

**IN THE NEWS**
**Babi Yar  
massacre marked**

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko marked the 65th anniversary of the Babi Yar massacre.

Wednesday's events involved some 1,000 guests from 41 countries in a ceremony at the ravine. The ceremony ended two days of events commemorating the estimated 33,000 Jews killed along the ravine's edge on Sept. 29-30, 1941.

"Time can heal wounds, but it should not erase them from our memories," Yushchenko said Tuesday at the opening of an exhibition on Babi Yar at Kiev's Ukrainian House. Yushchenko was joined at the ceremony by his Israeli counterpart, Moshe Katsav.

**Spain proposes  
peace conference**

Spain proposed reprising its 1991 conference for Israeli-Arab peace. The Madrid summit brought together Israeli, Jordanian, Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian leaders under U.S. and Soviet auspices.

Israel has generally opposed these types of conferences, saying the U.S.-backed "road map" is the framework for peace negotiations.

**Court delays hearings  
because of Yom Kippur**

The Supreme Court will postpone its "First Monday in October" hearings because of Yom Kippur.

Seven justices will convene Monday for routine business, such as admitting new lawyers to the Supreme Court bar and announcing which cases the court has accepted for argument, but hearings launching the formal court year will not start until Tuesday out of respect for Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer, who are Jewish and observe the holy day.

**Because of Yom Kippur, the JTA World Report will not be published Tuesday, Oct. 3.**

# WORLD REPORT

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## Groups use High Holidays to elicit support for Israel

By JACOB BERKMAN

**N**EW YORK (JTA) — The High Holiday season has traditionally been the time of year when many rabbis make appeal to their congregation to give money to Israel — most often in the form of Israel Bonds.

But this year, the market that Israel Bonds seemed to have cornered in years past is a bit tighter, as other organizations, most notably the United Jewish Communities, step up with mass appeals of their own.

Shortly after Israel's 34-day war with Hezbollah in Lebanon began, the UJC, the umbrella organization for North America's federation system, stepped up its campaign to raise some \$500 million that Israel said it will need to rebuild, according to the UJC's vice president for Israel and overseas projects, Doron Krakow.

The federation system saw a major influx of money at the beginning of the war, raising nearly \$300 million in its first weeks. But after the war stopped, the donations slowed, Krakow said.

As a result, the UJC asked the four major streams of Judaism to ask its congregations to make appeals during the holiday run, the first time that it has ever done so, Krakow said.

The Orthodox, Conservative and Reconstructionist movements agreed to ask their rabbis to make specific pitches to their congregations for the campaign.

The Reform Movement issued a strong endorsement of the campaign, while not specifically asking its congregations to make appeals. Rabbi Eric Yoffie, the presi-

dent of the Union for Reform Judaism, said that Reform rabbis don't usually make specific fund-raising appeals during the holiday season because of a concern that doing so would cut into the spiritual message.

In addition to the UJC's campaign, other groups are mounting major campaigns for Israel. The Jewish National Fund, for instance, has also started a 10-year, \$400 million campaign to help Israel rebuild, JNF's CEO, Russell Robinson, told JTA. In a conference call with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert last week, the group reached out to rabbis around the country to elicit support before the holidays.

But is there enough money to go around?

Those involved think there will be, and though a healthy competition might take place, they don't anticipate a problem.

Last year, about 500 congregations throughout the country held Israel Bonds campaigns during the High Holidays, bringing in \$80 million in purchases, said Israel Bonds' national director of synagogue and rabbinic activity, Rabbi Martin Pasternak.

Israel Bonds, which sells bonds as opposed to seeking charitable contributions, added 20 to 30 campaigns this year, a number that pleases the organization.

"We've been doing this for 55 years," Pasternak said. "So we don't expect dramatic increases in the number of campaigns each year. We are embedded in our market at this point. So an increase of 20 to 30 is significant."

Israel Bonds changed the theme of its campaign shortly after the war in Lebanon began, from "Your family, our heritage:

*Continued on page 2*

## ■ More Jewish organizations are making High Holidays appeals this year

*Continued from page 1*

Israel's future" to the general theme of rebuilding Israel, Pasternak said. He expects that the organization will again sell about \$80 million worth of bonds this year.

The organizations receiving the dollars raised in the United States don't anticipate a battle between the groups raising the money because the American Jewish community in the past has stepped up when Israel is in need, said Jay Sarver, chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee of the Jewish Agency for Israel's Board of Governors.

"There were billions of dollars of damage done to small businesses, the education system, and others," said Sarver of St. Louis. "The need is so large that it would be silly for one organization to claim a pre-eminent role. They are all partners."

As a result, local congregational leaders decided for themselves which fund-raising plan to push.

Rabbi Mitchell Wohlberg of Beth Tfiloh Congregation in Baltimore said that he was choosing both. His annual Israel Bonds pitch is normally the highest-grossing campaign in the country. Last year his 1,250-family congregation purchased \$800,000 in Bonds.

This year, he will also make a pitch for the Israel Emergency Campaign before the Ne'ilah service at the end of Yom Kippur. And though he normally makes some sort of pitch for his local federation, "I'll probably lay it on

a little thicker than usual this year," he said.

And that's what the fund-raising organizations want to see, said the UJC's Krakow.

"When it comes to individual communities and congregations, they will make their own judgments about what is the right way to give money. We certainly

are not looking to injure anyone in that process," he said. "There is some competition, but from our point of view, there is a collegial understanding that we are all out there together.

"There is so much money in the American Jewish community, there is no reason why we can't all be successful," he said. ■

## A cure for your Yom Kippur headache?

By JACOB BERKMAN

NEW YORK (JTA) — Tired of getting that headache that seems inevitably to set in somewhere around midday every Yom Kippur?

Dr. Michael Drescher, the associate chief of emergency medicine at Hartford Hospital in Connecticut, thinks he might have a cure — Vioxx.

This fall, the medical journal *Headache: The Journal of Head and Face Pain* will publish the results of a study Drescher conducted in Israel two years ago that show that the now-banned pain reliever could actually prevent the phenomenon known as the Yom Kippur headache.

The headaches associated with the 25-hour fast on the holiest day of the Jewish calendar have been fairly well-studied. The National Institute of Health reported on its Web site that about 39 percent of the fasting population gets headaches.

Drescher says that the most likely causes for the pains in the head are food deprivation, withdrawal from caffeine, or hypoglycemia. Researchers from Tel Aviv University reported in 1999 that the most likely cause for the Yom Kippur headache is lack of food, not lack of water, according to <http://achenet.org>.

In 2004, Drescher and then-medical student Yoni Elstein conducted a study at Israel's Chaim Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer. Before Yom Kippur started that year, they took a test group of 100 people between the ages of 18 and 65, all of whom had experienced Yom Kippur headaches in the past.

They gave 50 members of the group a placebo, and the other 50 Rofecoxib — the clinical name for Vioxx. Of the 50 who received the placebo, 60 percent got headaches during the fast, while only 18 percent of those who took the Vioxx came down with headaches.

The only snag is that two days after Drescher completed his study, the makers of Vioxx, Merck & Co., Inc, pulled the pill off store shelves because it was found

to cause an increased risk for heart attacks and stroke.

Drescher is not suggesting that anyone go out to find black market suppliers of the now-banned drug.

Celebrex may work just as well as Vioxx, he says, though it is not as long-lasting a pain reliever. And, he says, anyone interested in taking the drug should consult a physician first.

The remedy, says Drescher, also works for the Yom Kippur fast's Muslim counterpart — the Fast of Ramadan headache. ■

The most likely causes for the pains in the head are food deprivation, withdrawal from caffeine, or hypoglycemia.

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## Illinois buys \$10 million in Israel Bonds

NEW YORK (JTA) — Illinois purchased \$10 million in Israel Bonds. The Illinois state treasurer, Judy Baar Topinka, announced Monday that it would be part

of the state's \$25 million in foreign investment for 2006. The state's legislature recently passed a law making it legal for the state to invest in foreign bonds. ■

# Israel to welcome descendants of 'lost' Jewish tribe

By DINA KRAFT

TEL AVIV (JTA) — A group of 218 people from a remote mountainous corner of northeastern India who claim descent from one of the lost biblical tribes will be immigrating to Israel — the first time members of tribe will do so as recognized Jews.

The aliyah of members from the Bnei Menashe community to Israel is a turning point, said Michael Freund, founder of Shavei Israel, which assists "lost Jews" seeking to return to the Jewish people.

"This is a major historical event, because these members of a lost tribe of Israel, after 27 centuries of wandering in exile, will at last be coming home," he said.

News of the planned arrival in November of 218 Bnei Menashe, who have already undergone official conversion in India, was made public for the first time on Tuesday after it was leaked to the Israeli daily Yediot Achronot.

The government decision to bring the 218 to Israel followed months of bureaucratic wrangling in which Israel's Interior Ministry and Absorption Ministry balked at plans to bring them here, Freund said.

Advocates have been working for years to convince Israeli authorities that the Bnei Menashe were indeed long-lost Jews who had returned to the faith. They hope this group will pave the way for others in the community to also make aliyah.

The group of immigrants went through conversion courses and were approved for conversion by rabbinical judges sent to India last year by Israel's Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar.

Amar has declared Bnei Menashe "descendants of the Jewish people" and has been working to help facilitate the aliyah of those who want to live in Israel.

To date, many of the some 1,000 members of the community — who arrived in the country as tourists and later converted to Judaism and became citizens — live in West Bank settlements. Some also lived in settlements in the Gaza Strip until last year's Israeli withdrawal.

The decision to place them predominately in settlements has drawn criticism.

Their advocates say the move was not a political but a practical decision. They say the settlements were among the only communities in the country willing to financially help the Bnei Menashe, who arrived in Israel and had to spend their first year studying for conversion, without much time to hold down jobs.

Tzvi Khaute, 32, lives in the West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba, on the outskirts of Hebron, where the largest number of Bnei Menashe reside. He welcomes the government decision to bring more of his community to Israel as Jewish immigrants for the first time.

"It really is a dream come true," said Khaute, who studies in a yeshiva part-time and works for the Shavei offices.

The group that is scheduled to arrive in November will be living for the first year in absorption centers in the northern towns of Carmiel and Nazareth Ilit.

Some 7,000 Bnei Menashe live in the northeastern Indian states of Mizoram and Manipur. They trace their descent to the tribe of Menashe, one of the 10 tribes expelled from ancient Israel by the Assyrians.

They claim their ancestors wandered

eastward toward China, then eventually settled to the south in what is now north-eastern India and nearby Myanmar.

Most of the community converted to Christianity at the turn of the 20th century.

In recent decades, some have returned to the Judaism their ancestors practiced for centuries, including observing Shabbat, keeping the laws of kashrut, practicing circumcision on the eighth day of a baby boy's life and observing the laws of family purity.

The Jewish Agency will be facilitating their absorption into Israel.

Freund said some \$1 million in financial support for the undertaking will be provided by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, a Chicago-based group that has raised tens of millions of dollars from Christian supporters of Israel. ■

Many of the some 1,000 members of the community already in Israel live in West Bank settlements.

## Celebrants British Jews mark 350

By VANESSA BULKACZ

LONDON (JTA) — Trafalgar Square this week to mark 350 years of British Jewry.

An estimated 25,000 people on Sunday visited Simcha on the Square, the centerpiece of the yearlong anniversary celebration.

The weeks leading up to the celebration had been fraught with problems. Increased security was necessary due to the recent rise in anti-Semitic activity in Britain. Also, the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, or AJEX, cancelled its participation to protest the involvement of London Mayor Ken Livingstone, a vehement critic of Israel who has been accused of making anti-Semitic remarks.

Simcha on the Square coordinator Geraldine Auerbach told JTA that despite recent concerns, "The security was very low-key."

The London Metropolitan Police and the Jewish Community Security Trust worked together to ensure participants' safety so "it still felt like an event that was free and open to anyone," she said.

The involvement of Livingstone's office wasn't a recent decision, but it led AJEX to decide on Sept. 14 to boycott the event.

Livingstone outraged the Jewish community last year by making what some considered anti-Semitic remarks to a Jewish newspaper reporter and then refusing to apologize.

The decision resulted in his suspension from office, which was stayed pending further appeal.

In light of the controversy surrounding the mayor, Livingstone had been pulled from the celebration schedule months ago, to be replaced by his deputy, Nicky Gavron. AJEX's last-minute decision to withdraw likely was due to a Sept. 5 press release from Livingstone's office proclaiming the mayor's personal support of Simcha on the Square.

Despite these 11th hour glitches, the event "went beyond our dreams," Auerbach told JTA. "To see beautiful signs up in Trafalgar Square, we just couldn't picture in advance how that would make us feel. To have our event there in that setting, one of the most iconic spots in Britain, and to see Jews of all sects and other people all mingling and having a good time there, I think it was the best possible way we could have shown how the Jewish people have integrated into British society." ■

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## MIDDLE EAST

### P.A. official goes free

Israel released the Palestinian Authority deputy prime minister from security detention. Naser Shaer was among dozens of senior Hamas officials detained by Israeli forces after Palestinian gunmen abducted a soldier on the Gaza Strip border June 25. He was freed Wednesday with no explanation from Israeli authorities, who continue to hold another 21 Hamas legislators and Cabinet ministers.

Military prosecutors say the detainees were involved in Hamas terrorism, but Palestinians have accused Israel of rounding up the politicians as bargaining chips for the return of Cpl. Gilad Shalit from Gaza.

### Teen said killed in airstrike

Palestinians said a teenage girl was killed by an Israeli airstrike on the Gaza Strip.

The 14-year-old was reported to have died Wednesday when Israel's air force bombed a neighboring house in the southern Gaza town of Rafah believed to have concealed an arms-smuggling tunnel from nearby Egypt. Another 10 Palestinians were wounded. Israeli military officials said they warned occupants of the targeted house to evacuate before it was struck.

### Settler jailed for shooting spree

A West Bank settler was jailed for a shooting spree against Palestinians. Jerusalem District Court on Wednesday sentenced Shvut Rachel resident Asher Weisgan to 92 years in prison for last year's assault, in which four Palestinian laborers were killed and a fifth wounded.

The settler, who said he acted in hope of derailing Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, was ordered to pay his victims' families \$236,000 in compensation. It was not immediately clear if he would appeal to the Supreme Court.

### Israel names new command chief

Israel appointed a new military commander for its Lebanese and Syrian fronts. The Defense Ministry on Wednesday named Maj. Gen. Gadi Eizenkot, a former military operations chief, to head its Northern Command. Eizenkot replaces Maj. Gen. Udi Adam, who resigned earlier this month amid charges that he mishandled Israel's offensive against Hezbollah; others claimed he was a scapegoat. Israel's failure to crush the Lebanese militia has stirred concern that Hezbollah's patron, Syria, could also go to war in a bid to regain the Golan Heights.

### Holiday bombing foiled

Israeli security forces foiled a Palestinian suicide bombing. Troops raided Balata near the West Bank city of Nablus on Wednesday, detaining two would-be suicide bombers and confiscating a 22-pound explosives belt.

At least one Palestinian gunman was killed during clashes with the Israeli unit. According to security sources, the Balata bombers planned to strike inside Israel during the High Holidays.

Defense Minister Amir Peretz told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday that Israeli forces had thwarted 10 attempted suicide bombings this month.

## NORTH AMERICA

### Anti-boycott language in Oman agreement

President Bush signed a free trade agreement with Oman that includes language barring boycotts of Israel.

The U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement, signed by Bush on Tuesday,

is the latest such agreement that mandates an end to participation in primary, secondary or tertiary boycotts against Israel — a measure promoted by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and embraced by the Bush administration.

Oman already maintains trade relations with Israel.

### House resolution calls for border force

The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a resolution urging Lebanon to allow international troops along its border with Syria.

The nonbinding resolution, which passed 411-5 on Tuesday evening, urges Lebanon's government "to request without delay a robust international force deployment on the Lebanese border with Syria, so as to prevent the resupply of weapons to Hezbollah."

Lebanon has been reluctant to ask international troops to patrol its border, fearing Syrian reprisals. Israel believes Hezbollah will try to replace the missiles it used in this summer's war with Israel.

### Bill passes suspending state-church lawyer's fees

The U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation that would bar courts from awarding attorney's fees when they win state-church cases.

The Public Expression of Religion Act, sponsored by Rep. John Hostettler (R-Ind.) and passed Tuesday 244-173, mostly on party lines. The Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress, the National Council of Jewish Women, the Orthodox Union and the Reform movement opposed the legislation.

The groups are expected to lobby against it when it moves to the U.S. Senate.

### U.S. sues N.Y. village on religious rights

The U.S. government sued a New York-area municipality for religious discrimination against Orthodox Jews.

The lawsuit, filed Tuesday in Federal District Court, says the village of Suffern violated the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act when it refused to grant a zoning exemption for a private group, Bikur Cholim, Inc., to run Shabbos House, a home that offers lodging and meals to Orthodox Jews visiting patients at a nearby hospital on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays. Bikur Cholim has also filed suit against Suffern.

## WORLD

### German department store pressed on claims

The Claims Conference is pressing a German department store chain to compensate heirs of a German Jewish family for lost property. Gideon Taylor, executive vice president of the Claims Conference, said the organization had made a renewed effort last week, urging KarstadtQuelle to honor a recent decision by the German Restitution Authority by compensating the Wertheim heirs for properties in former East Berlin.

The Claims Conference successfully argued that Germany had been wrong to hand the property to Karstadt after German unification, a decision based on Karstadt's earlier purchase of businesses including the former Wertheim properties.

The Wertheims owned a chain of department stores in Germany before they fled Nazi persecution in 1939.

The property in question is worth about \$185 million today. Karstadt sold it in 2000 to Beisheim, who built the Ritz Carlton Hotel there. A spokesperson for KarstadtQuelle recently told the Financial Times of Germany that the firm will use every possible means to fight the latest decision.