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86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel kills Hamas leader

Israeli troops killed a senior Hamas leader in Hebron.

Abdullah Kawasme was held responsible by Israel for attacks in which some 50 Israelis were killed. Israeli security sources said Kawasme was killed Saturday when he tried to resist arrest.

But Palestinian sources said Israeli undercover troops opened fire on the Hamas member as he stood in front of a mosque. [Page 4]

American killed, parents wounded

An American immigrant was killed in a West Bank ambush last Friday that also wounded his wife and elderly parents.

Shots were fired at a car near the settlement of Ofra, but Zvi Goldstein was able to continue for another six miles until he lost control of the car and it overturned.

Goldstein, 47, from the West Bank settlement of Eli, was born in Brooklyn, and he and his wife, Michal, immigrated to Israel in 1992.

Goldstein's parents, Gene and Lorraine Goldstein, both 73, from Plainview, N.Y., were seriously wounded in the attack. Goldstein's parents had come to Israel to attend their grandson's wedding on June 12.

The attack occurred as the family was on its way to a Jerusalem hotel for part of the wedding celebrations.

Michal Goldstein was lightly wounded. [Page 4]

Iraqi: Jews buying up everything

An Iraqi religious leader said the U.S. military victory opened the door to Jews who are buying up Iraqi businesses and property.

Sheik Mahmud Khalaf, a Sunni Muslim religious leader, said the U.S.-led war to unseat Saddam Hussein was part of a Jewish conspiracy, Agence France Press reported.

"The liberation of which they spoke boils down to liberating Iraq from its Arab Muslim people" so "that the Jews can enter it," Khalaf said during last Friday's prayers at a Baghdad mosque.

"The Jews, civilian and military people, are now entering Iraq," buying "property, factories and companies while Iraqis work for them as brokers and guides," he said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Conference on anti-Semitism marks milestone in recognition of problem

By Ruth E. Gruber

VIENNA (JTA) — There was no escaping the irony.

Sixty-five years ago, Adolf Hitler stood on a balcony in Vienna's Heldenplatz and triumphantly addressed hundreds of thousands of cheering Austrians after Nazi Germany annexed Austria into the Third Reich.

Last week, within earshot of that balcony, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe held the first-ever international governmental conference exclusively dedicated to the subject of anti-Semitism.

The two-day meeting, held June 19-20, brought together nearly 400 delegates from the 55 member states of the OSCE, an international body founded in 1995 that grew out of the Cold War era's "Helsinki process" of human rights monitoring and conflict resolution.

The forum produced no concrete actions or resolutions. But the very fact that it took place and recognized anti-Semitism as a unique form of prejudice that needs to be addressed on its own in an international context made it a historic event.

"We are making a statement that the time of denial is over," Hebrew University professor Robert Wistrich told the gathering. "The message is very necessary."

Even more important, said delegates, was the prospect that the issue would be addressed on an ongoing basis, thanks in part to an offer by Germany to hold a follow-up session next year in Berlin.

"We're not going to cure the evil of anti-Semitism in a two-day conference. But we've begun something," said Mark Levin, the executive director of NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of the Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia.

Former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, who headed a large U.S. delegation, including Jewish leaders and members of Congress, declared himself "delighted and heartened" by the German invitation.

"It would be a shame to take a historic conference like this and to turn it into a one-off event," he said. "And what could be more historic than organizing a first meeting in Austria and following it up in Berlin?"

The conference stemmed from a decision taken by the OSCE foreign ministers' annual meeting last December and will be followed by another conference in September on discrimination, racism and xenophobia.

The United States was instrumental in pushing for the meeting — at times in the face of reluctance by some European states, who insisted that anti-Semitism should be addressed within the context of more general human rights and discrimination issues.

This remains the official stand of the European Union. Its delegate at the meeting reiterated that "the E.U. stresses the importance of addressing racism, xenophobia, discrimination and anti-Semitism under a common, unified approach, using the experience and initiatives on the various issues to support action across the board."

The format of the OSCE conference left little room for debate on issues that were emotional and at times highly politicized.

Members of government delegations and non-governmental organizations gave brief statements focused on specific areas of concern: legal and institutional mechanisms to combat anti-Semitism; and the role of governments, civil society, the media and education.

The shadow of history loomed large as speaker after speaker made reference to the

MIDEAST FOCUS

Sharon: Keep building

Israel should continue building settlements, but do it quietly, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said.

Sharon made the remarks Sunday in response to comments made to the Cabinet by Infrastructure Minister Yosef Paritzky, who outlined his proposal to relocate settlers from the West Bank to less-populated areas within Israel's pre-1967 borders, the daily Ha'aretz reported.

Peres chosen Labor leader

Shimon Peres was elected temporary chairman of Israel's Labor Party. Peres, 79, a former prime minister who was elected party chairman last week on a temporary basis, has agreed not to run next year when Labor chooses a permanent chairman.

Gay pride in Israel

Thousands of Israelis attended gay pride parades in Jerusalem and Haifa last Friday.

Jerusalem hosted its second gay pride parade, while Haifa held its first.

The Jerusalem parade originally was slated for last Friday, but was postponed after the one of the community's activists, Alan Beer, was killed in a June 11 suicide bombing.

"There are a few ministers in the government who aren't happy that I'm taking part in such an event, but despite everything, I came to wish you a happy holiday," Interior Minister Avraham Poraz told marchers in Jerusalem.

Orthodox rock-throwing blasted

Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski condemned the weekend rock-throwing by demonstrators protesting roads that are open in the city during the Sabbath.

A policewoman was hurt and several cars damaged during Saturday's rock-throwing by demonstrators protesting against Sabbath travel.

ghost of Hitler and the legacy of the Holocaust.

Several Jewish delegates referred pointedly to how their own families had been persecuted.

But the dangers of the present — and the uncertainties of the future — loomed even larger.

In effect, the conference became a forum for a passionate enunciation of Jewish concerns at pernicious new mutations of what Giuliani termed "the Western world's oldest and most persistent species of hatred."

In particular, this included what many described as a new form of anti-Semitism that, while drawing on traditional anti-Jewish stereotypes, has increasingly appeared to shift the target of hatred to Israel as the collective embodiment of the Jewish people.

This was linked partly to fallout from the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians and partly, too, to an increasing identification of Jews and Israel with the United States in a confluence of anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism and anti-Americanism.

Speakers described a spike in violence against Jews and Jewish institutions in some countries since the fall 2000 outbreak of the Palestinian intifada, many of them attacks carried out by disaffected Muslim youths.

They also described a wave of hate mail and anti-Semitic Web sites on the Internet, and a demonization of Israel in the media and the political arena.

This, speakers said, was accompanied by an erosion of post-Holocaust taboos that enabled criticism, even legitimate criticism, of Israel's actions against the Palestinian intifada to "legitimize" traditional anti-Semitic expression.

Irwin Cotler, a Canadian member of Parliament, described an "old-new escalating global and even lethal anti-Semitism carried on the new superhighway of the Internet."

The world has "seen the emergence of Israel as the collective Jew among nations," he said. "Traditional anti-Semitism rejects the right of Jews to exist in the Diaspora. The new anti-Semitism rejects the right of Israel and the Jewish people to live in the family of nations."

Part of this, he said, was an ideological anti-Semitism "that masks itself under the banner of anti-racism.

In this form, Israel becomes 'racist' and Zionism is 'racism,' and Israel emerges as the enemy of all that is good and the embodiment of all that is evil." Under this reasoning, he said, "the dismantling of Israel becomes held out as a moral imperative."

Wistrich identified Muslim anti-Semitism as the "most dangerous, even genocidal" threat. "Just as much of the anti-Semitism rampant in the media of the Arab Middle East was exported from Europe, some of it is now being re-exported to Europe," he said. "Combined with radical Islamism and traditional European belief, it is potentially deadly."

Still, warned a representative of Turkey, "fighting anti-Semitism must not turn into a blind Muslim-bashing."

These and related issues have sparked widespread debate on Op-Ed pages, on talk shows and in a recent series of symposia and conferences sponsored by Jewish and other non-governmental organizations and institutions.

"The OSCE and its member states have been forced to recognize the concern of the Jewish community that there has been a failure to recognize anti-Semitism," Michael Whine, a member of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and a vice president of the European Jewish Congress, told JTA. "They still think of it as a hangover from the Holocaust and neo-Nazism," he said. "Jewish organizations said during this conference that while this traditional form of anti-Semitism is still there, this is not as dangerous as the anti-Semitism that is now emanating from the Arab world. We have to recognize this new reality."

The question remained, however, as to how to harness warning and concern and translate it into action.

Giuliani put forward an eight-point plan that could serve as a framework to do just that.

This included a recommendation that OSCE states formulate a uniform system to track anti-Semitic incidents so that statistics could be monitored and compared in a meaningful way. □



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JEWISH WORLD

Belgium revising law again

The Belgian government again agreed to amend a war crimes law to make the law inapplicable to cases against foreign leaders without a clear link to Belgium, including Israeli leaders. The proposed changes still have to pass Parliament.

Freeze on charity's assets upheld

A U.S. court upheld the Bush administration's decision to freeze the assets of a charity linked to Hamas.

In last Friday's decision, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia said the Treasury Department had enough evidence to shut down the Texas-based Holy Land Foundation, which was closed down in December 2001. An attorney for the group said he would appeal the decision.

Malaysians hand out Ford's book

Malaysian officials distributed copies of an anti-Semitic book at a political party congress. The country's prime minister, Mahathir Mohammad, distanced himself from Saturday's distribution of Henry Ford's "The International Jew," but did not denounce the action. The distribution of the book, which contains "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," came as Mohammad prepares to step down in October after 22 years of rule.

Jewish rep visits Baghdad

A representative of the Jewish Agency for Israel visited Iraq's tiny Jewish community. During his three-day trip last week, Jeff Kaye checked on the condition of roughly 35 community members, and was updated on the condition of the community's archives, which had been confiscated by Saddam Hussein's regime.

Islamic center bomber sentenced

A Jewish man in Florida was sentenced to more than 12 years in jail for attempting to blow up an Islamic center.

Podiatrist Robert Goldstein, 38, apologized to the Islamic community for planning the attack, which he said was to be retaliation for Sept. 11 and for Arab attacks on Israel.

Typo mars Bush letter

Members of the U.S. delegation to last week's OSCE conference on anti-Semitism confessed to having red faces over a typo in a letter to the conference from President Bush that mixed up the names of Nazi death camps. In his June 17 letter, Bush noted that he and his wife, Laura, had only recently visited "the Nazi death camps at Auschwitz and Buchenwald."

The Bushes, however, visited the complex of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

ACROSS THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

Ukraine's Reform rabbi has faith as he struggles for new members

By Daniel Maclsaac

KIEV, Ukraine (JTA) — Rabbi Alexander Dukhovny is the embodiment of the Reform Jewish movement in Ukraine. That's only natural: Dukhovny is the only Reform rabbi in the whole country and Ukraine's lone native-born rabbi.

Willing to work to make a name for himself and the movement he represents, the 53-year-old is trying to articulate a modern approach for modern times that sets him apart from the religious Jewish establishment in post-Soviet Ukraine.

"If someone was to tell you that Judaism is only about tradition, don't believe them, because the best way to preserve tradition is to develop," he said. "Judaism is not only a religion but a way of life."

Energetic, clean-shaven and with intense blue eyes and a penchant for brightly colored clothing, the rabbi has a youthful air about him. He needs it, given the challenges he faces in establishing a foothold for Reform, or Progressive, Judaism here.

Most of Ukraine's Jews — estimates of the community range from 250,000 to 500,000 — are not religious or are being introduced to religion for the first time. Yet many of them attend Orthodox, rather than Reform, services because of a strong Orthodox presence in the country. Many Orthodox synagogues offer free meals or medical care, providing an added attraction for individuals to attend Orthodox services.

Many Jewish communities in the country are spearheaded by Chabad emissaries who come from abroad to work in communities here and spread Chabad-style observance of Judaism.

Dukhovny spends most of his time in Kiev, where he presides over the Religious Union for Progressive Jewish Congregations in Ukraine. The movement claims 47 congregations and a membership of some 14,000 Jews. There currently are eight Reform rabbinical assistants working in the country and four Ukrainians studying abroad to become Reform rabbis.

But with Orthodox rabbis reclaiming synagogues, starting schools and running social welfare programs, the Orthodox movement has secured the lion's share of international funding for Jewish causes in Ukraine — including donations of American Reform Jews distributed through agencies like the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

"Who else are they going to give it to?" said Anna Azari, Israel's ambassador to Ukraine and the wife of a Reform rabbi in Tel Aviv. "There is a lot of money coming from within liberal Jewish circles, but there is also usually some pretty objective criteria involved in how that money is allocated."

A 2001 study by Chicago-based consultant Betsy Gidwitz outlined some of the difficulties Dukhovny faces. "Operating with minimal funding and no communal facilities, Rabbi Dukhovny has yet to develop the educational, cultural and welfare programs that would earn him and his movement the credibility accorded to his Orthodox counterparts and their operations in Ukraine," said the study, titled "Jewish Life in Ukraine at the Dawn of the 21st Century."

"The Chabad movement can provide a lot of presents and material help," said Alona Lisitsa, a Kiev-born Israeli studying to be a Reform rabbi at the Jerusalem campus of Hebrew Union College. "Sometimes I think the Reform movement isn't doing something similar not because we can't do it, but because we don't think it's moral to bring people to our movement by 'buying' them. You can't take a person and provide for them materially all their lives, but you can provide for them spiritually."

The Jews who turn up at the Reform movement's small-yet-modern Tikva Center in downtown Kiev represent a cross section of the community. About 50 people came one recent Friday night to Shabbat services, ranging from the elderly to university students to schoolchildren.

One thing Dukhovny doesn't seem to lack is faith in himself and his ability to move Ukrainian Judaism in a new direction. The grandson of a Chasidic rabbi, Dukhovny grew up in a Kiev family that kept its Jewish faith and tradition alive in the face of Communist repression. □

What's old is new again: Violence flares as envoys are sent

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The events this week had a familiar ring to them: The United States dispatched envoys to the Middle East and daily violence showed little sign of abetting.

The violence flared again on Saturday, when Israeli troops killed a senior Hamas leader in Hebron.

Abdullah Kawasme was held responsible by Israel for attacks in which some 50 Israelis were killed.

The "targeted killing" followed last Friday's shooting near Ramallah in which Israeli American Zvi Goldstein, 47, was killed, and his parents and wife injured.

Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack.

Speaking Sunday in Jordan, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed concern that Israel's killing of Kawasme could impede progress on the U.S.-backed "road map" for peace.

"It is still important to remain committed to moving forward," he told a news conference in Jordan, after members of the "Quartet" — the United States, Russia, European Union and United Nations, met to discuss ways to keep the road map on track.

Israeli security sources said Sunday night that the United States had clarified that Powell's remarks were not a condemnation of the Israeli action, the daily Ha'aretz reported.

The World Economic Forum, being held in Jordan, gave U.S. officials a platform for maintaining a presence to advance implementation of the road map.

The U.S. assistant secretary for Near Eastern affairs, William Burns, who was taking part in the meeting in Jordan, is expected to visit Israel and the Palestinian Authority this week.

President Bush's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, is expected to visit the region later in the week or over the weekend.

Powell's remarks came two days after he termed Hamas an "enemy of peace," and said the Palestinian Authority must do more than just negotiate a cease fire with the group, but must "end violence and the capacity for violence."

Powell met separately last Friday with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas.

Powell said he stressed to Abbas that Palestinian terrorism must end.

"Violence and terror is not the way to build a state," he said, adding that the sight of their own forces maintaining security might give Palestinians "confidence that organizations such as Hamas and other terrorist organizations perhaps do not have the right answer."

Kawasme, one of the most senior Palestinian militants in the territories, was killed during an attempt by Israeli special forces to arrest him. According to army officials, Israeli forces shot Kawasme when he tried to resist arrest.

But Palestinian sources said he was standing outside when he was shot by the undercover troops, reports said.

On Sunday, Sharon called the killing a "successful and important" operation whose purpose was to ensure the security of Israelis. Speaking at the weekly Cabinet meeting, he said Israel would engage in such operations as long as the Palestinians do not assume security responsibility in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

If the Palestinian Authority is unable to take such responsibility, "we will act to safeguard Israeli security," Sharon was quoted

as saying. Sharon's statements came amid reports that Israel and the Palestinians were close to agreement on a proposal to transfer security responsibility to the Palestinian Authority in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Bethlehem.

Under the proposal, Israel would give the Palestinians a period of three to six weeks to organize.

Observers have suggested that a deal would hinge on progress in cease-fire contacts between the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian groups, primarily Hamas. Abbas has said he will not use force against Hamas to stop terror.

But Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, an open critic of the road map process, has accused the Palestinian Authority of using the cease-fire efforts as a front for disguising their lack of commitment to take genuine action against terrorism.

Mofaz was quoted as telling the Cabinet on Sunday that Israel would ultimately have to "launch an active" war on Hamas.

It was not immediately clear how the latest killing would affect the diplomatic efforts.

Israel's botched assassination attempt against senior Hamas official Abdel Aziz Rantissi in the wake of the Aqaba summit led to a bloody week of violence and retaliation that left dozens of Israelis and Palestinians dead.

Ducking international criticism for its policy of "targeted killings," Israel said its focus was on "ticking bombs," and reiterated its position that it will continue to defend its citizens as long as the Palestinians do not take security responsibility and crack down on the terrorist infrastructure.

Israel has described Kawasme as the "father" of imminent terrorist attacks and pointed to his responsibility for the deaths of Israelis in recent attacks, including a June 11 suicide bus bombing on Jerusalem's Jaffa Street, a May bus bombing in the city's French Hill neighborhood and a March bus bombing in Haifa.

Hamas also claimed responsibility for the shooting attack near Ramallah that killed Goldstein. In the incident, shots were fired at a car near the settlement of Ofra, but Goldstein continued for another six miles until he lost control of the car and it overturned.

Goldstein, 47, from the West Bank settlement of Eli, was born in Brooklyn, and he and his wife, Michal, immigrated to Israel in 1992. Goldstein's parents, Gene and Lorraine Goldstein, both 73, from Plainview, N.Y., were seriously wounded in the attack. Goldstein's parents had come to Israel to attend their grandson's wedding.

The attack occurred as the family was on its way to a Jerusalem hotel for part of the wedding celebrations. Michal Goldstein was lightly wounded.

Following the Kawasme killing, Hamas renewed its threat of retaliation.

But reports also quoted a Hamas official Sunday night as saying that the cease-fire contacts with the Palestinian Authority were continuing, and that the group would likely give its response by Monday. □

SLA veterans benefits OK'd

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's Cabinet on Sunday approved extending Social Security benefits to former South Lebanon Army members.

The SLA veterans will be eligible for stipends from the National Insurance Institute as well as rent assistance and other benefits. □