



Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Report: Abbas, Arafat make up

Mahmoud Abbas and Yasser Arafat reportedly patched their differences in a meeting on Monday. Abbas, the Palestinian Authority's prime minister, will maintain authority in discussions with Israel, but will press the issue of Arafat's confinement in upcoming talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, according to Ha'aretz.

Arafat also agreed that the P.A.'s security minister, Mohammed Dahlan, would not have his powers limited, the report said.

Palestinians: No Jenin massacre

Palestinian sources confirm that an April 2002 battle in the Jenin refugee camp was no massacre, according to a study to be released soon.

In the study, conducted by the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and provided to the Jerusalem Post, the sources said Fatah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad prepared for a pitched military battle in the densely-packed refugee camp.

Palestinians at first claimed that some 500 people had been massacred, and the United Nations voted to send an inquiry team to Jenin.

The massacre claims were later proven untrue.

Lieberman's fund-raisers depart

Two leading fund-raisers are leaving the presidential campaign of Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.).

According to the Boston Globe, Shari Yost and deputy Jennifer Yokum are leaving the campaign in a move to shift fund-raising tactics and cut costs.

Lieberman had a poor first quarter in fund raising this year, receiving about \$3 million, but garnered \$5.1 million in the second quarter. Detailed second quarter fund-raising reports will be released Tuesday by all campaigns.

Falash Mura committee formed

Israel's interior minister will head a committee to determine the aliyah of nearly 20,000 Ethiopians who claim Jewish heritage. Some Ethiopian Jewry advocates worry that Avraham Poraz is not committed to bringing the Falash Mura to Israel. The appointment follows an Israeli Cabinet decision in February to help expedite the immigration to Israel of the Falash Mura, whose ancestors converted to Christianity.

NEWS ANALYSIS

After season of frost, fragile thaw seen in Israeli-European relations

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA)—After years of mutual distrust and periodic acrimony, there are signs of a thaw in relations between Israel and Europe.

As Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was feted in London this week, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom pressed a new "friendship with Europe" initiative.

Also, the European Union recently put out feelers about including Israel in plans for a "wider Europe."

But though the stage for warmer ties was set by the revival of an Israeli-Palestinian peace process, there are still deep differences between Israel and Europe on the Palestinian issue. And while Israel's relations with European governments may be improving, the same can't be said about public opinion: In much of Europe, Israel is still getting what it considers to be hostile press.

In London early this week, Sharon received expansive red carpet treatment. In a rare gesture of friendship and support, British Prime Minister Tony Blair invited his Israeli counterpart to a private dinner at his home at 10 Downing Street.

British officials were at pains to point out that few foreign dignitaries are honored in this way. "Not even Blair's close friend George Bush was invited to dinner at No. 10," a senior official was quoted as saying.

For several months now, JTA has learned, Britain's Foreign Office has believed that Sharon wants to make peace with the Palestinians but will find it difficult to make concessions.

By exuding warmth and friendship, Blair apparently feels he can encourage Sharon to make the tough decisions.

Sharon, however, maintains that Britain and the rest of Europe first need to change their attitude toward Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Sharon argues that the power struggle between Arafat and the P.A. prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, really is a struggle over the peace process, which Arafat wants to destroy and Abbas wants to push forward.

To prove his point, Sharon presented Israeli intelligence reports to Blair and is openly urging British and other European leaders to boycott Arafat.

The Americans back Sharon on this, but the Europeans so far mainly do not. Most recently, a delegation of British legislators and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov visited Arafat at his Ramallah headquarters, knowing that Sharon and Shalom would refuse to see them as a result. Of the major European players, only Italy's prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, pointedly refused to meet with Arafat.

Sharon warns that if the Europeans keep strengthening Arafat, and if Abbas is forced to step down as a result, Israel will have to reconsider its attitude to the internationally approved "road map" peace plan.

Despite these differences, European attitudes to Israel seem to be changing dramatically. In early July, soon after the road map was set in motion, Israeli and E.U. officials met in Brussels for the annual review of Israel's economic association agreement with the European Union.

According to Oded Eran, Israel's ambassador to the European Union, the Europeans were unexpectedly forthcoming: They declared that E.U. relations with Israel no longer would be contingent on progress in the peace process.

More importantly, the officials indicated that the European Union was interested

MIDEAST FOCUS

Shots fired at Israeli patrol

Shots were fired at an Israeli patrol in the Gaza Strip. There were no injuries or damage in Monday's incident. Also Monday, Israeli troops opened another road in the central Gaza Strip to Palestinian traffic, as part of measures aimed at easing restrictions on Palestinians. The army said it would still control security at interseccions.

Barghouti confinement extended

The solitary confinement of a jailed Palestinian militia leader was extended for six more months.

On Monday, Marwan Barghouti again refused to testify in his defense at his trial in Israel.

Barghouti, who faces murder charges for involvement in terrorist attacks, said the outcome of the trial had been predetermined.

He pointed to remarks by Israel's attorney general calling him a "terror architect" as proof a Palestinian could not receive a fair trial in Israel. During Monday's session, the judges also criticized the attorney general's remarks.

The court adjourned until Aug. 21.

Belgian named E.U. envoy

The European Union has a new Middle East envoy. Belgian Marc Otte replaces Miguel Angel Moratinos, who has held the post since 1996. Otte, a senior adviser to E.U. foreign policy chief Javier Solana, served as Belgium's ambassador to Israel from 1992 to 1996.

Katsav: Forces won't help

U.N.-led international forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will not stop terrorist activities, Israel's president said. Moshe Katsav made the remarks Monday during a three-day official visit to Slovakia. Katsav also laid a wreath at a memorial to victims of World War II in central Slovakia.

in including Israel in its plans for a "wider Europe." They even suggested upgrading the economic association with Israel and adopting the model of the E.U.'s close ties with Switzerland and Norway.

There was, however, one request of Israel: that it ratify the Kyoto Protocol on environmental protection, which would mean enough countries had signed the treaty to bring it into force, despite American objections.

The new European openness to Israel has struck a receptive chord in the Israeli Foreign Ministry.

Arguing that Israel has neglected ties with Europe for too long, Shalom launched what he calls a European "friendship campaign" with a visit to Italy last week, which he intends to follow up at the upcoming session of the Council of European Foreign Ministers in Brussels.

For their part, the Europeans made it clear that although they want to play a role in the peace process, their aim is only to aid or to complement the United States, which will continue to be the main player.

As Israeli-E.U. ties warm up, there is a lot of old animosity to overcome. Britain is a case in point: In the run-up to the war with Iraq, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw spoke about a double standard and seemed to compare Israel to Iraq; Blair himself pressured Bush to pressure Israel to accept the road map; Britain hosted a conference on reform of the Palestinian Authority without inviting Israelis; and Britain last year also unofficially embargoed arms to Israel that it felt might be used in the conflict with the Palestinians.

Some British media, especially the BBC, continue to be hypercritical of Israel. Indeed, the screening of a recent BBC documentary on Israel's unconventional weapons led the Foreign Ministry's P.R. bosses to sever ties with the BBC.

The film compares Israel to Iraq, implies Israel is not a democracy and falsely alleges that Israel used nerve gas against the Palestinians.

It employs contrived concentration camp imagery, drawing jailed nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu peering through a barbed wire fence; blames Sharon for the Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinian refugees in 1982, without mentioning that the killing was the work of Lebanese Christian militiamen allied to Israel; and juxtaposes America's refusal to discuss Israel's nuclear capability with President Bush saying, "the greatest danger facing America and the world is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical and biological weapons."

This kind of media treatment, the pressure of large anti-Israel Muslim populations in several European countries, complex European guilt feelings toward the Jews, Europe's colonial past and Europe's strong human rights focus all make for highly problematic relations between Europe and Israel, which many Europeans see as an "occupying power."

As a fragile new Israeli-Palestinian peace process gets under way, it remains to be seen whether early signs of Europe's reassessment of ties with Israel herald a fundamental change in attitudes and policies. □

West Bank bust a bust?

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An Irish man arrested in the West Bank appears not to be an IRA terrorist.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz originally reported that the man arrested for allegedly training Palestinian terrorists is John Morgan, reported to be a member of an IRA splinter group.

But according to a Ha'aretz report released Monday, the man arrested is not a dissident Northern Irish terrorist but Sean O'Muireagain, a reporter for a Belfast Catholic paper and a well-known activist for the Belfast-based Palestine Solidarity Committee.

Sean O'Muireagain is the rough Gaelic equivalent of John Morgan.

The paper's editor told the BBC that allegations made against the arrested man — who he says was in the West Bank on behalf of the paper and a radio station — are "rubbish. We have contacted the Israeli Embassy in Dublin to demand Mr. O'Muireagain's immediate release," the editor told the BBC. □



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JEWISH WORLD

U.S. may report on anti-Semitism

The Senate may require the State Department to assess international anti-Semitism.

As an amendment to the annual State Department Authorization Act, the Senate passed a provision that would include a section on anti-Semitism in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, which provides country-by-country information on religious freedom and government practices.

The full Senate is expected to vote on the authorization package this week.

Wiesenthal blasts Oxfam boycott

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is protesting Oxfam Belgium's proposed boycott of Israeli fruit.

The center lodged a protest last Friday with Oxfam International and launched an online petition against Oxfam's move.

Wiesenthal officials pointed to an anti-Israel poster on the Web site of Oxfam's Belgian chapter that says, "Israeli fruit tastes bitter. Say no to the occupation of Palestine. Don't buy any fruit from Israel." Wiesenthal officials said the boycott echoes World War II-era calls from Belgian Nazi collaborators, who urged their countrymen not to buy Jewish-made products.

Lantos: Return ambassadors now

Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) is calling on Egypt and Jordan to "take immediate action" to return their ambassadors to Israel.

In letters to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordanian King Abdullah, Lantos, the ranking Democrat on the House International Relations Committee, said the return of ambassadors is "overdue."

PETA launches ad in Poland

An animal rights group launched a new campaign comparing the meat industry to the Shoah. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals unveiled a TV ad in Warsaw today likening the mass transport of animals to slaughterhouses to the Nazi deportations to concentration camps.

The ad, unveiled in the historic center of the Nazi deportations, follows the group's controversial photo exhibit and Web site comparing the meat industry to the Holocaust.

The ads mark the birthday of novelist and vegetarian Isaac Bashevis Singer, who created a character who said, "in relation to" animals, "all people are Nazis."

Swastikas daubed in Paris

Swastikas and anti-Jewish slogans were scrawled on an apartment building near Paris. Several Jewish families live in the building defaced Sunday night.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

Two Jewish groups show how Web can be used for fund-raising

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — The dot-com industry's death is grossly exaggerated.

At least, that's what two sectors of the Jewish philanthropic world are praying for.

The Jewish Funders Network, an umbrella group of Jewish Family foundations, recently launched I-Fund, a kind of Web matchmaker for Jewish foundations and grant seekers. Meanwhile, the Jewish National Fund is mining for Internet gold with new online features expected to raise \$1 million by year's end.

Three years after the Internet bubble popped, it seems many non-profits are finding that waiting out the Web's early buzz is becoming profitable.

"That sort of slow and steady approach seemed to pay off," says Stacy Palmer, editor in chief of The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

The Jewish Funders Network, which represents the burgeoning foundation sector of the Jewish philanthropic world, hopes I-Fund will help foundations sort through the thicket of grant proposals to find a project they want to support.

With more than 8,000 Jewish family foundations in the United States, most of which lack professional staffs to sort through grant requests, finding a project that matches their mission "is next to impossible," JFN President Mark Charendoff said.

Initially, I-Fund is posting requests for \$1,000 or less for Jewish educational venues such as summer camps, day schools and Jewish community centers. "We're just putting the ideas out there and letting the marketplace decide," Charendoff says.

Already, I-Fund has connected four foundations and grant seekers. In one case, a \$900 grant from a New Orleans funder will allow visiting Maccabi Games athletes to produce Judaica at a Tenafly, N.J., Jewish community center.

That may not match the visibility of a multi-million-dollar project such as birthright Israel, which sends young Jews to Israel for free, but "that's not what Jewish education looks like" generally, Charendoff said.

Should I-Fund succeed, the Web site could expand into other areas, such as social justice projects or women's issues, he added.

Dealing with far higher stakes is the JNF, the century-old philanthropy famous for Israeli reforestation and water projects. The JNF has revamped its Web site, adding new functionality and robust new content, including an online store.

The site, which raised \$325,000 online in the 2001 calendar year — out of JNF's total of \$29 million raised in fiscal 2001 — ranked first among Jewish charities for online fund-raising in a June 2002 Chronicle of Philanthropy study.

This year the philanthropy journal ranked 135 charities, including a handful of Jewish non-profits. The study found that only 12 percent of those surveyed raised 1 percent or more of their total revenue via the Web in 2002.

Among them was JNF, which raised \$31 million in total last fiscal year, including \$663,000 online in calendar year 2002, a 104 percent online jump.

The 124 charities that provided figures for the past two years showed that online fund-raising shot up to \$123 million in 2002, from only \$41 million a year earlier.

The other Jewish charities in the Chronicle list were, in descending order: the Jewish Federation/Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, which raised \$605,598 in 2002; the United Jewish Communities, \$511,000; UJA-Federation of New York, \$207,902; and the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, \$13,435.

Ken Markus, manager of Internet Business Technology at AOL-Time Warner and Internet chairman of JNF's marketing committee, says the revamped site merged the organization's online and offline databases, allowing JNF to target specific donors with personalized newsletters in 22 regions and to more closely track donations.

The site is averaging 56,000 hits a day since it launched in early February. It raised \$450,000 in the first five months of the year, or between \$3,000 and \$4,000 daily, he added. That means the site is on track to raise \$1 million by year's end, out of an expected total of some \$33 million, Markus said. □

I-Fund can be accessed at www.jfunders.org/ifund. JNF can be accessed at www.jnf.org.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

By drawing closer to Israel, Turkey hopes to mend relations with U.S.

By Yigal Schleifer

ISTANBUL (JTA) — Moshe Katsav's recent visit to Turkey, which included a delegation of more than 100 businessmen traveling with the Israeli president, highlighted the growing trade relations between the two countries.

Yet some observers say the visit's subtext was a Turkish attempt to draw closer to Israel as a way of repairing its strained relations with the United States. For Turkey, Israel and the American Jewish lobbyists may be a backdoor to the leadership in Washington.

These lobbyists in the United States have been particularly active on behalf of Turkey in recent years, helping to raise the country's profile on Capitol Hill and to fend off attacks by the Greek and Armenian lobbies.

"The worsening of U.S.-Turkish relations has brought Turkey and Israel closer," one Jewish lobbyist in Washington said. "They see that they need more than ever the American Jewish lobby."

Katsav capped off the two-day trip on July 10 with a visit to Istanbul's main synagogue and a cruise up the Bosphorus, before heading to Eastern Europe.

The Israeli businessmen on the trip met with Turkish businessmen during Katsav's stops in Ankara and Istanbul.

While military and strategic factors were behind the normalization of ties between Israel and Turkey over a decade ago, trade quickly is becoming a significant part of the two countries' relationship, Israeli and Turkish analysts said.

For example, trade between Turkey and Israel totaled \$1.2 billion last year, a dramatic rise from the figure of about \$120 million a decade ago.

"I think there is an appreciation on the Turkish part that this relationship has an economic dimension, a technological connection. It is a multidimensional relationship, and even the" Justice and Development Party — Turkey's governing party, whose leaders are veterans of the country's political Islam movement — "recognize that," said Ilter Turan, a professor of international relations at Istanbul Bilgi University.

Katsav's visit is the third to Turkey by a top Israeli official in as many months. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz visited in mid-June, while Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom came in April.

Meanwhile, Turkey's top military official, General Hilmi Ozkok, visited Israel last week, and its foreign minister, Abdullah Gul, is expected to go to Israel in coming months.

The relative flurry of high-level Turkish-Israeli visits comes as Turkey's relations with the United States are strained following the refusal of Turkey's Parliament to allow U.S. forces to open a northern front against Iraq from Turkey during the recent war. In addition, the U.S. military arrested 11 Turkish special forces in northern Iraq; the United States claims the Turks were on a mission to assassinate the Kurdish mayor of Kirkuk.

During a lunch event in Istanbul hosted by the Foreign Economic Relations Board, an influential Turkish trade association, Katsav told Turkish businessmen of the potential for increased economic relations between the two countries.

"The cooperation between Israel and Turkey, including

economic cooperation, has become an important marker in the Israeli economy," Katsav told the group.

Amnon Rasner, general manager of a Netanya-based software and logistics-consulting firm that started working with two Turkish companies a few months ago, said he foresees trade between the two Middle East neighbors growing. "We think that Turkey will be a very interesting place to do business," Rasner said. "Israel is a country of 6 million, but Turkey is a country of 70 million."

"In my opinion, this is a market with a lot of possibilities. I think Israeli companies have an advantage here because we think similarly to the Turks, so communication is easy. Also, it's only an hour and a half away," said Rasner, who travels to Istanbul twice a month on business.

Katsav's day in Istanbul also included a visit to Neve Shalom, the city's main synagogue, where a ceremony was held in his honor. Entering the packed synagogue to the sound of blowing shofars and accompanied by Turkey's ornately dressed chief rabbi, Katsav told the crowd that he had come to express gratitude for the refuge Jews found in Turkey when they were expelled from Spain in 1492 and for their continuing success in the country.

"The relations between Israel and Turkey are further proof that there is no conflict between Judaism and Islam," Katsav told the crowd, which greeted him with enthusiastic applause. "Judaism and Islam have shared values, and we should not allow in any way for a political conflict to become one between religions."

Turkish Jews at the ceremony said the event allowed them to express their connection to Israel.

"I wanted to come see him. He is an important person, he is a leader of us," said Sinto Levi, 47, an Istanbul dentist who took time off from work to come to the ceremony. "We are living here but I am also Jewish, so he is also my president."

"We are the youth of the Turkish Jewish community, and we think that there is one Israel and we must support it and show that we support it," said Nedim Ergil, 18, a university student who came to the event with two friends. "I feel proud seeing the president. When the Turkish president and other officials meet with him, they show that he is special and that makes me proud."

Before coming to Istanbul, Katsav visited Ankara, where he met with both Turkish president Ahmet Necdet Sezer and the country's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Israeli officials said Katsav and the Turkish leaders discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations as well as the lingering issue of Israel's unfulfilled promise to buy water from Turkey's Manavgat River.

"It's a state visit, which means it has a lot of significance for us and the Turks. It adds an element of respect to the relations," an Israeli diplomat in Turkey said.

"It's certainly a major step forward." □

Terror victims meet Cherie Blair

NEW YORK (JTA) — The wife of British Prime Minister Tony Blair met with three Israeli victims of terror.

The July 8 visit with Cherie Booth Blair at 10 Downing St. was organized by One Family UK, the British arm of the Israeli charity One Family, which supports terror victims and their families.

The visit was considered especially symbolic after controversial comments Booth Blair made last year that showed empathy for suicide bombers. □