



Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Netanyahu boosted in Likud vote

The outcome of the Likud Party primary was seen as a victory for Israeli Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's camp.

Results from Sunday's vote showed that 10 of Netanyahu's supporters placed in the first 31 slots of the party's list of Knesset candidates.

The outcome was described as a disappointment for supporters of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz placed 12th on the list. The current mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, placed 33rd.

The big winner was Cabinet minister Tzachi Hanegbi, who came in third behind the slots reserved for Sharon and Netanyahu.

Labor Party leader Amram Mitzna, whose own party is holding primaries Monday to select its Knesset list, said the outcome of the Likud vote revealed the hawkish face of the party.

Hebron infant's killer arrested

Israeli officials arrested a Palestinian terrorist who admitted to killing 10-month-old Shalhevet Pass in Hebron in March 2001.

Israel's Shin Bet domestic security service said Monday that Muhammad Mahmud Amro, 26, confessed to the attack shortly after his recent arrest.

Following the murder, Amro was detained by the Palestinian police, but was released shortly afterward, according to Shin Bet officials.

Neo-Nazis protest Katsav visit

German neo-Nazis marched through Berlin to protest the visit of Israel's president.

Hours after Moshe Katsav met Monday with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, about 100 supporters of the far-right National Democratic Party demonstrated against Israeli policies toward the Palestinians.

About 400 counterdemonstrators also turned up, and police set up cordons to keep the two groups apart.

Katsav also visited the site of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, where he was accompanied by German President Johannes Rau and the leader of the Jewish community in Germany, Paul Spiegel.

Katsav departs for Italy and the Vatican on Tuesday.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Hillel faces new campus challenge:

A new president to lead its mission

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — The organization whose CEO is praised as a "guru," "Svengali" and "pied piper" is now in the position of having to determine its direction without him.

For more than 14 years, Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life has thrived under the leadership of Richard Joel, who last week accepted an offer from Yeshiva University to become its next president.

"I'm not leaving Hillel, I'm going to Yeshiva," Joel told JTA last Friday, calling his move an opportunity for fueling "Jewish renaissance."

Joel's move comes as college campuses, where Hillel is the central Jewish organization, have taken on a new urgency in American Jewish life.

The two-year-old Palestinian uprising against Israel has stirred a wave of activism on campuses across North America, with Jewish students buffeted by anti-Israel and, in some cases, anti-Semitic, activity.

Even before the latest wave of activism, campuses had garnered increasing attention from Jewish organizations over the past decade, when, amid reports of rising assimilation, the Jewish student population became a prime target for intervention.

"It's a vital connecting point between youth and adulthood, where many opinions and values get shaped," said Jay Rubin, Hillel's executive vice president.

Hillel's national and regional staff insist that Joel's legacy will outlive his tenure, and that his successor will expand the well-articulated vision in place.

But it is clear the group faces a major challenge in replacing him.

"We need to think about the direction of Hillel and the type of leadership that we want for the future," said Marlene Post, a member of Hillel's board of directors. "You don't know who to search for until you know what you're looking for for the organization."

Under Joel, Hillel transformed its presence on campus from a local chapel into a full-service Jewish community center boasting a theme of Jewish renaissance. As an international organization it ballooned, with 500 affiliates and more than 600 personnel.

In 1994, Hillel gained independence from B'nai B'rith — its parent organization since 1925, two years after Hillel's founding — and funds from the North American federation system.

Ten years ago, its budget equaled \$15 million, with about \$4 million from B'nai B'rith. Hillel's budget today tops \$50 million, with \$14 million in revenues from the North American federation system. Joel brought on board major philanthropists such as Michael Steinhardt, Edgar Bronfman, and Lynn and the late Charles Schusterman. With them came dollars and prestige.

During his tenure, Hillel partnered with Birthright Israel, the free trip for 18- to 26-year-olds who had never been to Israel on an organized trip, and launched the Steinhardt Jewish Campus Service Corps, a group of recent college graduates who try to find unaffiliated Jews and draw them to Judaism and Jewish events. Hillel also expanded to the former Soviet Union and South America.

Joel is known for his skilled management, magnetism and personal warmth. But it was his clarity of vision — and use of language to transmit it — that helped Hillel flourish, according to many observers.

Joel coined catch phrases — like "Jews doing Jewish" — to underscore his end

MIDEAST FOCUS

P.A. official: Halt attacks

A Palestinian Cabinet minister called for a halt to attacks on Israeli civilians. "Stopping targeting Israeli civilians is a step that needs to be implemented," Nabil Sha'ath said Monday.

He joins an increasing number of Palestinian officials who have questioned the Palestinians' use of violence to achieve their goals.

Will Arafat visit Bethlehem?

Palestinian officials warned Israel against preventing Yasser Arafat from celebrating Christmas in Bethlehem for a second straight year.

Monday's warnings came after an adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Ra'anana Gissin, said Arafat should stay in Ramallah "because he has caused much tragedy to the Christian population." But Gissin stopped short of saying Israel would bar Arafat from Bethlehem. Last year, Israel's Security Cabinet decided to ban him from going to Bethlehem from his office in Ramallah. The Security Cabinet has not yet made a decision this year.

Kenya suspects images released

Kenyan police released computer-generated images of two men believed to have taken part in the Nov. 28 attacks on two Israeli targets in Kenya.

Police said Monday that they do not know whether the men are still in Kenya, but are seeking the public's help in identifying and finding the two.

P.A. official warns of civil war

Civil war between supporters of Hamas and Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement is a real threat, a Palestinian official warned.

Hasan Kashef, director general of the Palestinian Ministry of Information, condemned street clashes, particularly in Gaza City, that have erupted frequently during the past few months.

game, "Jewish renaissance." He created a language and culture that spilled through the ranks of Hillel and into other Jewish organizations, with the North American federation system picking up the term "Jewish renaissance" to refer to a new infusion of Jewish identity and practice.

According to Bronfman, chairman of the Hillel International Board of Governors, Joel changed Hillel from "a place where real people wouldn't be seen dead at to a place where Jews want to go."

Still, Hillel doesn't appeal to all the Jews on campus.

"There are a lot of students that feel there's a certain kind of student that goes to Hillel — someone who grew up Jewishly active, part of youth movements," said Daniela Gerson, the 25-year-old editor of New Voices, a national magazine written for Jewish college students. Students who don't come to school affiliated "often don't feel that Hillel is a place where they feel comfortable."

Gerson graduated from Brown University in May 2000.

Organizationally speaking, most applaud today's Hillel. Joel fashioned "a phoenix of an organization that now shares center stage in the Jewish world," said Neil Moss, chairman of the board of directors.

In fact, Carl Sheingold, director of the Fisher-Bernstein Institute for Leadership Development in Jewish Philanthropy at Brandeis University, chose Hillel as a case study for organizational renovation, naming Joel "arguably the most effective" CEO in the Jewish professional world. But as Hillel looks for a replacement, Sheingold warns organizations against trying to recreate a past leader, which sets unrealistic expectations.

Joel will stay with Hillel through the spring of 2003, at which time he will take up his post at Yeshiva University. Hillel has assembled a search committee of 12 members, representing its philanthropists, national and regional staff and student activists.

Bronfman said he wants a successor "who will share our vision" — of "doing Jewish" and pro-Israel advocacy. The new hire should be someone "who's young and strong and knows how to inspire young people," he said.

Bronfman speculated it could take from one to six months to find a new president. Meanwhile, the group has plenty of immediate concerns.

"I think the biggest challenge we're facing is our growth. The more you grow, and we've been growing rapidly, the more expensive it gets," Bronfman said.

He cited the exuberance of Birthright alumni, demanding follow-up services from Hillel.

For now, Hillel maintains its direction.

"Richard has plenty of leftover vision," Rubin said, naming agenda items such as strengthening Hillel's 27 groups in the former Soviet Union, expanding activities at Israeli universities and the impending launch of two chapters in Brazil.

Hillel's first priority is its domestic role, followed by its work in the former Soviet Union, Bronfman said. Expanding into Europe is also a consideration.

Hillel staff and activists say there's enough momentum to carry the organization forward.

"It's less about Richard than about the personality behind Hillel and a lot of what he's trained us to do," Simon Ariel, executive director of Hillel at George Washington University in Washington, said, citing Joel's lesson to avoid the "mediocrity" that can plague nonprofits.

"Richard's a smart guy and he created an international organization that will be able to stand and strengthen itself even as he moves on to another position."

But for many student activists — who would crowd "Late Night with Richard Joel" conference sessions to snare a few moments with their leader — the distinction between Joel and Hillel is blurry.

"With Richard Joel, you have this role model and almost father figure," said Alison Siegel, a 20-year-old sophomore at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she is co-president of the Hillel Leadership Council.

For his part, Joel has faith in the future.

"There is lots of room for new visions that my successor and her partners will devise for themselves, and I take great pleasure in standing from a distance and cheering them on," he said. □

(JTA correspondent Lev Krichinsky in Moscow contributed to this report.)



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JEWISH WORLD

Concert honors U.S. terror victims

Some \$20,000 was raised in honor of two Americans killed last July in a terrorist bombing at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The funds raised at a concert held Sunday night at New York's Knitting Factory are being donated to the Marla Bennett & Ben Blutstein Memorial Scholarship Funds at the Jerusalem-based Pardes Institute.

Bennett and Blutstein were enrolled in the Pardes Educators Program when they were killed in the attack.

A total of nine people were killed and more than 80 wounded in the bombing. A sold-out crowd of 400 people attended the concert, which featured Jewish music.

Swiss may overturn convictions

The Swiss government backed a proposal to overturn the wartime convictions of people who broke laws then in effect when they sheltered Jews and others fleeing Nazi Germany.

"Rehabilitation of people who aided refugees should take place because convictions no longer can be seen as just from today's vantage point," the Justice Ministry said Monday.

Annan: Peace in 3 years

A peaceful, two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be achieved within three years, according to Kofi Annan.

The U.N. secretary-general made the assessment in a speech Sunday night at a dinner for the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science.

Annan also said that the majority of Palestinians accept the continued existence of Israel, and are ready to live alongside it in their own state. He added that the majority of Israelis accept that peace requires the establishment of a Palestinian state in nearly all of the territory Israel captured following the 1967 Six-Day War.

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Prague security stays the same after report of terror attack denied

By Magnus Bennett

PRAGUE (JTA) — Security measures at key Jewish sites in Prague will not be increased following reports that Al-Qaida is planning a terrorist attack in the Czech capital, Jewish leaders told JTA.

On Sunday, an Israeli security official was quoted by the Yediot Achronot newspaper as saying that Israel had received a warning about an Al-Qaida attack in Prague.

Prague is a popular destination for Jewish tourists. Its centuries-old Jewish Quarter attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

After the official's comments appeared Sunday, both the Prague Jewish community and Czech authorities said there was no indication that an attack was imminent.

"The information in this Israeli article does not bring anything new," said the leader of the Prague Jewish community, Tomas Jelinek. "It is absolutely clear to everyone living in Prague that after the attack on Manhattan on Sept. 11, Jewish Prague could be a future target. It is a well-known Jewish treasure."

Referring to a deadly Al-Qaida attack launched earlier this year against a synagogue on the Tunisian island of Jerba, Jelinek added, "It was the same scenario in April, when the synagogue in Tunisia was attacked. People said at the time that the same could happen to Prague."

The Czech Interior Ministry said Monday there was no indication of an imminent attack.

"This information in the media about the Al-Qaida organization planning an attack on Israeli tourists in Prague has been checked by our Israeli partners and they have not confirmed it," spokeswoman Gabriela Bartikova said.

Czech police also said they had no information about any specific threat, adding that they were not advising further security measures at sites popular with Jewish tourists. Security had already been tightened after the Sept. 11 attacks, they said.

The Israeli Embassy in Prague also said there were no plans to change its current security levels.

"We are always taking necessary measures to protect our interests here, and we are not taking any extra precautions because at this stage we do not have any concrete and official information," embassy spokesman Walid Abu Haya said.

Hotels in Prague that are popular with Israeli tourists told JTA they have no plans to increase security until a concrete threat emerges.

The alleged threat is due to be discussed by the Czech Federation of Jewish Communities on Wednesday.

"Of course, any place in the world could be used as an attack against Jewish people, but there is no concrete information about the increase in danger just now in Prague," the president of the federation, Jan Munk, told JTA.

Some, however, have cautioned that the Czech security services must avoid becoming complacent.

Roman Kupcinsky, editor of the Prague-based Radio Free Europe publication, "Crime, Corruption and Terrorism Watch," said that the reports should be taken seriously.

"The Czech Republic has been relatively lucky so far," he said. "There is a serious risk, and officials must take common sense precautions." □

Brazil's oldest shul turns 90

RIO DE JANEIRO (JTA) — The 60,000-member Jewish community of Sao Paulo, Brazil, celebrated the 90th anniversary of its first synagogue.

Founded in 1912, the Kehilat Israel congregation is an Orthodox synagogue located in the traditionally Jewish neighborhood of Bom Retiro.

"It is certainly one of the cultural assets of Brazilian Jewry," the newly elected president of the Sao Paulo Jewish Federation, Jayme Blay, told JTA. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**New financial scandal could hurt both Arafat and the Labor Party***By Gil Sedan*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Those inclined to look on the bright side might say that Israeli-Palestinian cooperation is alive and kicking: Israelis and Palestinians joined ranks to make big money, until one of them woke up with a bad conscience.

The joint venture in question began in February 1997, when Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat transferred official P.A. funds from the Arab Bank in Ramallah to private accounts in Swiss banks.

The money was Palestinian, mostly customs and levies on products imported into the Palestinian Authority via Israel.

But the intermediaries were Israelis, who in return received generous commissions — millions of dollars, according to reports.

The key person was Yossi Ginossar, a former senior official in the Shin Bet security service. Ginossar and his partner Ezrad Lev succeeded in opening the doors of Switzerland's Lombard Odier Bank to the Palestinian money.

The cooperation continued until the summer of 2001, well into the intifada.

Like some other former senior officers, Ginossar had been involved in business transactions between Israeli and Palestinian companies since the early days of Palestinian Authority rule. The Palestinians dubbed him "Mr. 5 Percent," a reference to the commissions he earned on business deals.

The hidden Swiss accounts eventually grew to more than \$300 million. The Israeli partners managed the accounts, though they were not authorized to make withdrawals.

But then, in August 2001, something unexpected happened: Mohammed Rashid, Arafat's closest financial advisor, suddenly withdrew some \$65 million from the account, which then couldn't be traced. Lev suspected the money was going to finance terrorist activities.

He decided there was no real control over the money and that it was politically unacceptable that Ginossar — whose extensive business ties had led Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Ehud Barak to use him as an unofficial emissary to the Palestinian Authority — should also be involved in controversial financial transactions with the Palestinians. Lev, 42, went to the Ma'ariv newspaper and disclosed the secret deals Ginossar was involved in.

There was nothing new in the fact that the Palestinian Authority handles its money as if it was the private property of Arafat and his colleagues. At his own discretion, Arafat has allocated funds to various projects — including the financing of terrorist activities, as the Israel Defense Force learned from documents seized at Arafat's Ramallah headquarters last spring.

Rampant corruption has enriched the Palestinian political elite, but it also has alienated the leadership from the masses — and helped opposition elements, including Hamas, gain in popularity.

What is new is the depth of Israeli involvement in the accounts — and the ways in which it undermined international pressure on Arafat to implement fiscal reforms and full financial accountability.

Earlier this year, that pressure forced Arafat to appoint Mohammad Fayyad, an American-trained economist, as his new finance minister. Absent drastic measures to make his financial management more transparent, Arafat knew, the international

community might cut off his money supply.

The exposure of the Swiss funds and their connection to Israel hasn't helped Arafat's already battered political stock — or that of the Israeli left that negotiated and, in some cases, benefited from the Oslo peace accords.

Ginossar, 55, came to Israel from Lithuania at the age of 11.

After his military service he joined the Shin Bet, eventually becoming head of counter-espionage activities. He was forced to quit in the mid-1980s following the "Bus 300" scandal, in which Shin Bet agents killed two Palestinians they had taken prisoner after the terrorists hijacked a bus, then tried to blame the killings on top army officers.

For a while Ginossar failed in his business activities. But the signing of the Oslo accords and the creation of the Palestinian Authority allowed him to develop business ties with Palestinians.

He became so influential behind the scenes that Rabin began sending Ginossar on confidential missions to Arafat, even when other negotiating channels appeared blocked. Ginossar also was deeply involved in the July 2000 Camp David summit talks between Barak and Arafat.

While the ultimate use of the funds in Arafat's bank account is unclear, the Ginossar scandal sheds light on the dubious character of financial relations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

Over the years, Israeli authorities approved the transfer of official P.A. funds to private accounts, though they knew the money could have been used instead to help hundreds of thousands of Palestinians suffering in the Palestinian territories.

The Israelis believed that financial interactions with the Palestinian Authority — even if not strictly kosher — ultimately would strengthen ties and lead to a peace agreement.

Ginossar defended himself as the revelations about the Swiss account surfaced late last week, saying that Israel had taken advantage of his business contacts, not vice versa.

"I served the state" in political missions "voluntarily, and I made significant contributions not only to the security of Israel's citizens, but also directly saving lives," he said.

The exposure of the affair, just as the election campaign is kicking, was like a ripe fruit falling into Sharon's hands. He and Benjamin Netanyahu, the other Likud prime minister to serve in the post-Oslo period, refrained from using Ginossar's services.

Both can point to the affair as a product of the Oslo Accord.

"I do not blame Yossi" Ginossar," Lev told Ma'ariv, "I blame the Israeli leadership, the premiers who operated him, although they knew that he had interests with the other side."

Shortly after the story was published in Ma'ariv, Sharon instructed the Mossad to check whether the Swiss accounts were used to finance terrorism.

Naomi Blumenthal, a deputy Cabinet minister from Sharon's Likud Party, demanded the establishment of a state inquiry commission that would examine not just the Ginossar affair but "all those who took part in the negotiations with the Palestinians."

P.A. officials dismissed the allegations as a smear campaign against Arafat. But Israeli pundits predicted that the scandal would further weaken Arafat's status among the Palestinians.

Hussein Sheik, secretary-general of Arafat's Fatah movement in the West Bank, demanded a commission of inquiry "to bring to trial the corrupt people who hide away public money."

Rashid claims Israel has deliberately used the affair to demonize Arafat in the eyes of the Palestinian public and prevent a smooth process of reform in the Palestinian Authority. □