing degree in the search for a just and lasting solution," Javier Solana wrote in an article that appeared Sunday in Germany's *Bild am Sonntag*.

## **Israel, Palestinians trade bullets as U.S., Palestinians trade barbs**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli-Palestinian violence has reached one of its most intense levels, dashing any hopes there may have been for planned cease-fire talks between the two sides.

Accompanying the violence, there was a new war of words: In addition to the charges and countercharges that Israel and the Palestinian Authority have traded during the past 11 months of violence, this verbal war involved the United States and the Palestinians.

On Sunday, there was fighting reported in several cities across the West Bank, including Ramallah, Tulkarm and Bethlehem.

Israeli tanks opened fire on Palestinian security positions in Ramallah and Tulkarm after a 50-year-old Israeli from Netanya was killed in an apparent drive-by shooting in Israel near the West Bank. Police believe the attackers fled back into the West Bank after carrying out Sunday's assault near Kibbutz Magal.

Earlier Sunday, Israeli jets destroyed the Palestinian police headquarters in Gaza City as well as other Palestinian security and intelligence buildings in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. One Palestinian was killed and 18 injured in the raids.

Israel said the early morning raids came in retaliation for the killings of three Israeli soldiers and two Jewish settlers in two separate Palestinian attacks Saturday.

The Al-Aksa Brigades, which is affiliated with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah Party, claimed responsibility for a drive-by shooting Saturday evening that killed a married Israeli couple — Sharon and Yaniv Ben-Shalom — as they drove home near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The wife's brother, Doron Sabari, 21, died Sunday of wounds sustained in the attack. The couple's two infant children were lightly wounded by the gunmen.

The drive-by shooting followed a pre-dawn raid Saturday in which two Palestinian militants entered an army base in Gaza.

After penetrating the Marganit army post, located near the Israeli settlement of Bedolah, the two militants killed three Israeli soldiers, including a major, and wounded seven others. The two infiltrated the post from Palestinian-ruled Khan Yunis around 3 a.m., taking the soldiers, some of whom were sleeping, by surprise.

According to a statement issued by the Israel Defense Force, the gunmen fired and threw grenades at the troops. A 10-minute battle ensued.

The three Israeli fatalities were Maj. Gil Oz, 30, Staff Sgt. Nir Kobi, 21, and Sgt. Tsach Grebley, 19. The two militants were later killed by Israeli fire.

The Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine claimed responsibility for the assault. But the army suspects the involvement of a Fatah-linked cell that operates in the Khan Yunis area.

Senior army officials later acknowledged that the raid reflected a level of daring not previously demonstrated by Palestinian gunmen.

The incident also raised questions about the IDF's military preparedness.

In a briefing on the incident, the head of the IDF southern command, Maj. Gen. Doron Almog, said he would have "expected a different outcome from a face-to-face battle." Israel's army set up a committee to investigate military "weaknesses" that allowed the militants to enter the base.

Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer called the raid "very grave" and instructed army officials to provide him with the inquiry's conclusions as soon as possible.

Following the raid, Israeli tanks and bulldozers on Sunday entered Rafah — the

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Arafat to visit Syria

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat will visit Syria on Sept. 12-13, a senior Palestinian official said Sunday. The trip could signal a possible Palestinian-Syrian rapprochement after years of animosity over how to achieve Middle East peace.

### Turkish businessman slain

Turkish police arrested a teen-age boy on suspicion of murdering a leading Turkish-born Jewish businessman.

Police discovered the body of Uzeyir Garih, known for his liberal views, less than two hours after he had been stabbed to death in a Muslim cemetery on Saturday. It remains unclear whether the murder was related to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence.

### Hezbollah vows to fight for village

Hezbollah officials in Lebanon claimed a village spanning the volatile Lebanese-Israeli border as Lebanese territory. The group has set up checkpoints near Israeli soldiers on the edge of Ghajar, a village lying on both sides of a line marking Israel's withdrawal last year from southern Lebanon.

### Top NYC cop visiting Israel

New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik is traveling to Israel for a series of talks with his Israeli counterparts, according to the New York Post. Kerik will discuss combating terror, crowd control, and coping with the use and sale of Ecstasy in Israel and the United States, the newspaper reported Sunday.

### IDF to deal with abuse complaints

Israel's army chief ordered more supervision at military checkpoints following Palestinian complaints of abuse. Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz ordered that an army officer, an Arabic-speaking officer and a police officer be stationed at checkpoints in the territories.



## Daily News Bulletin

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southern Gaza town from which the two militants came — and destroyed a Palestinian security building and several security checkpoints. The Israeli forces withdrew within several hours.

The latest violence followed efforts to arrange a meeting between Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to discuss a cease-fire.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, on a visit to the region last week, offered to host the meeting.

Israeli and Palestinian officials alike are now downplaying the likelihood of the meeting. Indeed, there was mounting pressure on Peres from within the Sharon government to cancel the meeting. Hawkish Israeli Cabinet members spoke out over the weekend against the meeting, which was expected to take place soon in Berlin.

Arafat returned to Gaza on Sunday after visiting the Far East last week in an effort to drum up support for the Palestinian cause.

Brandishing a pistol, Arafat inspected the destruction by the Israeli assault on the Palestinian headquarters in Gaza City and declared that the Palestinians would never bow to Israeli shows of force.

Arafat also brushed off U.S. criticism for failing to end violence with Israel, hinting that the Bush administration was partially to blame for the continued bloodshed.

Arafat's comments came after President Bush blamed the Palestinians for failing to break the deadlock in the Middle East conflict, saying Arafat could end the violence if he tried harder.

Speaking in Texas last Friday, Bush called on Arafat to "stop the suicide bombings, to stop the incursions, to stop the threats." Bush also said he understands the Israelis will not negotiate under the threat of terrorism.

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi harshly criticized Bush's comments:

"We have now a full and absolute American bias. An American president is parroting the Israeli point of view," Ashrawi said. □

## Slovakia's Jews applaud probe of properties looted by the Nazis

By Magnus Bennett

PRAGUE (JTA) — Slovakia's Jewish leaders are welcoming the government's decision to establish a commission to consider compensation for property the Nazis confiscated from Slovak Jews during World War II.

The cash-strapped Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities, which for more than two years has been pressing for such a commission, said the bulk of compensation money would be used to preserve Slovakia's Jewish cultural heritage and help Holocaust survivors.

The joint commission, which will include 10 state representatives and 10 Jewish representatives from Slovakia and elsewhere, will identify and establish the value of property seized from Jews, most of whom died in Nazi concentration camps.

The executive chairman of the Central Union, Fero Alexander, said the commission's main focus should be on the 70,000 Slovak Jews who died in the Holocaust.

"We are talking about principles here, about the properties of those who were murdered," he said.

The commission will be chaired by Slovakia's deputy prime minister, Pal Csaky. It is expected to meet for the first time at the end of September, after enabling legislation passes Parliament.

The panel's first task will be to assess the value of seized properties. Negotiations then will begin on the amount of compensation for the Jewish community.

Both the government and Jewish leaders have agreed not to discuss figures publicly at this stage, but it is believed that the value of stolen properties could run into the tens of millions of dollars.

Given the potentially huge sums involved, Slovak Jewish representatives have conceded that a compromise will have to be reached.

The manner in which the compensation will be handled has yet to be decided.

Csaky said the commission should produce a report by the end of the year, for consideration by the government in January. Compensation payments could begin some time next year, he said. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Vatican blames Jewish scholars

The Vatican called for mutual trust between Catholic and Jewish scholars probing the Holy See's behavior during the Holocaust, but again blamed the Jewish side for stalling the study.

The project was halted in July, when scholars demanded access to more of the Vatican's wartime documents.

Cardinal Walter Kasper, leader of the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism, said last Friday that "tactless comments" emanating last month "from the Jewish side fed a sense of mistrust which has made it almost impossible to continue this bilateral research."

### Lithuanian Jews hold congress

An organization dedicated to Jews of Lithuanian ancestry is holding its inaugural congress in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Some 300 participants from Israel, Europe and America are attending the weeklong conference, at which participants plan to address religious and cultural matters, as well as Jewish-Lithuanian relations.

Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus addressed the group last Friday, which was the conference's first day.

### Austrian official plans Israel visit

Austrian Vice Chancellor Susanne Riess-Passer is planning to visit Israel in October in an attempt to improve relations between the two countries, the weekly magazine *Profil* reported.

Israel withdrew its ambassador from Vienna in February 2000 and has said it will not send a new one while Riess-Passer's far-right Freedom Party remains in the government.

### Russian school can rebuild

The president of Russia's Tartarstan region notified the Jewish community of Kazan that it will be able to continue repairs on the Jewish school there and reopen in time for the new school year, according to NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States & Eurasia.

President Sharipovich Shaimiev reversed a previous order to close the school, which was damaged by a suspicious fire in July.

### Airlines nix Israel trips

Six Russian air carriers announced they would cancel flights to Israel because of the ongoing Middle East violence, according to the Russian media.

Scandinavian Airlines, which flies 25,000 tourists to Israel each winter, also recently canceled flights to Eilat.

## Spielberg's Shoah foundation shifts to new focus: education

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — After videotaping the testimony of more than 50,000 Holocaust survivors, filmmaker Steven Spielberg's foundation is shifting to an even more daunting task, a worldwide educational campaign against bigotry and intolerance.

Spielberg launched the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation in 1994 after filming "Schindler's List." Completing an archive containing testimony from 51,661 eyewitnesses was "a dream that became a remarkable reality," he said.

Each of the survivors interviewed has become "a teacher, putting a real face, a real voice, a real experience in front of this and future generations," Spielberg said. "The archive is their perpetual link to our expanded long-range objectives of remembrance and education."

Using state-of-the-art media technology, the educational effort will be aimed particularly at a new generation of students, said Douglas Greenberg, president and CEO of the Shoah Foundation.

"We will pursue this effort with the same urgency as our original mission of interviewing aging survivors," Greenberg said in a phone interview. "We hope to change not only how people think, but how they behave."

To oversee the outreach program, the Shoah Foundation is establishing an education department with an annual budget of \$2 million. An international search for a director to head the department is now under way.

Parallel to the new program, a staff of 69 researchers is tackling the task of reviewing and indexing the 117,000 hours of testimony by men and women — from 57 countries and speaking 32 languages — who survived concentration camps, were in hiding during the Holocaust, lived under Nazi rule or rescued Jews.

It would take a single person, scanning the videos 24 hours a day, more than 13 years to finish the job. As it is, it will take the staff four more years to link the archived material through 25,000 keywords. The time period would have been much longer but for an innovative technology developed in-house, which allows one person to catalog a single testimony — usually two hours long, but sometimes running up to five hours — in half a day, instead of one week.

The final result, Greenberg believes, will be the largest available video database in the world, usable by scholars, teachers, students and eventually, the general public.

Some of the testimony is already viewable at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles. Other repositories will be the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Museum of Jewish Heritage — A Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York, the Fortunoff Video Archive at Yale University and the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

Greenberg is now looking for additional "strategic partnerships," and a permanent office has opened in Berlin. The Shoah Foundation also has reversed its previous ban on making the testimony available on the Internet. The ban had been designed to avoid misuse by hate groups and others.

Now, Greenberg said, "we won't put the entire archive on the Internet, but we'll have some significant chunks of it. We'll find a sensible and secure way to do this."

Some testimony can be viewed on the Shoah foundation's Web site at [www.vhf.org](http://www.vhf.org).

The foundation already has a head start in its educational outreach, mainly through CD-ROMs and film documentaries.

One CD-ROM is being used in American and German schools. Prize-winning documentaries that have used material include 1998 Oscar recipient "The Last Days," "Survivors of the Holocaust" and "The Lost Children of Berlin."

Completed or in the works are documentaries by five international directors, drawing on survivor testimony in their own languages. "Some Who Lived" (Argentina), "Eyes of the Holocaust" (Hungary) and "I Remember" (Poland) already have debuted in their respective countries. To be shown later this year are "Hell on Earth" (Czech Republic) and "Children of the Abyss" (Russia).

To underwrite its ambitious programs, the foundation, which has an annual budget of \$12.8 million, is stepping up its fund-raising efforts. Greenberg would not specify a figure, saying, "We'll raise as much as we can, as fast as we can." □

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

**Marva program gives foreign Jews a taste of 'real' Israel — boot camp**

By Jessica Steinberg

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Nadia Kahn, 24, doesn't fit the typical image of an Israeli soldier in boot camp.

She's petite (5 foot 1), half-Asian (on her mother's side) and training to be an archaeologist.

Yet Kahn recently spent two months wearing baggy army khakis, toting an M-16, sleeping in an army tent and doing push-ups as part of Marva, a program sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Originally from Albany, Calif., the University of Chicago graduate has been in Israel since last October, studying Hebrew at a kibbutz ulpan and then at Hebrew University.

She's planning to start a master's program in archaeology at Harvard in the fall.

Before she returned to Boston, Kahn wanted an experience that would give her a better understanding of Israeli society, of "how the army works," and what it was like for her adopted kibbutz father, who served in Israel's famed Golani brigade.

That is the goal of Marva, a program designed to give participants a taste of real Israeli life

For eight weeks, the group lives on army bases, learning about Israel's topography by hiking across it, sometimes carrying stretchers weighed down by one of their fellow participants.

They become familiar with army base life — doing kitchen duty, polishing their black boots, cleaning their guns and waking up at ungodly hours.

The group of 35 will finish its eight-week session earlier this month. There usually are four sessions each year.

Initially there were 38 people who signed up for the program, but three dropped out — one because it was too strenuous, and two because of scheduling conflicts back home.

The 27 men and eight women, most of them in their late teens and early twenties, were from all over the globe, including the United States, Canada, Australia, Britain, France and Germany.

Two participants in this latest group are British relatives of the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz.

Like Mofaz's relatives, most of the Marva applicants hear about the program through friends or family after spending summers or semesters in Israel. Most participants have at least one Israeli parent and want to experience what their Israeli relatives are doing in the army.

While Marva isn't exactly like the basic training Israeli recruits do, there are similarities, from the 14-mile hikes to the Spartan living conditions and the tough love from their commanders.

Some of the trainees were looking for a physically strenuous experience, while others sought an experience that would help them toward their goal of moving permanently to Israel.

If participants choose to move to Israel, the two months in Marva count toward their obligatory time of army service. Several participants plan to serve in the army after completing their university studies.

Lazer Berman, a 19-year-old Boston University student, plans to return after college to serve in a paratrooper unit.

Ditto for Sergio Weingarten, 19, a law student at the University of Glasgow.

"My parents wouldn't be entirely happy," Berman admitted,

"but mothers get nervous, especially Jewish mothers."

The Marva parents received letters assuring them their children wouldn't be on active duty. The group spent most of its time in the northern and southern parts of Israel.

Group members were not allowed free time in Jerusalem due to fears of Palestinian terror attacks.

The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence has not cut into the number of Marva applicants, according to the Jewish Agency. Some 200 people apply each year, and those numbers haven't gone down, agency officials say.

The Marva program costs \$1,600 per participant. Most participants pay only about \$500, however, after subsidies from the Jewish Agency and the army.

Participants must be older than 18, Jewish and have a basic command of Hebrew. They need Hebrew to understand their commanders, who expect full cooperation during the two-month, quasi-boot camp.

The amount of discipline was something of a surprise to this group of "chulnikim," Hebrew that can be roughly translated as "Jews who live outside Israel."

Whether being instructed to unload a bus in 55 seconds or to run around sandbags, they were impressed with their commanders' authority.

"It's more than I expected, but they're very professional," said David Hewitt, a 27-year-old Canadian. "It really feels like they know what they're doing."

"I was like, Whoa, this is really serious," Weingarten agreed in his thick Scottish brogue.

Rotem Keinan, one of the group's two commanders, is a freckled 22-year-old with a friendly, open face.

But his trainees didn't even know his first name until a few days ago. To them, he was just "the commander," someone to be feared and respected. Along with other IDF soldiers who spend time with Marva participants as part of their army service, Keinan said working with Jews from all over the globe is a privilege.

"It's really hard work, but it's worth it," said Keinan, who was running his fifth Marva group.

"It's great to see them learning the ropes, working hard and bonding together as a group."

It was certainly bonding for the eight women in the group, who have been showering, sleeping and cleaning guns together.

"You stop worrying about whether the tent flaps are down or not when you're surrounded by all these guys," said Jordana Gluks, 18, from Bethesda, Md.

Gluks, who will start her sophomore year at Brandeis University soon, has spent a lot of time on various Israel programs, and wanted to do one that wasn't just about sitting on the beach and having fun.

Marva certainly tested her physically, since she "hates exercise and always skipped" gym classes in high school.

Her fellow trainees had to push and pull her along on several hikes.

There were times she wanted to go home, Gluks said.

Instead, she persevered — and now "it's the last Sunday of the program," she said, grinning, while rinsing the pots and pans used to cook lunch. Kahn said she was slightly "taken aback by the testosterone level" displayed by some of her fellow Marvaniks, raising her eyebrows above her tortoise-shell glasses.

"I've done my best and proved myself," she said.

"But I'll be relieved when it's over, and it's time for the closing ceremony." □