

IN THE NEWS
Security Council OKs statement on killings

The U.N. Security Council approved a presidential statement Thursday on Israel's killing of four peacekeepers in Lebanon.

The council also expressed "deep concern" for Lebanese casualties, displaced persons and damage to infrastructure, as well as for Israeli civilian casualties and suffering.

Al-Qaida eyes Lebanon crisis

Al-Qaida threatened Israel and the United States over the fighting in Lebanon. Ayman Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's deputy, issued a recorded statement Thursday which was played on Al-Jazeera, calling for Muslims to avenge Israel's attacks on Lebanese Hezbollah combatants, which Washington has tacitly endorsed.

"How can we remain silent while watching bombs raining on our people?" he asked. "Oh, Muslims everywhere, I call on you to fight and become martyrs in the war against the Zionists and the Crusaders."

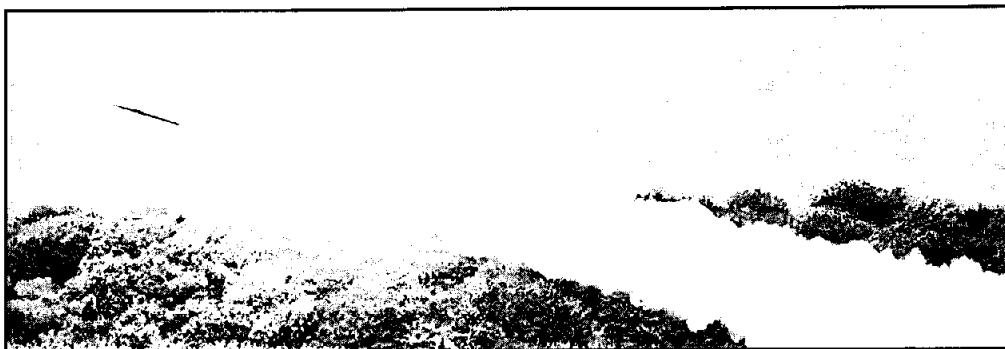
Hezbollah names tied to AMIA bombing

Interpol is issuing arrest warrants for specific Hezbollah members in connection with the 1994 bombing of an Argentine Jewish community center, JTA has learned. Names were supplied to the international police organization by the Argentine prosecutor in charge of investigating the 1994 attack on the AMIA building, which killed 85 people and hurt more than 300.

According to the sources, suspected Hezbollah and Iranian terrorists involved in the attack are believed to be living in South America. The announcement of the arrest warrants follows a meeting Wednesday in Washington attended by U.S. State Department officials, the Israeli and French ambassadors to the United States and the Organization of American States.

WORLD REPORT

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Aviv Divon/IDF

An artillery unit fires toward south Lebanon from a position in northern Israel.

Catch-22: Cease-fire calls don't jibe with need to defeat Hezbollah

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — It's a conundrum for countries that want to end the crisis in Israel and Lebanon: Despite their calls for a quick end to violence, the best hope for a lasting cease-fire depends on how thoroughly Israel crushes Hezbollah.

Many of the actors who met Wednesday in Rome at a crisis summit hosted by the United States have called forcefully on Israel to exercise "proportionality" in its efforts to rout Hezbollah firepower from north of the border.

The problem with such calls is that as a terrorist militia accountable to no government, Hezbollah is neither a reliable nor acceptable party to any agreement as formal as a cease-fire, Israel says — a reality underscored by Hezbollah's unprovoked July 12 cross-border assault that launched the fighting.

Europe and the United Nations may be calling for an immediate cease-fire, but "they have a message that is a contradiction in terms," Daniel Ayalon, Israel's ambassador to the

United States, told JTA. "They call for an early cease-fire and then they call for restraint. It doesn't work together."

Hezbollah is likely to stop shooting only when it is crippled militarily, according to this theory.

Now touring the region, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice proposed a muscular international stabilization force that would police the border until Lebanon's military is strong enough to replace it and keep Hezbollah terrorists at bay.

French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy has made an end to violence in southern Lebanon a precondition for French participation in any peacekeeping force.

"You have to understand that if there's no cease-fire, there can't be any intervention by a foreign armed force," Douste-Blazy told French television station RTL.

The American message was equally clear: A cease-fire must ensue from circumstances that would prevent Hezbollah's return to the border.

"We cannot return to the status quo ante,

Continued on page 2

NEWS
ANALYSIS

Finding refuge among strangers

By DEBORAH FINEBLUM RAUB

TEL AVIV (JTA) — There's a crib standing ready in the Ariel family's living room outside Tel Aviv. Within a few days there will be a new Israeli settled in among the stuffed animals. The new parents, Larisa and Daniel Ulianitsky, however, don't live here. In fact they'd never laid eyes on the owners of the home until last Friday.

They had called the municipal offices of their northern town of Carmiel and explained that Larisa, at full term minus one week, could not be driven to the hospital through closed streets.

Soon the Ulianitskys, natives of Kiev, along with their 5-year-old son Lior and Larisa's mother and her husband, were on their way to Tel Aviv in a match made by Babait Beyachad, a program of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

They are among thousands of families from northern Israel who have found refuge from Hezbollah rockets in homes in the nation's center. Some are with family or friends but others, like the Ulianitskys, with complete strangers.

"They came right before we made kid-dush and have been part of the family ever since," says Diana Ariel, whose household — and subsequent food bill — doubled, with no immediate end in sight.

An estimated 10,000 northern Israeli families have taken up residence in private homes, a figure that doesn't include the thousands more in children's camps and schools, tent cities and yeshivas, says Yehuda Freidiger, who is helping to run Israel Beyachad, another home hospitality program. The clearing house has 25 volunteer-staffed phones that ring around the clock, with both offers and requests for emergency housing.

In fact, the offers from people willing to open their homes has outweighed the number of requests to date, says Josie Arbel of the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel, still another group that is making matches.

"The outpouring is amazing," she says. "Now we're hoping more people step up and ask us for housing, because we have homes ready to go."

Adina Rosen, buying eggs and yogurt in a small shop in Jerusalem, fled her Safed home after a missile landed next door, killing her neighbor.

"We heard glass shattering and smelled

smoke," says the Kansas City native.

"My 10-year-old was really traumatized." Now living with two of her children in a friend's apartment in Har Nof, a religiously observant Jerusalem neighborhood, while her other three stay with relatives elsewhere in the country, Rosen says she has no idea when she'll feel safe going home.

Others, like the Ulianitskys, who have no centrally located family or friends to move in with, have very specific needs which have to be considered when placing them in a home.

Whether they have a late-term or high-risk pregnancy, need dialysis or use a wheelchair, these individuals need a home equipped and located to meet their needs. One family felt no one would understand the fears and unpredictable behavior of their autistic son, unless it was another family with an autistic child. Within a day of receiving the request, such a family was found through Israel Beyachad.

Because they haven't had the time to build an extensive network of friends throughout the country and because their Hebrew skills may be rudimentary, new immigrants in the North are often hard-pressed to find safe housing.

The numbers affected are considerable — and the flow has been little affected by the war. The Jewish Agency expects more

than 2,000 North American immigrants to Israel in the first eight months of 2006. And on Tuesday, some 650 new Israelis touched down at Ben-Gurion Airport from France.

New arrivals are being sent daily from their northern homes to families in the nation's center, through the Jewish Agency's Babait Beyachad program.

These immigrants are getting their first taste of Israeli warmth, says Yair Redl, acting director-general of the Immigration and Absorption Department of the Jewish Agency.

"Openness and hospitality is a part of our culture," he says, adding with a grin: "It's the flip side of our chutzpah."

That impulse to share led Mickey Hubner, who heads the international private



Deborah Fineblum Raub

Diana Ariel at left, has welcomed Larisa Ulianitsky, second from left, 5-year-old Lior and Ludmilla Hodorofsky into her Tel Aviv home.

banking department of the Israel Discount Bank, to pick up his phone last week and ask the manager of the bank's Carmiel office if any of his employees needed a place to stay.

Within hours, a mother and her three children, ages 8 to 16 were on their way. More than a week later they remain with his family in Jerusalem.

"I hope they feel at home with us," he says. "I know that, at first the little one was afraid of our two dogs but now he loves them,

so something good came out of it."

As for Larisa Ulianitsky, she is learning a bit about a new culture.

"I'd never tasted Persian food before," she says, referring to her host family's culinary preferences. "And it really is delicious."

Thursday morning, Ulianitsky gave birth to a son in a Tel Aviv-area hospital. Her hostess, Diana Ariel, attended the birth. It went off without a hitch and mother and baby were resting comfortably. "My mother was so moved by the whole experience she was crying when she called me," said Ariel's daughter, Sharona. "Who would ever have believed such a story could happen?"

'Openness and hospitality is a part of our culture. It's the flip side of our chutzpah.'

Yair Redl

Immigration and Absorption Department,
Jewish Agency

Europeans more open to Israel's plight

By JTA STAFF

PRAGUE (JTA) — During a BBC World Radio call-in program this week about the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, a Dutch caller expressed sentiments that once were unspeakable in Europe.

"The Americans have been propping up Israel for 60 years and it just doesn't seem to have worked. There is constant war there, reflecting what happens when you create a country surrounded by hostile neighbors," the caller said. "European guilt over World War II is wearing thin, we can't accept this anymore."

While not everyone shares the caller's attitude, there's no doubt that Western Europeans are less likely to support Israel in its current conflict with Hezbollah than Americans — and that criticism of Israel is much more widespread.

In Central and Eastern Europe, conversely, governments and the media are far more supportive of Israel, perhaps because of those regions' different histories and smaller Muslim populations.

In London, the Independent newspaper was in no rush to exonerate Israel. The paper suggested this week that Israel may be guilty of war crimes, and Monday's front page was nearly filled by a photo of a blood-splattered Lebanese woman and her son.

Some Europeans who oppose Israel's actions have taken to the streets.

Thousands of protesters across Britain demonstrated against Israeli attacks on Lebanon. On Sunday, rallies that took place in London and other major cities were organized by groups including the Muslim Association of Britain and the Stop The War Coalition.

London police estimated that about 7,000 people participated in the march, which passed by the U.S. Embassy.

"Hezbollah is not a terrorist group, and I am here to glorify the Lebanese resistance movement," said George Galloway, a member of the British Parliament and a long-time critic of Israel and the United States.

Approximately 7,500 people attended a pro-Israel rally Sunday in London. The rally, which was organized by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, included a speech by Britain's chief Orthodox rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, and a live link-up with Israelis in a bomb shelter.

Police in Berlin estimated that 2,700 people took part in an anti-Israel protest last Friday. Most participants reportedly were of Arab origin.

The event was organized by a coalition of German and Arab organizations that distanced themselves from anti-Semites and neo-Nazis. Organizers reportedly attempted to prevent individuals from chanting "Down with Israel" or "Down with the USA."

Several left-wing German groups are joining with some Jewish groups to hold a pro-Israel demonstration Friday in Berlin.

French media have not been as critical of Israel as in the past. In fact, on July 20, three major French newspapers — *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Liberation* — included an insert titled "Hezbollah Is a Threat to Peace," published jointly by several French Jewish organizations and the European Jewish Congress.

The French government has been in a tricky position: The country is home to the largest number of Arabs in Europe, around 6 million, and the country's leaders therefore have gone out of their way to demonstrate solidarity with Lebanon.

Almost as soon as Israel responded to Hezbollah's July 12 attack that precipitated the crisis, in fact, President Jacques Chirac called Israel's reaction "aberrant" and "disproportionate" and demanded immediate negotiations toward a cease-fire.

Nevertheless, France has not directly criticized Israel, and at a local level the support has been unequivocal. The mayor of Montpellier, Helene Mandroux, traveled this week to Tiberias, Montpellier's twin city, which has been bombed by Hezbollah.

In Holland, Jews and other Dutch citizens took to the streets over the weekend for pro-Israel and anti-Israel demonstrations. More than 40 Jewish and Israeli organizations located in the Netherlands organized a pro-Israel, anti-terrorism rally.

Protesters drowned out Edith Mastenbroek, a Dutch lawmaker in the European Parliament, when she tried to argue that Hezbollah has been criticized too much

and that Israel should negotiate with the group.

Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, whose government holds the six-month rotating E.U. presidency, accused Israel of applying the principle of "20 eyes for one eye."

But new E.U. members from Central and Eastern Europe demonstrated far more understanding for Israel's position.

Israeli diplomats in both Poland and the Czech Republic boasted to JTA about living in the E.U. country most supportive of Israel.

About 200 Arabs demonstrated in front of the Israeli Embassy in Warsaw last Friday, but almost no native-led protests occurred across the region. Another 200 or so demonstrators — supporters of an as-

sociation known as the Lebanese Club — protested Monday against Israel in Prague, according to the Czech News Agency.

The Czech Foreign Ministry, however, released a statement condemning Hez-

bollah's attacks, calling for a release of kidnapped Israeli soldiers and supporting Israel's right to self-defense. While calling on Israel to "show regard" for Lebanese civilians and infrastructure, the ministry also called for Hezbollah to be disarmed in accord with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1559.

The Czech press has run many editorials empathizing with the Israeli position. In the most popular news daily, *Mlada fronta dnes*, one staffer wrote last Friday, "Anytime something happens in the Middle East, many people elegantly kick Israel for taking things to the extreme."

He added, "Maybe it would better to think about other things, like why Hezbollah has not been disarmed a long time ago."

Both the Czech Republic and Poland have both been fighting — so far without success — to have the European Union label Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. ■

(JTA correspondents Dinah Spritzer in Prague, Vanessa Bulkacz in London, Toby Axelrod in Berlin, Lauren Elkin in Paris, Rachel Levy in Amsterdam and William Echikson in Brussels contributed to this report.)

BEHIND
THE
HEADLINES

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European Jewish leaders visit Israel

By URIEL HEILMAN

JERUSALEM (JTA) — European Jewish officials are warning the Israeli government that public opinion in their home countries is threatening to turn Europe's governments against Israel's military operations in Lebanon.

In meetings here Sunday with Israel's defense and foreign ministers, European Jewish leaders urged the Israeli government to launch a full-court press in European capitals to maintain continued international support for Israel's campaign to rout Hezbollah. Media reports of mounting Lebanese casualties, photographs of the devastation and mass demonstrations on the Continent threaten to undermine that support, they said.

"It is not something that we are used to, where Israel and the international community see a situation the same way," said Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, in a meeting with European Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. "For the first time, the G-8 and the European Union made statements saying the cause of the conflict is Hezbollah and the goal is to dismantle Hezbollah."

Serge Cwajgenbaum, the secretary-general of the European Jewish Congress, which organized the trip to Israel, said, "The question is how long public opinion will continue to accept this."

The delegation is led by Israel Singer, chairman of the Policy Council of the World Jewish Congress, and Pierre Beinainou, president of the European Jewish Congress, which is part of the WJC.

In most European countries, the governments are supportive of Israel's current action against Hezbollah but the people are mostly opposed, the European Jews said.

For example, German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed strong support for Israel's operation in Lebanon at the recent G-8 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia, saying, "We do not want to let terrorist forces and those who support them have the opportunity to create chaos in the Middle East. Therefore we place value on clearly identifying the cause and effect of events."

But in Germany, noted Stephan Kramer, secretary-general of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, "There is a lot of resentment against the Israeli position in the German public."

There have been numerous demonstrations in European cities against Israel's bombardment in Lebanon. Many of them



Uri Heilman

Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, meets with delegates from the European Jewish Congress in Jerusalem.

were organized by Muslim groups, the Europeans said.

"Public opinion, because of the media, because of the pictures in the paper, is maybe reacting emotionally. We hope it will not affect drastically the status quo," Cwajgenbaum said. "Our concern is to explain to public opinion that Israel wants to live in peace with Lebanon, that it has no intention to occupy one inch of Lebanese territory."

The Jewish leaders, who also were scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and visit Haifa, urged Livni to take Israel's case to Europe's capitals. The foreign minister demurred, saying Shimon Peres would go in her place and she would stay in Israel to meet the foreign leaders visiting the Jewish state.

As part of European Jewish efforts to preserve support for the cause of destroying Hezbollah, some European Jewish communities, like that of Ukraine, are sponsoring journalists' trips to Israel to present them with Israel's case.

Rabbi Yakov Dov Bleich, one of Ukraine's chief rabbis, said most Ukrainians have no opinion about the conflict, because they don't really pay much attention to the Middle East.

To capture Russian public opinion, said Sol Bukingolts, executive vice president of

the Russian Jewish Congress, it is important that Israel stress that it is fighting a war against terrorists, much like Russia is fighting Islamic terrorists in Chechnya. A pro-Israel rally of 10,000 people is planned in Moscow for Aug. 9, he said.

Along with European Jewish leaders from Greece to Sweden, the group from the European Jewish Congress included non-Jewish lawmakers from France, Ukraine and The Netherlands.

"We will support you because it's crystal clear that you need to act," said Dutch lawmaker Hans van Baalen, of the Liberal Party, told Livni on Sunday. "You don't have an option."

French legislator Rudy Salles, who is president of the French National Assembly's France-Israel Friendship Group, said the close relationship between Lebanon and France makes generating support for Israel in his country particularly difficult.

He noted that French policy toward Israel since the 1967 Six-Day War has been "not very objective, not very friendly."

French Jewish leaders said they are monitoring closely whether Israel's current conflict with Lebanon stirs up anti-Semitic activity, as the intifada did several years ago. So far, they said, the situation is stable. ■

'For the first time, the G-8 and the European Union made statements saying the cause of the conflict is Hezbollah and the goal is to dismantle Hezbollah.'

Tzipi Livni

Foreign minister, Israel

Fighting over Babi Yar memorial

By VLADIMIR MATVEYEV

KIEV (JTA) — The future of Babi Yar is dividing Ukraine's Jewish community, weeks before the country is to mark the 65th anniversary of one of the worst civilian massacres of Jews in World War II.

Some 33,000 Jews were killed at the ravine in September 1941.

The dispute highlights differences over whether private individuals should be allowed to build memorials to a national tragedy or whether the government should take complete responsibility for the memorial as part of present-day Ukraine's attempt to come to terms with the tragedy.

Despite the enormous scope of the tragedy at Babi Yar — an estimated 200,000 people were killed there during the course of the war — Ukraine still does not have a museum commemorating the killings.

A Jewish leader's decision to build a memorial and religious complex near the site has motivated opposition from a group called the Babi Yar Public Committee, made up of both Jewish and non-Jewish activists, joined by one of Ukraine's chief rabbis.

The memorial initiative comes from Vadim Rabinovich, a business magnate and head of the All-Ukrainian Jewish Congress.

Those against his plan insist that no privately funded construction should take place at Babi Yar until the area is made into a state-protected memorial zone. Development at the site should be undertaken only if a broad public consensus has been achieved, activists say.

But Rabinovich sees no contradiction between his plan and what his opponents suggest.

Two of Ukraine's three chief rabbis support Rabinovich, and he insists the plan is sensitive to both moral and religious aspects of the issue.

"Rabbis consider that from the point of view of halachah," or Jewish religious law, "it's an ideal solution to build a synagogue, yeshiva and museum," Rabinovich told JTA.

He also noted that the plot he plans to use is "only adjacent to the territory of Babi Yar," not on the site itself.

Last month, Rabinovich and his sup-

porters announced an Aug. 23 cornerstone-laying ceremony for the complex.

The proposed ceremony and future construction is not related to another commemorative event to be held at Babi Yar later this year. On the invitation of President Viktor Yushchenko, international Jewish leaders and statesmen are expected to attend a Sept. 27 event marking the 65th anniversary of the tragedy.

That event, co-sponsored by the Ukrainian government, is a brainchild of Russian Jewish leader and business magnate Vyacheslav "Moshe" Kantor, who wants to model the Kiev commemoration after January 2005 events in Poland when world leaders attended the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Kantor helped to bankroll that event as well.

Critics have organized a media and political campaign in Ukraine describing Rabinovich's initiative as an attempt to "privatize" what the activists believe should be a state-protected memorial zone of national importance.

Rabinovich disagrees.

"I hope the Ukrainian state will build its memorial complex at Babi Yar, and I will do what I can," he told JTA.

Meanwhile, on July 15, vandals desecrated a 10-foot memorial menorah that Jewish groups erected at Babi Yar in 1991.

Following the vandalism, Azriel Haikin, one of Ukraine's chief rabbis, sided with opponents of the new construction.

Haikin wrote to Yushchenko, urging him to receive members of the Babi Yar Public Committee to "develop joint steps of the state and the public aimed at proper perpetuation of the memory of victims of the Holocaust and Nazi terror."

The Babi Yar massacre began in late September 1941 when Nazi forces occupying Kiev forcibly marched 33,000 Jews to the steep ravine and shot them over a period of several days. Killings in the area continued throughout the two-year

Nazi occupation of Ukraine.

Other Nazi victims at Babi Yar included Soviet prisoners of war, members of the Ukrainian national resistance movement, gypsies and mentally disabled people.

Before their 1943 retreat, the Nazis forced prisoners to burn corpses and spread the ashes across the vast territory adjacent to the ravine.

In more recent years, Babi Yar came to symbolize Soviet attempts to suppress Jewish identity. When a memorial to victims was erected there 35 years after the tragedy, it mentioned only "citizens of Kiev and prisoners of war."

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, several memorials were erected in Babi Yar, each built on a private initiative or by some public organization.

Responding to the concern that Ukraine had not properly commemorated the tragedy, authorities decided a few years ago

to turn the area into the State Historical and Cultural Reserve Babi Yar. Nothing has been done beyond the designation, however.

Four years ago, a public protest staged by many of the same Jewish and non-Jewish activists and intellectuals led the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to scrap its plan for a Jewish community center that was to be built with funds raised from North American federations.

Those who objected to that plan, and who are resisting new construction now, say there should be a different solution to make Babi Yar a meaningful symbol of Ukraine's national tragedy.

"Babi Yar should be made into a memorial zone without much bulldozing or construction. Any public, social or ethnic group would be able to find a place for its own memory in a project that could unify the entire nation," said Vitaly Nachmanovich, the secretary for the Babi Yar Public Committee.

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

Critics describe Rabinovich's initiative as an attempt to 'privatize' what the activists believe should be a state-protected memorial zone.

TISHA B'AV FEATURE

A rummage sale on a fast day?

By JANE ULMAN

ENCINO, Calif. (JTA) — Traditional Jews mark Tisha B'Av by fasting, reading from the Book of Lamentations and observing rituals of mourning.

But Tisha B'Av at The Valley Temple, a Reform synagogue in Cincinnati, took on a less somber demeanor last year. Temple sisterhood members spent the holiday busily hosting their annual rummage sale.

The scheduling of the rummage sale on Tisha B'Av, the ninth day of the month of Av, which falls this year at sundown on Aug. 2, was not deliberate. But the fact that sisterhood members were not aware of the holiday, according to one spokesperson who asked not to be identified, reveals that Tisha B'Av, the saddest day on the Jewish calendar for Jews, is also a non-event in some, usually Reform, congregations.

It also reveals how the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem, which Tisha B'Av commemorates, resonates differently among various denominations.

References to the Temple's rebuilding have been moved from Reform and Reconstructionist liturgy.

Tisha B'Av is observed in most Conservative synagogues, according to Rabbi Ed Feinstein, spiritual leader of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, Calif. "The question for Jews like us is what does it mean to celebrate Tisha B'Av at a time when Israel is ours and Jerusalem is ours," he said.

His congregation tackled this question at a Tisha B'Av discussion several years ago. Afterward, they read the Book of Lamentations, or Eicha in Hebrew, and prayed.

At Reconstructionist Temple Beth Or in Miami, the program includes a reading of excerpts from Eicha, followed by a contemporary take on Tisha B'Av, such as a discussion of Milton Steinberg's "As a Driven Leaf," a novel that unfolds during the time of the Temple's destruction.

Orthodox congregations continue to commemorate Tisha B'Av in traditional ways, such as observing the 25-hour fast, not wearing leather shoes, sitting on low stools or on the floor and reciting Eicha.

It is a day of absolute mourning for the destruction of Jerusalem's two Temples, in 586 BCE and 70 CE. ■

Book treats Jewish history in Brazil

By BILL HINCHBERGER

SAO PAULO, Brazil (JTA) — The man who couldn't be buried: It may sound like the title of a Hollywood horror film, but this tale is true.

In the 1840s, Benjamin Benatar founded the first bar in Vassouras, a little town about 75 miles outside of Rio de Janeiro that today has a population of 33,206.

Born in Gibraltar, Benatar introduced billiards to the town and organized dances. Never much for calling attention to his religious heritage amid all the revelry, Benatar must have felt a twinge of faith on his death bed in 1859:

He would be buried a Jew, he demanded.

Benatar's final request threw Vassouras into a tizzy. There was only one cemetery, and it was reserved for Roman Catholics.

Finally, perhaps in the interest of public health, officials at the town's only hospital, the Catholic Santa Casa, allowed Benatar to be buried on its grounds.

Revealing anecdotes like that one pepper "Jews in Brazil: Inquisition, Immigration and Identity," a book recently released in Portuguese by Brazilian publisher Civilizacao Brasileira.

With contributions from more than a dozen leading scholars, the volume represents one of the first efforts to provide a comprehensive overview of Jewish history in South America's largest country.

"Jews in Brazil" is divided into two sections. One covers the colonial period, with an emphasis on the Portuguese Inquisition and its effect on the lives of Jews and anusim, or forced converts.

The other focuses on contemporary Brazil, examining waves of immigration in the 19th and mid-20th centuries — notably from Europe, Morocco and Egypt — and the recent history of Jews in the country.

Editor Keila Grinberg is a history professor at the University of Rio de Janeiro

and the Institute of Humanities of Candido Mendes University. The book grew out of her experience teaching an adult-education class on Jewish history in Brazil in 2000 as part of the country's commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Portuguese landing on the coast of South America.

"I tried to find a book like this to use in the course, but there wasn't one," she recalled.

Grinberg called upon leading scholars of Jewish-Brazilian history to contribute. USP's Bruno Feitler analyzed the 1630-1654 Dutch occupation of northeastern Brazil. That was a relatively advantageous time and place for Jews and

anusim, and it brought the founding of the first synagogue of the Americas, Kahal Zur Israel, in the city of Recife.

Many Jews of Portuguese heritage left their exile in Amsterdam and relocated to Brazil during this period, Jaqueline Hermann of the Federal University of Rio de

Janeiro noted in another chapter.

USP's Anita Novinsky wrote about the role of anusim in the 18th-century gold rush in Minas Gerais and about the persecution many of them faced from the Portuguese Inquisition.

The Amazon also provides the setting for a strange example of Brazilian religious syncretism, the case of the

Santo Rabbi.

A rabbi from Jerusalem died of malaria while visiting the Amazonian city of Manaus in 1910, and was buried separately in the Catholic cemetery. Locals began to attribute miracles to the rabbi's spirit, and his tomb became a destination of pilgrimage by devout Catholics.

The book also tackles a simmering academic debate over the importance of anti-Semitism in the government of Getulio Vargas, a Brazilian strongman akin to his better-known Argentinean contemporary Juan Peron. ■

ARTS & CULTURE

The book recounts how a rabbi from Jerusalem died while visiting in 1910, and was buried separately in the Catholic cemetery. Locals began to attribute miracles to the rabbi's spirit, and his tomb became a destination of pilgrimage by devout Catholics.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Israel envoy rejects Annan's call

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations rejected Kofi Annan's call for a joint U.N.-Israeli investigation into Israel's killing of four U.N. peacekeepers in southern Lebanon.

"Israel does not feel it needs any help in investigating what happened," Dan Gillerman said Thursday in New York.

Gillerman said an Israeli investigation would be "full of transparency," and asked the international community to trust the Israelis' judgment and legal expertise.

Envoys work in Middle East

U.S. envoys are in the Middle East working to create conditions for a lasting cease-fire in the Israel-Hezbollah conflict.

David Welch and Elliott Abrams are holding talks with leaders in the region, following up on U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit earlier this week.

Palestinians rally for Hezbollah

Some 2,000 Palestinians held a pro-Hezbollah rally in the West Bank.

"Dear Nasrallah, blow up Tel Aviv," they chanted Thursday, referring to Hezbollah's leader, Sheik Hassan Nasrallah.

Israelis still back offensive

Israeli public support for the Lebanon offensive remains strong despite serious troop losses, a newspaper survey found. According to the Ma'ariv poll published Thursday, 95 percent of Israelis still believe it was right to go to war after Hezbollah killed eight soldiers and abducted two more in a July 12 border raid.

But with the Israeli casualty toll mounting, there has been a possible slight increase in the number of respondents — from 8 percent to 12 percent, within the survey's margin of error — who believe Israel should cease fire and pursue negotiations on returning the hostages.

Israel maintains course in Lebanon

Israel decided to press ahead with current tactics in the Lebanese offensive.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert convened top Cabinet ministers Thursday for an assessment of the current military campaign against Hezbollah in light of mounting troop casualties.

The session ended with an announcement that Israel would continue its two-pronged strategy of airstrikes against Lebanese infrastructure and limited ground assaults on Hezbollah positions in southern Israel.

Olmert authorized the mobilization of extra reserve troops to allow for the retraining of regular forces.

Three killed in Gaza

Israeli shelling of suspected terrorist sites in the Gaza Strip killed three Palestinians. At least two of Thursday's fatalities were believed to be noncombatants, according to local reports.

WORLD

Hostage relatives meet with French minister

Relatives of three kidnapped Israeli soldiers met with France's foreign minister.

After Thursday's meeting in Paris with Philippe Douste-Blazy, Malky Goldwasser, the mother of one of the hostages, said she's confident France will be able to secure her son's release.

Polish city wants to host Israeli children

A Polish city offered to host a group of 15 Israeli children suffering from the violence in northern Israel.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry is considering the initiative launched by Jerzy Kropiwnicki, mayor of Lodz.

The city would host for two weeks children from the city of Nahariya, which has been under daily Hezbollah rocket attacks.

Berlin museum returns painting

The Brucke Museum in Berlin will return a painting stolen by the Nazis to heirs of the Jewish family that owned it before World War II.

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's "Berliner Strassenszene," painted in 1913 at the height of Kirchner's expressionist career, is valued at \$12.59 million, the Associated Press reported.

France bans extremist group

France banned an extremist black group that held an anti-Semitic march in Paris earlier this year.

"Racism will not be allowed and has no place on the territory of the republic," Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy said Wednesday after Tribu K was banned.

In May, members of the group marched through a Jewish section of Paris, chanting anti-Semitic slogans.

The group said the demonstration was a response to radical Jewish groups it said had beaten up black bystanders at a demonstration honoring Ilan Halimi, a young Jewish man kidnapped and tortured to death earlier this year.

NORTH AMERICA

Senator: Israel's reaction 'excessive'

Israel's response in Lebanon has been "excessive," said a U.S. senator.

"The Israeli response has been excessive and the current crisis of escalating violence on both sides must be brought to an end so we can resume efforts at creating a lasting peace," Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) said in remarks Monday in the Senate, taking care to blame Hezbollah for initiating the violence. Bingaman called for a cease-fire as soon as possible.

Lawmakers form pro-Israel caucus

A bipartisan slate of lawmakers is forming a pro-Israel caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives. Reps. Dave Weldon, (R-Fla.), Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) and Trent Franks (R-Ariz.) on Thursday announced the formation of the Congressional Israel Allies Caucus.

The caucus' formation comes in response to a 2004 initiative launched in the Knesset to develop lines of communication between Knesset members and Christian groups and denominations around the world.

Jewish groups denounce anti-abortion measure

Two Jewish groups decried a bill passed by the U.S. Senate that restricts access to abortion for minors. The measure, passed Wednesday, would punish anyone except a parent who helps a minor obtain a legal abortion outside her home state, unless that state's parental-involvement law has been met.

"The Child Custody Protection Act does not protect," Phyllis Snyder, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, said in a statement.

"On the contrary — it endangers and isolates pregnant teenagers, potentially pushing them toward unsafe, illegal alternatives." The bill now goes to conference between the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.