

**IN THE NEWS**
**Top terrorist killed in Nablus**

Israeli forces killed the head of the Al-Aksa Brigade in the West Bank.

Nayef Abu Sharakh was shot dead in his Nablus hideout Saturday, along with the city's leading Hamas and Islamic Jihad chiefs.

After a four-day sweep of Nablus, Israeli forces began withdrawing from the city Sunday.

The mission was aimed at undermining Palestinian terrorist groups that get funding and guidance from Hezbollah, the Lebanese terrorist group.

At least five additional Palestinian militants were killed during the Nablus operation, Israeli officials said.

**Palestinians bomb fort in Gaza Strip**

Five Israeli soldiers were wounded when Palestinians bombed an Israeli fort in the Gaza Strip.

Hamas and the Al-Aksa Brigade claimed joint responsibility for Sunday night's attack, in which an army compound was blown up, apparently by terrorists who dug a tunnel underneath it and stuffed it with explosives.

A few hours after the explosion, at least one soldier was reported to be trapped underneath the rubble.

**Naomi Shemer, Israeli musician, dies**

Israeli folk musician Naomi Shemer died. Shemer, the singer/songwriter of dozens of Zionist favorites like "Jerusalem of Gold" and "Lu Yehi," died Saturday of cancer.

Shemer won the prestigious Israel Prize in 1983, and she also set Hebrew poetry and biblical passages to music. She was 74.

Following the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995, Shemer translated American poet Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" into Hebrew, put it to music and dedicated it to Rabin's memory. [Story, Pg. 3]

# WORLD REPORT

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## Exhibit of photos and testimonials shows soldiers' troubles in Hebron

By DINA KRAFT

**T**EL AVIV (JTA) — Off a small, quiet courtyard in a southern corner of Tel Aviv, a one-room exhibit of photographs and video testimonials tells the story of one group of soldiers' army service in Hebron, which they call "the hardest and most confusing place of all."

The testimonials and photographs — of Palestinian terrorist suspects blindfolded, Israeli children trashing a Palestinian store, a smiling soldier holding his machine gun like a guitar — present an everyday reality that the soldiers say turned their moral universe upside down.

The exhibit has attracted national and international coverage. On Tuesday, among the steady stream of visitors — who included a Japanese television crew and Israeli teenagers and families — were Israeli Military Police who raided the exhibit, confiscating a videotape of soldiers' testimonials and a folder of articles on the exhibit.

The four reserve soldiers from the infantry brigade who organized the exhibit, entitled "Breaking the Silence," were interrogated by the military on Wednesday.

More than 80 soldiers from the Nahal brigade's Battalion 50 contributed to the exhibit.

The exhibit was spearheaded by Yehuda Shaul, 21, a burly and charismatic fervently Orthodox reservist from Jerusalem who spent 14 months in Hebron as a soldier and officer. He apologized to visitors Tuesday for having to cut short a tour.

"We have to go meet with our lawyer," he said. The army "is scared of us telling our story. They want us to stop."

Military officials denied that the army was trying to shut down the exhibit. Instead, they said, the materials suggested that soldiers had abused Palestinians, and the army wanted to investigate the incidents with an eye to possible prosecution.

Hebron is a complex place, army spokesman Jacob Dallal said, but the soldiers "have as their responsibility a duty to act in a certain way and uphold a certain standard. If there are incidents in which they acted in ways that were unlawful, they're accountable for it. Hence the police are investigating."

The exhibit reportedly is scheduled to appear next at Israel's Knesset.

Shaul, whose father is Canadian and whose late mother was American, intended to work in Canada after finishing his compulsory military service, but said he couldn't go abroad before telling what he and his

friends had gone through.

He soon found that others who served in Battalion 50 also wanted to share their experiences.

Shaul began sifting through their photo albums, selecting pictures for the exhibit and interviewing other soldiers with a video camera, often with their faces blurred and voices distorted to protect their identities.

Created in the 1950s to help set up new kibbutzim, the Nahal brigade is known for attracting left-leaning, idealistic soldiers, many of whom grew up in youth movements.

Shaul says he thought he had a strong moral compass before entering the army, but "in Hebron, you forget what is right and what is wrong."

"It's not because you are a bad soldier," he

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**BEHIND THE HEADLINES**

## ■ *Exhibit of photos and testimonials shows soldiers' troubles in Hebron*

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explains. "It does not matter how much you are educated. You spend time in the territories and you change . . . we lost ourselves."

In the testimonials, soldiers speak of the confusion inherent in their mission. They are told to protect the Jewish settlers who live in the city, where some 500 Jews live in uneasy proximity to 130,000 Palestinians. Often, however, they end up protecting Palestinians from the settlers.

Hebron is the second-holiest city in Judaism, but the Israeli settlers there are considered among the most hard-line in the West Bank, known for assaulting Palestinians and storming through Palestinian areas, destroying property and spraying Arab-owned buildings with graffiti. Scrawled on one wall that was photographed was, "Arabs to the gas chambers."

The Palestinians in Hebron, who oppose any Jewish presence in the city, also are known to be violent, often shooting at settlers and soldiers.

Shaul describes soldiers' interactions with Palestinian children, who are viewed with a mixture of suspicion and affection.

One photograph shows a soldier smiling at a group of Palestinian boys pretending to be Israeli soldiers: They have lined their friends against a wall and pretend to search them.

Shaul also spoke about what it was like to shoot for hours on end into neighborhoods from the top of what was once a school. Often, he said, the soldiers were not returning fire, but were shooting randomly.

He said it often felt unreal, "like a video

game," and that "we did it without asking questions."

In their testimony, soldiers speak of guilt feelings from the perverse pleasure of having power over others — of raiding homes, confiscating car keys, firing tear gas just for fun, leaving teenagers who break curfew to sit blindfolded for hours.

Daniel Robinson, a graduate student who served in the battalion in Lebanon in the 1980s, said the exhibit reminded him of the chaos of any war, whether just or unjust.

"Part of the problem is the whole power trip of it," he said. "You have guns, explosives — you can do anything."

Robinson spoke of the fog of battle that the exhibition addresses.

"You don't know what's happening in real time," he said, "and you're supposed to operate as a moral being, and you're 19 years old."

Lt. Col. Amos Guiora, commander of the Israel Defense Forces' School of Military Law, said that most Israeli soldiers are doing the best they can.

"I think we're doing an incredible job under extremely difficult circumstances," he said. "That doesn't mean we don't mess up on occasion. On the issue of morality and conflict there is no better 'school' to study that than here."

Guiora pointed to interactive software the army has developed to train soldiers

and commanders in an 11-point code of conduct for operating in an armed conflict.

Through Hollywood movie clips and scenarios taken from real life situations in the West Bank, soldiers are instructed how to handle themselves in various situations.

"If you mistreat an innocent civilian, the end result may well be that instead of him remaining a good guy, he becomes a terrorist," Guiora told JTA. "We address this head-on, that there is a clear relationship in how you behave and what your action may lead to. We

address issues that are part and parcel of a soldier's daily dilemma."

For his part, Shaul no longer is speaking to the foreign press after being criticized for "airing Israel's dirty laundry." But in an interview with the daily Ha'aretz, he said the exhibition's message is not political.

"It's beyond politics. It's a true and honest look at reality," he said.

Among those visiting the exhibit was Ori Vilin, 20, released recently from the army. He served seven months in Hebron and brought his parents to the exhibit.

"It's good that this is on display; now people can see how it actually is there," he said.

His mother, Orna Vilin, gazed at the photographs and sighed.

"I didn't realize it was so awful," she said. ■

**'You have guns,  
explosives — you  
can do anything.'**

**Daniel Robinson**  
Former Israeli soldier

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## Israeli Cabinet fights over Diaspora

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Cabinet members traded barbs over a report showing that Israeli government policy decisions do not take the Diaspora into consideration.

Commenting on last week's findings by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, Justice Minister Yosef "Tommy" Lapid said Israel should resolve a growing rift with Diaspora Jews by reducing Orthodox power in Israel.

"The new generation of Jewish intelligentsia in America, 85 percent of whom are Conservative or Reform, are being alienated from Israel because the country does not recognize their rabbis," political

sources quoted Lapid, head of the secularist Shinui Party, as telling Cabinet colleagues Sunday.

In response, Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom attacked Lapid. "I am sick of hearing you, every time Jewish matters are discussed, coming along with attacks on Judaism," Shalom said. According to sources, the two ministers exchanged epithets before agreeing to make up.

In its first annual report, the institute, headed by former U.S. Middle East envoy Dennis Ross, recommended creating a consulting Diaspora body that would participate in Israeli decision-making processes. ■

## THIS WEEK

## MONDAY

■ A conference on the psycho-social effects of terrorism, cosponsored by the University of Haifa and the University of Pennsylvania, begins in Washington. Organizers say the conference, which will bring together health care and social work professionals, is the first of its kind.

■ The Festival of Jewish Culture in Krakow, Poland continues through July 4. Theodore Bikel, the Klezmerics and Israeli diva Chava Alberstein headline the performances. The program also features the book launch of the Polish edition of "Virtually Jewish: Reinventing Jewish Culture in Europe," by JTA's senior European correspondent, Ruth Ellen Gruber.

■ Canadians head to the polls to elect a new government. With the incumbent Liberals and the Conservatives neck-and-neck in polls, the winner likely will have to form a minority government in the 308-seat federal Parliament. Jewish officials have praised both Prime Minister Paul Martin and Conservative leader Stephen Harper for their sympathy for Jewish concerns and their support for Israel.

## TUESDAY

■ Rep. Robert Wexler (D-Fla.) leaves for Israel, where he will consult with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on the plan to withdraw Israeli civilians and soldiers from the Gaza Strip next year. Wexler is slated to help draft the Democratic Party platform when he returns.

## WEDNESDAY

■ The Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs hosts a forum on the threat of cyber-terrorism. Gabriel Weinman of the University of Haifa, currently a fellow of the government-sponsored U.S. Institute of Peace, will discuss how terrorists use the Internet to coordinate activities, raise money and recruit new members.

## THURSDAY

■ A photographic timeline depicting the largest waves of migration of Jews to America opens Thursday at the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society headquarters in New York. The HIAS timeline places the organization's own 122-year history within the 350-year history of Jews in America.

## SUNDAY

■ The International Conference on Jewish Genealogy starts in Jerusalem. Hosted by the Israel Genealogical Society, with cooperation from the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial and scholars from Jerusalem's Hebrew University, the conference features topics such as the major Jewish families of the Ottoman empire to "memorializing your family's Holocaust victims."

## Singer Naomi Shemer dies at 74

By DAN BARON

JERUSALEM (JTA) — It was a sign of the importance of Naomi Shemer to Israel's national psyche that the singer's death relegated the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the inside pages of the nation's newspapers.

Saturday's death of Israel's national folk musician, at the age of 74 from cancer, spurred Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to open his weekly Cabinet meeting with a eulogy and the Education Ministry to order all schools to spend an hour in the classroom remembering Shemer.

"Using marvelous lyrics and melodies, she succeeded in connecting us to our roots, to our origins, to the beginnings of Zionism," an emotional Sharon said at the Cabinet meeting.

"Today, when we part with Naomi Shemer, we bow our heads in sorrow and are grateful for the wonderful gift Naomi gave us," the prime minister said.

Perhaps best known for her song "Jerusalem of Gold," a paean to Israel's capital written shortly before Jerusalem's Old City was captured by the Israelis in the 1967 Six-Day War, Shemer penned and performed countless songs that captured the national mood and drew on her kibbutz upbringing.

Set to guitar, the melody of "Jerusalem of Gold" and the haunting descriptions of Jerusalem's ancient edifices resonated for Jews worldwide.

In the Soviet Union, it inspired hope among Jewish refuseniks.

"It was the most Israeli thing we could think of, and we knew that in Israel the song had become something of a national anthem," recalled Natan Sharansky, a former Soviet political prisoner who now serves as Israel's minister for Diaspora affairs.

"Al Hadvash Ve'al Haoketz" — "Of the Honey and the Bee Sting" — spoke of the joy and sorrow that invariably intertwine in Israeli lives.

In 1973, Shemer composed the song "Let it Be" — "Lu Yehi" — an Israeli version of the famous Beatles tune, to inspire optimism in an Israel demoralized by the heavy losses of the Yom Kippur War.

Following the assassination of Israeli

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in 1995, Shemer translated American poet Walt Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" into Hebrew, put it to music and dedicated it to Rabin's memory.

The messages of Shemer's songs still hold currency in Israel today.

Her songs enjoyed a revival in public sing-alongs after the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000.

Shemer won the prestigious Israel Prize in 1983 just a year after speaking out against the government's evacuation of Sinai settlements as part of Israel's peace accord with Egypt.

The award was a sign that Shemer's popularity spanned even fierce political differences.

Shemer was born in 1930 in Kibbutz Kinneret. She began playing piano at age 6, and she was writing songs in her 20s.

She studied at music schools in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, but Shemer returned to her kibbutz roots in the army, spending her years of compulsory military

service as a musical coordinator for shows put on by the Nahal Corps at new settlements and kibbutzim around the country.

She went on to write dozens of Israeli favorites, including "All of These," or "Al Kol Eleh," as well as numerous children's songs.

Her last work, composed as she lay dying of cancer during the last two years, was a tribute to Israeli astronaut Col. Ilan Ramon, who died in 2003 in the breakup of the space shuttle Columbia.

Shemer was buried Sunday evening at Kibbutz Kinneret, her birthplace, overlooking the lake about which she wrote so many songs.

She asked that no eulogies be delivered at her funeral and that mourners instead sing three songs, including her famous "Eucalyptus Grove," or "Churshat Ha'Icalyptus."

After her death, Israeli President Moshe Katsav said, "In her song, Shemer bequeathed us landmarks in the life of the country. Her songs voiced a great love for the state and the people of Israel."

Shemer is survived by her husband, the poet Mordechai Horowitz, two children and four grandchildren. ■

Shemer's Israel Prize reflected popularity that spanned fierce political differences.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## MIDDLE EAST

### Fence gets results

An Israeli official said the completed northern section of the West Bank security barrier has eliminated terrorism there.

"It has gone from a situation of 600 terrorist operations and criminal activities a year to zero. It saves lives and creates quality of life," Deputy Defense Minister Ze'ev Boim was quoted as saying Sunday in Ha'aretz.

Boim was referring to the 125 miles of fence already constructed near the cities of Jenin and Nablus, two hubs of Palestinian terrorism.

### Hezbollah: 3 killed by mistake

Hezbollah said it didn't intend to kill three Israeli soldiers whose bodies were returned in a prisoner exchange this year.

In October 2000, the Lebanese terrorist group targeted an Israeli vehicle along Israel's northern border. Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader, told Al-Jazeera TV this week that the attackers mistakenly believed the Israeli vehicle was armored, but the explosive used killed the three soldiers inside.

Hezbollah took the bodies and refused to reveal the soldiers' status until the bodies left Lebanon in an exchange this year.

### World court to rule on fence

The International Court of Justice will issue its ruling on Israel's security barrier July 9. In a ceremony at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the 15-judge U.N. court first will say how it ruled on whether it even should weigh in on the fence debate, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported.

The court's ruling on the fence is non-binding, but would be an important propaganda victory for either side.

### Jordan ready to help

Jordan is willing to help train Palestinian security forces.

King Abdullah II told Ahmed Qurei, the Palestinian Authority prime minister, that Jordan would extend "all forms of support" to the Palestinians after Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank. Egypt is offering to train P.A. forces in Gaza.

### Burg quits Knesset

Avraham Burg, the Labor Party veteran once touted as a possible successor to Shimon Peres, quit Israeli politics.

Burg, a former Jewish Agency for Israel director and one of the architects of the "Geneva accord" peace proposal, offered his resignation Sunday to Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin.

"Today's Knesset is not at its highest point," Burg, 49, said in a brief speech. Israeli pundits say Burg quit to protest Peres' apparent willingness to bring Labor into a coalition government with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ruling Likud Party.

Burg's next job will be as an Israeli investment consultant to a British consortium, media reports said.

### El Al flights to Turkey halted

Israel's national airline suspended flights to Turkey out of security concerns.

The move came after Turkey ordered a reduction in the amount of Israeli security personnel operating at Istanbul's airport.

Israel's Shin Bet security service then instructed that flights be canceled for several days.

Israeli and Turkish officials are conferring on solving the issue, which comes amid increased tensions between the two countries over Israeli policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians, Turkish criticism of Israel and reports of Israeli support of Iraqi Kurds.

## NORTH AMERICA

### Club that barred Jews loses lawsuit

A judge awarded \$370,000 to a former manager of a Toronto golf club who was fired after he tried to change the club's no-Jews policy.

An Ontario judge last Friday found that Michael Geluch, the former general manager of Toronto's Rosedale Golf Club, was wrongfully dismissed in 1997 for trying to change a membership policy that barred Jews as members.

Geluch had charged that club board members had tried to prevent Toronto businessman George Cohon from joining the club on the grounds that his admittance would be tantamount to "opening the floodgates to more Jewish members."

Located in the posh neighborhood of Rosedale, the exclusive 111-year-old club has since admitted Cohon, who is chairman of McDonald's Canada.

### Winnipeg elects Israeli-born mayor

Sam Katz, an Israeli-born baseball-team owner, was elected mayor of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Katz, 52, whose parents were Holocaust survivors, came to Canada as an infant.

Considered a political outsider, the conservative-leaning businessman gained local fame 10 years ago when he negotiated construction of a downtown stadium and founded the Winnipeg Goldeyes baseball club. Katz won a sweeping victory in elections June 22.

## WORLD

### Nuke parley sought

The U.N.'s top nuclear arms official said he will seek an agreement from Israel to enter a dialogue on Middle East nuclear disarmament.

The world needs "to rid the Middle East of all weapons of mass destruction," Mohammed ElBaradei, head of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency, said Sunday. "Israel agrees with that," he noted, but says it can come only after comprehensive peace agreements. "My proposal is maybe we need to start to have a parallel dialogue on security at the same time as we're working on the peace process," he said.

ElBaradei is due to arrive in Israel on July 6 for what Jerusalem officials describe as a routine visit.

According to officials, Israel has no intention of changing its long-standing policy of neither confirming nor denying the existence of its assumed arsenal of nuclear weapons.

### More Falash Mura go to Israel

A Jewish Agency for Israel-sponsored flight brought 268 new Ethiopian immigrants to Israel on Sunday. The flight, aboard a chartered Ethiopian Airlines plane, was part of efforts by the Jewish Agency to expedite the immigration of the remaining members of the Falash Mura community to Israel. Another 380 members are scheduled to arrive next week, which would bring the number of Falash Mura immigrating to Israel this month to almost 800. As of January, the government estimated that some 14,000 Falash Mura were eligible to come to Israel over the next four years.

### Belgians rally against anti-Semitism

Hundreds attended a rally at a Holocaust memorial site near Brussels to protest last week's stabbing of a 16-year-old Jewish boy.

Addressing the rally, Justice Minister Laurette Onkelinx promised that authorities would hunt down those behind the attack.

"There will be no tolerance at all of anti-Semitic and racist acts," Onkelinx said. Police said around 15 youths of North African origin attacked four Jewish boys near Antwerp on June 24, reports said.