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Teenager’s death mourned by a nation



Photo: Yonatan Sindel/Flash90

Israelis are pictured mourning at a Jerusalem vigil for 16-year-old Shira Banki, who died last Sunday, three days after being stabbed at last Thursday’s Jerusalem Gay Pride Parade. Five others were injured in the stabbing. “It never crossed our mind that Shira would be murdered as a symbol,” her parents said in a eulogy on Monday. “An unnecessary death of a young girl, innocent and full of good intentions and deeds. A death that gives us and hundreds of other people sorrow and pain as deep as the sea, without end or benefit.” The alleged assailant, Yishai Schlissel, a haredi Orthodox man from Modiin Ilit in the West Bank, had been sent to prison for committing a similar stabbing at the same parade in 2005. Schlissel was freed from prison for that crime last month. He is now in custody. Israel’s leaders condemned the attack. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised to “deal with the murderer to the fullest extent of the law”. The attack has prompted calls for legislation that would protect LGBT rights, as well as an end to denunciations of LGBT Israelis.

Abuse at school: Jewish day schools are proactive		Netanyahu’s focus homeward	Limmud 2015 sets the benchmark very high – again	Israel trip opens minds	Nuclear deal: What can Iran hide in 24 days?
Over the past 10 years schools have lifted the lid on all kinds of inappropriate behaviour and Jewish day schools are at the forefront of monitoring abuse on the part of the teachers or other staff members.	Jewish terror	Benjamin Netanyahu has suddenly found himself facing down a terrorist threat – apparently from Jews. Netanyahu has fiercely condemned a predawn arson attack in the West Bank village of Duma, which killed an 18-month-old Palestinian boy.	Another highly successful Limmud conference took place over the weekend at the Indaba Hotel and Conference Centre in Johannesburg. This was the 10th Limmud conference and it is growing from strength to strength.	Four participants in the recent “Young South African Leaders” visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories, shared their experiences and insights with Gauteng Jewish leaders and community members at a report-back evening last week Thursday.	US Congress has until mid- to late September to consider whether to reject the nuclear restrictions for the sanctions rollback deal reached by Iran and six major powers on July 14. Some of the debate is over the meaning of certain provisions in the accord.
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A biblical injunction for Jews to take care of their pets

SUZANNE BELLING

The Internet and newspaper classified sections are chock-a-block with advertisements urging people to adopt pets - especially dogs and cats - but there are also horses, ducks, rabbits, budgies, monkeys, even Bearded Dragons and snakes.

Most pets are acceptable according to South African law, except tortoises and other indigenous animals, says an observant Jewish veterinarian who does not want to be named for professional reasons. “The unusual animals are bred in captivity and are used to living this way - so there is no problem having a pet that is different,” he said.

The SPCA, among other animal protection organisations, invites people to visit its centres, stating that “working hand-in-paw with our animal behaviourists, they assess the temperament of each animal to see what kind of owner will suit them best”.

Recently, there was a shocked reaction to President Jacob Zuma’s remark in the press that having a pet was white, not African, culture. He said black South Africans who bought a dog and took it for walks and to the vet, were copying white culture.

Speaking at a traditional ceremony in KwaZulu-Natal, he stated that people who loved dogs more than humans had a “lack of humanity”. He said there was a new generation of Africans who tried to adopt other



lifestyles.

But what of the Jewish community and its teachings regarding animals and their care?

“The Torah is replete with instances and laws which highlight the extent to which we are concerned about cruelty to animals. For example, the Torah prohibits using an ox and a mule to jointly plough a field (Devarim 22:10), the logical reason being that the two are unequally matched,” Rabbi Gidon Fox, of the Pretoria Hebrew Congregation, told the SA Jewish Report.

“The Sefer Hachinuch in Mitzvah 550 says that this prohibition is part of the biblical prohibition against

cruelty to animals, known as Tza’ar Ba’alei Chayim. It is manifest also in the fact that we are obliged to assist an animal when we see it overburdened by the load it is carrying (Exodus 23:5). These and others are a reflection and implementation of the biblical prohibition against cruelty to animals.”

Jews were so concerned with this prohibition that the Shulchan Aruch (OC 167:6) instructed us not to eat unless we ensured that our animals had eaten first, so much so that if a person had already made a bracha on the bread but had not yet eaten, he was allowed to instruct someone else to feed the animals and need not

to put down poison to kill rats. This was because killing was not a Jewish act and should be avoided directly.

Rabbi Yechezkel Landau (Yoreh Deah 10) prohibited hunting and Rabbi Ovadia Yosef (Yechave Da’at) forbade watching traditional Spanish bullfighting. In days of yore, even if an ox had killed a person, it could only be put down on the decision of 23 dayanim (judges).

The veterinarian said dogs should be kept inside unless suitable shelter was provided.

Regarding human consumption of meat, he said the Noachide Laws, incumbent on all people, prohibited meat to be cut off a living animal.

In keeping with the stringent laws prohibiting any benefit from a mixture of meat and milk “you cannot feed an animal milk and meat together - there should be separate bowls for them - and, on Pesach a Jew must ensure that there is no chometz in the animal food they provide to their pets”.

He added that the Torah prevented us from castrating animals and a rabbinical decree prevented an animal from being spayed.

Rabbi Fox added that it was permissible to visit a zoo “for even though the animals are in captivity, it provides a person (with) an opportunity to see and appreciate the wonders of Hashem’s creations, their diversity and majesty.

“Naturally, the zoo must ensure that the animals are well cared for.”

Parsha

Cecil the Lion - in Zimbabwe and Jerusalem



Parshat Eikev

Rabbi Asher Deren
The Shul of Blouberg - West Coast

Was Cecil the Lion that different from Cecil John Rhodes? Was Cecil’s status as king of the Hwange National Park attained in a manner all too different than his namesake’s?

“What?! - How can you say that?!”

So wait a second. Firstly, let me be clear that sport hunting is possibly the most despicable form of human recreation, and is arguably immoral if not outright forbidden. Just this week I was listening to a talk from the Rebbe where in an almost cracking voice he asked how a human being can take pleasure in the senseless killing of a defenceless animal. If he could, would he also take pleasure in killing human beings?

That said, can we be honest here? Cecil the

Lion was a killer. So why is everyone, myself included, saddened by the ruthless killing of a ruthless killer?

Perhaps it’s because Cecil the Lion was a (majestic) creature of G-d-given instinct. Cecil John Rhodes, Walter Palmer, Yishai Shlissel and the rest of us are (potentially majestic) creatures of G-d-given conscience and purpose.

When a lion follows his instinct he’s a majestic reflection of G-d. When a human follows his/her instinct (ignoring conscience and purpose) they’re a tragic desecration of that reflection of G-d.

And perhaps that’s why the lion is the symbol of Jerusalem - because a lion could and should inspire our greatness, in the greatest city on earth.

Last week in Jerusalem we saw a human being, a fellow Jew, act like a wild lion. Not with strength of character but with heartless instinct of grossly distorted values. How someone, ostensibly religious or otherwise, can take a knife

and stab other people is beyond my imagination. To do so in the name of G-d is despicable.

The tragic passing on Sunday of 16-year-old Shira Banki, has left a deep scar, not only in the hearts of her grieving parents, but the entire nation who witnessed the horrific act. As a collective family we carry individual responsibility for it - and to repair it.

Right after Tisha B’Av, the 9th day of Av, we celebrate the greatest holiday on the Jewish calendar - and you didn’t even know it existed.

Tisha B’Av commemorates the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem because of Jewish infighting. But right after mourning on Tisha B’Av we marked the holiday of the 15th of Av - www.TheShul.co.za/15Av which was traditionally celebrated with “the maidens of Jerusalem dancing” in unity.

If the 9th of Av reminds us of the dangers in attacking one another, the 15th of Av highlights the critical power in embracing one another.

While in the past the message of the 15th of Av may have been a hidden holiday, today, yes today, it is of vital importance - every day of the year.

Let that Cecil within us be one of a human being, “rising like a lion” as the first halacha in Jewish law teaches us, to serve Hashem, and His creations - human, animal, and even the leaves on His trees - with strength, with joy and with love - in a Jerusalem of unity rebuilt by the ultimate Lion, our righteous Moshiach.

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Eikev Aug 7 / 22 Av Aug 8 / 23 Av		
17:26	18:17	Johannesburg
17:53	18:46	Cape Town
17:09	18:01	Durban
17:29	18:21	Bloemfontein
17:24	18:17	Port Elizabeth
17:16	18:09	East London

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South African

Jewish Report

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Abuse at school: Jewish day schools are proactive

SUZANNE BELLING

Over the past 10 years, schools have lifted the lid on all kinds of inappropriate behaviour and the Jewish day schools are at the forefront of monitoring and preventing abuse on the part of teachers or other staff members.

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, dean of Torah Academy, sent out a letter to parents and staff at the beginning of the term emphasising that “the safety of our children is a priority”.

He said that over the past two years key personnel of Torah Academy had been involved in training and workshops relating to the broad area of safety of learners with regard to abuse or sexual misconduct during school and school-related programmes.

“We are, together with the principals, currently in the process of creating a Torah Academy policy document relating to the safety of our learners and staff.”

A workshop was held, conducted by Dalya Erster, social worker at Torah Academy, and psychological counsellor, Kim Lazarus.

The presentation at TA included different types of abuse - sexual, physical, emotional and neglect. These phenomena “have become an indisputable reality across the Jewish world. We are not creating a drama or crisis but raising awareness of appropriate behaviour. Sexual abuse can happen anywhere, at any time,” said Erster.

The training was to help staff and learners recognise a potentially unsafe situation “and have the ability to deal with it accordingly”.

Rabbi Hazdan added: “We have put in place a comprehensive educational process, addressing children, parents, educators and anyone who comes into contact with the children in our care.”

He said the concerns were mainly of a sexual nature but were expanding into other areas.

Rabbi Craig Kacev, director of the King David Schools in Johannesburg, said the schools had in place a prevention of sexual

abuse policy, which had to be signed by each staff member.

“Every year we train teachers, sports coaches and those dealing with children and every teacher has to have police clearance to ensure they are not on the sexual offenders’ list.”

Being proactive and taking preventative steps is essential. Rabbi Kacev reported that in the early eighties there was a teacher whose actions with the children were “inappropriate” and a letter of apology had been sent out to parents. But this had been insufficient.

Today there are training sessions with learners, parents and teachers conducted by a social worker. “There is much more awareness and openness to talk,” Rabbi Kacev said. “Our policy covers all forms of abuse, including bullying.

“The King David Schools welcome information - letting us know what previously was brushed under the carpet. Generally, there is more awareness across the board today.”

Marc Falconer, principal of Herzlia High School in Cape Town, said bullying was a problem in all schools, but it had changed over the years.

“At one stage it involved, to a large extent, repeated incidents of physical abuse where a person was picked out because of some or other perceived oddity. Of course, there was also name calling and insults.

“The ubiquity of social media has changed the kind of bullying most children are exposed to - and means that even adults are victims of bullying in ways that would have not been the case before. Whatever the structure and whatever the laws, the very ‘social’ part of social media means that this most common form of bullying is very difficult to contain and to repair.

“As most thinking schools

would agree, it is almost impossible to protect children from this kind of bullying and the most effective (probably the only) defence against bullying is to educate pupils (and parents and teachers) and to allow them opportunities to develop empathy which would see the end to almost all bullying of whatever kind, and, specifically, to educate children about how to use social media responsibly.”

Programmes are in place to make Herzlia a school in which all its pupils can find a home “and feel acknowledged, celebrated and affirmed”.

Yeshiva College in Johannesburg is committed to providing a safe and appropriate environment for all learners and employees.

This is done with continuous education and awareness campaigns, aimed at learners, staff and the parent body, said Rabbi Leron Bernstein, managing director of Yeshiva College.

“Acknowledging that abuse is a universal issue that cannot be ignored, Yeshiva College, over the last few years, has been working very diligently, in conjunction with professionals in the field to tighten up on policies and protocols to do all that we, as an educational institution, possibly can do, in order to prevent and deal with any issues of this nature.”

Rabbi Bernstein quoted excerpts from the school’s “Values and Standards Policies”, saying: “Developmentally appropriate life skills and awareness of inappropriate conduct, which is within the context of our school ethos, are continuously arranged and implemented for our learners, from play school to high school.

“Recently we launched a policy, with the guidance of an advocate, bound by applicable South African legislation, and the relevant Torah ethos imperatives and halachic guidelines.

“The policy details appropriate and acceptable standards of interaction and behaviour for our entire campus. These standards

place a special emphasis on protecting learners and staff from unwanted touch and abuse, whether direct or indirect, and/or the exertion of any form of inappropriate verbal, physical or psychological influence or control over learners and/or staff.”

Rabbi Bernstein said he had appointed Yeshiva College’s fulltime campus psychologists and social worker as monitors to investigate all reports of concern.

“Our counsellors are trained to liaise with all parties involved and will refer to statutory bodies where legally required to do so. They work closely with our principals to ensure all necessary steps are taken in relation to the proper handling of the matter, while being bound by strict professional codes of confidentiality and ethics.”



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

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Hard to replicate SA day schools abroad

SHIRA DRUION

Jewish education in the United Kingdom has been a contentious issue for thousands of parents comprising the Jewish community of approximately 300 000. The question of whether or not to choose a Jewish education for one’s children brings with it a complexity of factors.

During his tenure as chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation of the British Commonwealth, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks embarked on a very vocal campaign to encourage Jewish communal life and he succeeded in making enormous strides to help improve education in Jewish schools.

His campaign to strengthen areas of observance for British Jewry recalls the dramatic advert in 1993 which launched his call to bolster Jewish education. It depicted lines of young people queuing like lemmings to tumble off the edge of a precipice, with the headline: “Today, we’ll lose another 10 Jews”.

The campaign had the desired effect and served as a catalyst for a staggering growth in enrolment into Jewish schools. Attendance grew from 24 per cent of Jewish youth to 68 per cent in only two decades.

“In a world spinning in a kind of values vertigo, Jewish education is the only means we have of ensuring that the next generation will cherish their cultural heritage,” says Elliot Wolf, former headmaster of King David Linksfield and now director of the King David Schools Foundation.

“A Jewish education is all-embracing and draws on our long religious and cultural history, nurturing a love for Israel, confidence and pride in one’s identity, knowledge of one’s past, and commitment to preserving

one’s heritage,” says Wolf. Former South Africans who themselves went to Jewish day schools, often feel a desire to offer their children the same kind of experience they had.

Lori Tanur Hudalay is an expat who now lives in North West London and is a parent at Kerem, a private Jewish school in Hampstead Garden Suburb. She comments: “I attended Jewish schools all my life. I went to Yeshiva College Primary and King David Linksfield High. They were both very traditional Jewish schools and definitely instilled strong Jewish values in me.

“I have chosen to send my kids to Kerem because we live in the area; it’s a very small school and the community is a close-knit one - which I love.

“I think all Jewish children should be afforded the chance to receive a Jewish education because it imparts the fundamentals of Judaism, which are lessons which stay with you for life. I think South Africans would probably want that outcome for their children because that is what is familiar to us from back home.”

These sentiments are echoed by Lindsay Shapiro, a former King David Linksfield pupil who has also chosen to send her children to a Jewish school.

“King David Linksfield was instrumental in nurturing my love of Judaism and friendships and has helped me to stay connected. I have chosen to send my children to Mathilda Marks Kennedy in North West London because it is a lovely Jewish school, and providing my children with a Jewish education was a non-negotiable for me.”

Parents feel, however, that it is difficult to replicate the King David experience entirely.



“Unlike South Africa, there do not seem to be schools in London which combine a Jewish ethos with outstanding academics, great facilities, good sport and other extracurricular activities,” says Shapiro.

“So, by deciding to go to a Jewish school, parents might need to accept lower standards on some of the other areas of education.”

And still others feel that although they would have liked Jewish day schools for their children, these schools don’t always offer the kind of education that would prepare their kids for the best British universities.

“The Jewish Lives Project, a study of the impact of secondary education on the lives of Anglo-Jewish families, has shown that those opting not to send their children to a Jewish school do so because they want private schools with a good academic record,” says Jeffrey Leader who has 45 years’ experience in Jewish education and is the director of

Pikuach, an organisation that inspects Jewish religious education in Anglo-Jewish schools.

“This could suggest that academic achievement is seen by many families as more relevant than Jewish religious development,” says Leader. “It’s interesting to note that the popular private schools in London such as City of London Boys and Girls, Haberdashers and UCL, all have large numbers of Jewish children and therefore wealthy families are comforted by the fact that their sons and daughters will be mixing with other Jewish children of the same social class.

“Some parents also feel that Jewish education is ethnocentric and view a faith school as a narrow option. They want their children to understand that at least from a British perspective, we live in a multi-ethnic society and it is better their children are introduced to this reality sooner rather than later.”

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World News in Brief

Iran’s Khamenei writes 416-page book on long-term plan to destroy Israel

TEHRAN - Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has written a 416-page book titled “Palestine” that details his long-term plan to destroy Israel, the Gatestone Institute think tank reported.

Khamenei states that his plan is rooted in “well-established Islamic principles” rather than the “European phenomenon” of anti-Semitism, according to Iranian-born author Amir Taheri.

“One such [Islamic principle] is that a land that falls under Muslim rule, even briefly, can never again be ceded to non-Muslims,” Taheri wrote. “What matters in Islam is control of a land’s government, even if the majority of inhabitants are non-Muslims.” While using the ayatollah’s usual incendiary descriptors for Israel such as “a cancerous tumour,” Khamenei’s book does not recommend “classical wars” to wipe the Jewish state off the map, but instead advocates “a long period of low-intensity warfare designed to make life

unpleasant if not impossible for a majority of Israeli Jews so that they leave the country,” wrote Taheri.

“His calculation is based on the assumption that large numbers of Israelis have dual-nationality and would prefer emigration to the United States or Europe to daily threats of death,” he wrote. “Khamenei makes no reference to Iran’s nuclear programme. But the subtext is that a nuclear-armed Iran would make Israel think twice before trying to counter Khamenei’s strategy by taking military action against the Islamic Republic. In Khamenei’s analysis, once the cost of staying in Israel has become too high for many Jews, Western powers, notably the US, which has supported the Jewish state for decades, might decide that the cost of doing so is higher than possible benefits.”

The book, according to Taheri, “has received approval from Khamenei’s office and is thus the most authoritative document regarding his position on the issue”. (JNS.org)

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Around the Jewish World

FIRST LADY’S COUSIN IS ‘BLACK CHIEF RABBI’
CHICAGO - Rabbi Capers Funnye from Chicago has been declared “black chief rabbi” by the International Israelite Board of Rabbis, a US-based umbrella body for black Jewry.

Rabbi Funnye, who converted to Judaism, is a cousin of US First Lady Michelle Obama, and is expected to assume his position in the autumn. The community has branches in the Caribbean, South Africa, Uganda and Nigeria as well as the United States. Rabbi Funnye is the spiritual leader of the Bet Shalom Bnai Zaken Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation and the only black rabbi on the Chicago Board of Rabbis. The position has been vacant since 1999, when Chief Rabbi Levi ben Levy died. The new incumbent aims to build closer ties with the Ethiopian Jewish community that was moved to Israel. He met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on a previous visit to Israel. Black Hebrew Israelites are not recognised by the mainstream Jewish community unless they undergo a certified conversion. – Jewish Chronicle

UK PRIME MINISTER ON CONSPIRACY THEORIES
BIRMINGHAM - British Prime Minister David Cameron has said conspiracy theories about Jews may be the first stepping stones to Islamist extremism. He also warned of extremists who believe that “Jews exercise malevolent power” and engaged in conspiracy theories that Mossad was behind the September 11 terror attacks in 2001. In a major speech in Birmingham, the prime minister outlined a five-year plan to combat Islamists which will see the government “confront, head on, the extreme ideology” behind terrorist actions. Cameron said he had visited the King David Jewish primary school in the city. The majority of its learners are Muslim. A five-year plan would involve tackling violent and

non-violent extremism, Cameron said, using anti-Israel rhetoric as an example. He said if people claimed “violence in London isn’t justified, but suicide bombs in Israel are a different matter”, then “you too are part of the problem”. - Jewish Chronicle

CAFÉ OWNER PLEDGES TO PRESERVE YIDDISH SIGN
TORONTO - A co-owner of the Taiwanese bubble tea café opening at 29 Baldwin Street - the storefront whose front window bears what’s believed to be Toronto’s last commercial Yiddish sign - says he and his partners can relate to the Jewish community’s desire to preserve the historic lettering and will co-operate with efforts to salvage it. “It’s easy for us to understand what the Jewish community wants to do, because we also want to promote our culture, Taiwanese culture... I’ve talked to the [Ontario Jewish Archives, Blankenstein Family Heritage Centre (OJA)] and we have the same mind-set to protect the sign,” said Taiwanese-Canadian Daniel Li, part owner of the new café - a franchise called Formocha - and full owner of the café’s original Yonge and Eglinton location. The painted Yiddish letters, which translate to “Eggs, cheese, cream cheese, made fresh every day”, originally adorned the former Mandel’s Creamery, one of the many Jewish-owned businesses that lined Baldwin Village and the adjacent Kensington Market from the early 20th century to the 1950s. Though left intact for decades by the storefront’s next (non-Jewish) occupant, John’s Italian Caffè, the sign appeared to be in jeopardy earlier this month when John’s Italian Caffè closed. - Canadian Jewish News

ALP ANTI-ISRAEL RESOLUTION SLAMMED BY JEWISH LEADERS
The Australian Labour Party (ALP) has been condemned by communal leaders for passing a

one-sided resolution that singles out Israeli settlement building as a “roadblock to peace” and states that if the next round of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians fail, it will discuss recognition of a Palestinian state. Israel’s ambassador to Australia Shmuel Ben-Shmuel, said the motion incentivises further Palestinian obstructionism rather than encouraging the sort of bilateral talks that the party purports to support. - Australian Jewish News

BETTER THAN BOTOX?
TEL AVIV - A team of researchers from Tel Aviv University and Harvard Medical School has devised a noninvasive technique that harnesses pulsed electric fields to stimulate new skin tissue. The novel technique, utilising microsecond-pulsed, high-voltage, non-thermal electric fields, produces rejuvenated skin without scars and may revolutionise the treatment of ageing skin and degenerative skin diseases. “Pulsed electrical field technology has many advantages, which have already proved effective - for example, in food preservation, tumor removal and wound disinfection,” said bioengineering expert Alexander Golberg, who led the study on behalf of TAU’s Porter School of Environmental Studies. “Our new application may jumpstart the secretion of new collagen and capillaries in problematic skin areas,” Golberg continued. “Considering that, in the modern era of ageing populations and climate change, degenerative skin diseases affect one in three adults over the age of 60, this has the potential to be a healthcare game-changer.” It is estimated that Americans spend some \$10 billion a year on products and surgery to rejuvenate ageing skin, but most solutions are temporary. Botulinum toxins, such as Botox, smooth lines and wrinkles when injected, but do not provide

a permanent answer to sagging skin. Moreover, the toxin carries many risks, some neurological. - Israel21c

LONDON WOMAN ATTACKED BY BURGLARS
LONDON - A Jewish woman has spoken of her fear after being attacked by burglars at her home in north London. Deborah Nathan, 49, was pushed to the floor as two men forced their way into her six-bedroom home in Golders Green. They ransacked the safe containing family heirlooms and stole her son’s barmitzvah presents. The attack took place two days after the simcha, which was attended by 700 guests. Nathan was in her home with a friend.

Nathan, a mother of four, who sustained a cracked rib, told the Evening Standard: “I was pushing them out but they were so aggressive, they overpowered me. They pushed me to the floor and said: ‘Keep quiet and nothing will happen’.” “They kicked me in the stomach. I shouted to warn my friend but they pulled her down the stairs and smashed her head against a banister which broke off from the force. “They were pushing us down and put tape over our mouths.” She said she believed the attackers - who also stole a £7 000 pair of sapphire earrings - were familiar with her home. She added: “One of them kept watch while the other went upstairs. He didn’t ask me to show him where everything was. It was like he knew where everything was...” “I said: ‘Please don’t take my son’s presents’. They picked up my head by my hair and kicked me in the face...” “I looked horrible with a black eye and a swollen face. I was in agony for a week.” Both victims now wear panic buttons around their neck. – Jewish Chronicle

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Deconstructing
our drive to
succeed

In just over two weeks, the Jewish Report will celebrate along with the rest of this community, the 2015 Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, which honours all the incredible contributions Jewish citizens have made in the fields of business, arts, law, philanthropy, innovation, education, job creation, sports - and more.

I have had the honour of editing all of the articles and biographies that go into the Jewish Achievers magazine. There will be many wonderful speeches on the glamorous evening of the gala and awards ceremony on August 23, about the incredible impact our small community has made on South Africa. We are amazing parents, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs, scientists, teachers, social workers, and philanthropists - to name just a few.

It is also exciting to witness that South African Jewish women are emerging as leaders and today contribute to the rich fabric of business and philanthropy in our country. The new Jewish Achievers' Woman in Leadership award is testament to that.

What is interesting to consider is why and how Jewish communities, as immigrants, have placed so much value on achievement wherever we have wandered and landed. We brought with us from Russia and Eastern Europe our immigrant tendencies to overdress, over-cater, over-worry - and over-educate (oops - there is no such a thing!).

Indeed, when our ancestors arrived here on boats in the earliest part of last century and even before, they were on a mission to build, succeed and shed the tired skin of the “poor immigrant”. My own grandparents from Lithuania, to the extent they could afford it, bought furs and jewels, created a great home and prepared lavish meals - for all of them it was a signal for themselves and for others that they had “arrived”.

In fact, when I later lived in Toronto, I was reminded again of my own grandparents when I observed the recent Russian immigrants - women in furs through the harsh winters compared to the more casual sporty wear of local Canadians, or the parties and events of the Russian communities, offering tables laden with elaborate dishes - very different to the more simple fare of the locals.

In South Africa, now - three generations on - Jewry continues to thrive and prosper. Yes, we have lost many of our best and brightest to the United States, Europe, Australia and elsewhere. But still, the depth of local talent is immense and we as a community seem to regenerate and get stronger. And we have never lost that immigrant drive to succeed and be accepted.

Psychologists have theorised that a sense of being on the outside or having major life disruptions such as childhood immigration, can increase the likelihood of success due to tools developed to thrive during periods of difficulty.

South Africa, unlike Europe, is a place where Jews have arrived without layers of preceding generations who have set the tone. As a result, we as individuals often grow up believing we can do anything and have a great impact on society.

We can be entrepreneurial and discover new ways of doing things. We can build businesses, invent systems or offer services that are unprecedented. It is the immigrant mindset or the golden possibility, like the American Dream, that anything is achievable.

It is perhaps also motivated by our own feelings of not being historically connected to the lands we wandering Jews have settled in. So we gain a sense of recognition and connectedness in the wider context from financial, intellectual and other kinds of success. These are the perfect antidotes to any feelings of powerlessness or dislocation we may experience.

More than just immigrants, we are also a minority where our actions and achievements are highly visible to others in our tiny community and we are a very willing audience for one another's successes, failures, tragedies and celebrations. Thus reputation, status and success are all the more compelling for both the achievers and the observers.

Recognising our contributions, as we do through the Absa Jewish Achievers, is a vital ritual. It celebrates our resilience and our essence - the ability to survive in any land we may find ourselves and to flourish as the South African future unfolds.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor

Photo: Flash90



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pictured last week Friday, visiting the hospitalised family of a West Bank Palestinian baby killed in an arson attack.

Jewish terror draws Netanyahu’s
focus homeward

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

Ahead of what may be the toughest diplomatic battle of his career, a final bid to kill the Iran nuclear deal, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has suddenly found himself facing down a terrorist threat - apparently from Jews.

The flow of Iran messaging from the Prime Minister’s Office was interrupted Friday by Netanyahu’s fierce condemnation of a predawn arson attack in the West Bank village of Duma, near Nablus, which killed an 18-month-old boy, Ali Saad Dawabsha.

With anti-extremism rallies throughout the country last week Saturday night and an arrest on Monday, the terrorist attack continued to dominate the news cycle well into this week and overshadowed Netanyahu’s appeal through a webcast to US Jews to oppose the Iran nuclear deal.

Factoring into the outrage was the death of a teenager over the weekend from a stabbing attack at the gay pride parade in Jerusalem on July 30.

Jewish groups in the United States called on Israel to more forcefully rein in its Jewish extremists.

The attacks “must be met with determined action to prevent violence, apprehend perpetrators, and hold to account those who engage in incitement,” the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations said in a statement.

Similar calls came from the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and the Orthodox Union.

Extremist Jewish settlers were suspected. Hebrew slogans were spray-painted at the scene, and witnesses reported seeing masked men fleeing toward a nearby settlement. Netanyahu ordered an all-out manhunt to find the killers.

Meir Ettinger, who Israeli authorities believe oversees a Jewish terrorist group, was arrested Monday in the northern Israeli town of Safed. It was not clear whether he is a suspect in the firebombing or is being interrogated for information he might have that could lead to the perpetrators. Ettinger is a grandson of Meir Kahane, the assassinated US-born extremist rabbi.

“We condemn this,” Netanyahu said after a bedside visit with Ali’s 4-year-old brother, Ahmed, who was hospitalised along with his parents for severe burns. “There is zero tolerance for terrorism wherever it comes from, whatever side of the fence it comes from, we have to fight it and fight it together.”

“We condemn this,” Netanyahu said after a bedside visit with Ali’s 4-year-old brother, Ahmed, who was hospitalised along with his parents for severe burns. “There is zero tolerance for terrorism wherever it comes from, whatever side of the fence it comes from, we have to fight it and fight it together.”

As thousands took part in protests Saturday night against violence and homophobia, Israeli President Reuven Rivlin warned against a wave of hatred “spreading throughout the land”.

Speaking at a rally in Jerusalem – others were held in Tel Aviv and Haifa – Rivlin said that Israel could no longer afford to downplay violent attacks carried out by Jews.

Shira Banki, 16, died Sunday afternoon at Hadassah Medical Centre in Ein Kerem, where the high school student from Jerusalem had been fighting for her life after being stabbed in the chest and stomach during the city’s gay pride parade.

Yishai Schlissel, a haredi Orthodox man from Modiin Ilit in the West Bank, allegedly stabbed six marchers. Schlissel, who is in police custody, had been released from prison three weeks earlier after serving 10 years for a similar attack at Jerusalem’s 2005 gay pride parade.

The attacks distracted Netanyahu’s last-ditch attempt to quash the nuclear agreement between Iran and the major powers.

Israel’s ambassador to Washington, Ron Dermer, has been working overtime to rally Congress to kill the deal within the next two months – the window for legislative action. Netanyahu addressed American Jews in a webcast Tuesday in a bid to fortify opposition to the deal, which one poll showed American Jews supporting by a 48-28 percent margin.

“Iran could get to the bomb by keeping the deal, or Iran could get to the bomb by violating the deal,” Netanyahu said in the 20-minute webcast organised by the Jewish Federations of North America.

In addition to the Iran tangle, Israel faces a likely bid in September by the Palestinians to again seek statehood recognition at the UN Security Council. With the backing this time of France, one of the council’s permanent members, they may be closer than ever. Also looming is the International Criminal Court’s consideration of whether to bring war crimes charges against Israelis involved in last summer’s war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Palestinian officials were quick to add the Duma arson to their case.

A spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas said the Israeli government’s support for settlements drove the attack and urged the international community to respond.

On Sunday, addressing his Cabinet, Netanyahu accused Palestinians of lionising their terrorists.

“This is what distinguishes us from our neighbour,” he said. “We deplore and condemn these murderers. We will pursue them to the end. They name public squares after the murderers of children. This distinction cannot be blurred or covered up.” (JTA)

Orthodox feminists don’t burn bras, but demand Torah



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Mention the word “feminism” and many people think of militant women in the 1950s burning their bras and aggressively attacking the male-dominated establishment for treating females as inferiors in education, careers, and so on.

A different kind of feminist spoke at Limmud last Sunday. Just as committed as the secular feminists of old, but married to a rabbi and the mother of four children, Dina Brawer is advocating for increasing women’s participation in the Orthodox religious realm - reading from the Torah, for example, or giving learned halachic opinions. And becoming rabbis.

Brawer was a rebbetzen for over a decade in London. She is now studying for smicha - rabbinic ordination - at Yeshivat Maharat in New York and represents the New York-based Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance (Jofa). She was recently recognised by The Jewish Chronicle in London as one of the “Power 100 List” of most influential figures in UK Jewry.

Predictably, Orthodox feminism faces stiff opposition in the Orthodox establishment. There are typically three arguments made, says Brawer. Firstly, that feminism is a “foreign import” from secular culture, not an authentic Jewish value, and doesn’t belong in Orthodox Judaism. Secondly, that it is the slippery slope: “If we allow this,” say its opposers, “what will it lead to? Little by little, we will lose all our traditional values and religion will not be what it is now.” Thirdly, many rabbis tell women wanting equality: “You have misunderstood; women are very important in Judaism - they are central to the home, they are akeret habayit.”

Brawer counters each point: “If we look back to the Torah, when G-d created Adam and Eve, they were created in G-d’s own image - equally in G-d’s image. So already we have the notion of equality in the Torah.”

Regarding the “slippery slope” argument, it is asking the wrong question, she says. “Maybe it is actually the beginning of the ramp up rather than the slippery slope down.” Greater women’s participation will not destroy religion. On the contrary, it might increase their religious practice and bring them closer to G-d.

When it comes to women as the mainstay of the home, Brawer says there is roughly a 12-year gap between the time women biologically become adults, and get married and set up their own home.

Many contemporary women don’t get married at all, and even for married women, when their children leave home they still want to find purpose and fulfilment. The akeret habayit concept doesn’t cater for them. Furthermore, even as the mainstay of the home, women have a large influence on their children, husbands, and extended families. Therefore, “we must ensure we invest in women so they are educated and inspired, and can in turn invest in their own children and grandchildren. If the woman feels marginalised, how is she going to be a good akeret habayit?

“Secular feminism has brought women unlimited opportunities for secular education, careers, and so on,” she says. “Yet when it comes to the Jewish religious space, women have limited choices. So the talents of 50 per cent of our population are poured into matters outside the religious community. We lose all that potential for enriching our ritual space. Rather than seeing it as a threat, we must invite women’s participation.”

What strategy does Orthodox feminism advocate? Torah study, for one thing. Brawer quotes a book by Prof Tamar Ross called “Ex-

panding the Palace of Torah”, which documents how women’s Torah education became more advanced in the last 25 years - women now study at the same high level as boys and men at yeshivot such as Midreshet Lindenbaum in Jerusalem.

In this process, the teachers - still predominantly male - have been exposed to a different way of thinking and different questions, because the women came in with fresh eyes. So Torah study has become better for everyone.

Women have become yoatzot halacha (halachic advisers), particularly on the laws of nida (ritual purity) and the mikveh. Previously, only men answered the questions, which arguably often made women so uncomfortable that they were willing to forgo this mitzvah altogether.

The yoatzot halacha understand the women’s point of view better and can find empathetic solutions, therefore more women can now observe the rules of mikveh.

For example, she explained to the mixed audience at Limmud that it is not well known that halachically women are permitted to immerse in the mikveh on their own - some women want this because they don’t like being naked in front of others. Previously, male rabbis dismissed their concerns: “What’s the big deal?” It took women to explain that although men might not mind going to the mikveh as a group, women sometimes have a problem.

Another example involves reciting kaddish. When a man is bereaved in the UK and South Africa, he is usually invited to the shul by the rabbi to say kaddish, and if necessary he will get help in reading it, etc. But when a woman is bereaved, most shuls will not invite her. If she specifically asks the rabbi, he might allow it, but she will get little support beyond that.

“Why shouldn’t women be encouraged to say kaddish, as an opportunity for greater spiritual growth and engagement, rather than seeing it as a threat?” asks Brawer.

There is a fear among some Orthodox rabbis that if anything is changed, Orthodoxy will no longer be authentic. They argue: “If it was good enough for our parents, grandparents, and going all the way back, why should it not be good enough for this generation?”

Much of this resistance derives not from halachic issues, says Brawer, but from the fear of becoming too close to the liberal Jewish movements. But the truth is that Orthodoxy itself is something new, and arose as a reaction to the Reform movement. “We are now in a different Judaism than it was 200 years ago. Judaism is constantly changing. The most Orthodox Jewish life today is nothing like the traditional Jewish life as it was lived a couple of hundred years back.”

Brawer emphasises that Orthodox feminists are committed to halacha. “We don’t just say that times have changed and we scrap that. But there is a lot of flexibility within halacha. There is no halachic reason for women not to touch or carry a Sefer Torah, for example. Maimonides says even a non-Jew can touch a Sefer Torah. It cannot be made impure. And the Talmud itself talks about women being called up to read from the Torah.

“Educate yourselves!” Brawer urges women. “Halacha has been democratised in the social media age. There is so much material available online. The Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance website [jofa.org] provides many halachic answers. Then, go back and be able to talk about it with your religious leadership.”

The bra-burning feminists of the 1950s could not have predicted the kind of feminism that Brawer represents. But the underlying motivation is the same. Religions must find the way to integrate the modern view of people as equal in value. It takes pioneers like her to break the new ground.

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Limmud 2015 sets the benchmark very high - again

GEOFF SIFRIN
PHOTOS BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER

Another highly successful Limmud conference took place over the weekend at the Indaba Hotel and Conference Centre in Fourways, Johannesburg. This was the 10th Limmud South Africa conference, and it is clear from the number and diversity of the participants that it is growing from strength to strength.

The hotel was packed to capacity from Friday night to Sunday. Many of the most popular sessions were so chock-full that people were standing in the aisles and sitting on the floor of the auditoriums. Participants included people from across the religious and political spectrum and it was evident that there were many young people coming to their first Limmud, as well as older ones who had been before and now were “regulars”.

Limmud is known as the fastest growing Jewish organisation in the world. It has bases throughout North and South America, Europe, Israel, Asia and Africa. There are currently 80 Limmud groups in 40 countries. In 2014 there were 62 Limmud events worldwide, run

by 3 000 volunteers, with 28 500 participants.

Speakers at the numerous sessions at the Indaba Hotel included international and local specialists on particular topics. For example, Avi Melamed, an intelligence analyst with the Eisenhower Institute in Washington, gave several talks on the dynamics of radical Islam, its sources, and the highly complex situation in the Middle East today, as the region descends further and further into chaos.

Another high-profile speaker was Jewish Orthodox feminist Dina Brawer, a leader of Jofa - the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance - who spoke about the growing strength of the demands from women in the Orthodox movement to have greater participation in religious rituals and halachic deliberations. Brawer is currently studying at the Yeshivat Maharat in New York for her smicha, or rabbinic ordination.

A contentious panel of world experts on European countries - Sweden, Poland, the UK, France and others - discussed the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe, and whether there is a future for Jews in that region.

Another equally contentious panel on the Israeli situation discussed the political divisions in Israeli society today, ranging from the left which is severely critical of Israel’s current government, to the settler movement, which has members at high levels in the government.

South African issues were discussed in several key sessions, including a talk by Wits University Vice Chancellor Adam Habib. He spoke on how he is trying to ensure that open debate remains viable on his campus, amidst all the racial and political tensions among contemporary South African students, and the difficulties he faces in ensuring that the passions generated by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict don’t prevent this.

Another panel consisting of three DA parliamentarians - Michael Bagraim, Glynis Breytenbach and Darren Bergman - discussed the current state of the opposition in South Africa and what it is like to be in parliament these days under the Zuma-led ANC government.

One of the biggest problems the

Limmud participants faced was trying to decide which session to attend, given the very wide range of stimulating topics and speakers. There were sessions devoted to politics, spirituality, religion, history, Jewish identity, activism and outreach, Israel, tikkun olam, arts and culture, and more.

Limmud has gone out of its way to ensure that people from all Jewish streams feel comfortable and catered for. This year it succeeded more than ever before in attracting Jews from across the spectrum, providing both Orthodox and Progressive shul services, and ensuring that all food was kosher.

Contrary to the first Limmud, when the Orthodox movement purposely stayed away after its rabbinate urged their congregants not to attend, Orthodox Jews were present in large numbers, both as delegates, members of panels and speakers.

Limmud moves to Stellenbosch this weekend. If this year is anything to go by, people will be waiting eagerly for the follow-up next year.



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King David Primary School, Sandton invites applications for the following position, effective from 1 January 2016.

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Applicants are invited to apply for the post of Jewish Studies Teacher at King David Primary School, Sandton.


Applicants must have:

- Vast teaching experience as well as a recognised academic and professional teacher’s qualification.
- Extensive knowledge of Torah to be able to impart this knowledge appropriately to different age groups.
- A firm belief and observance of Yiddishkeit to be able to serve as a positive role model.
- Knowledge of spoken and written Hebrew is an advantage.
- Have a passion for education.
- Team player who supports collegiality.
- Have excellent administrative skills.

Applications to be submitted to the Head of School by Fax: 011 803-7246 or e-mailed to horwitzgi@sabje.co.za
A CV, copies of qualification, references and testimonials must be submitted.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 12 August 2015

The school reserves the right not to make an appointment. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Should you not hear from the school by 30 August 2015 please accept that your application has not been successful.



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A CV, copies of qualification, references and testimonials must be submitted.

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS: 12 August 2015

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Gabi Allan, Rebecca Patrick, Ashleigh Marais and Kristen Marais.



Marc Friedman with Clive Evian.



Adam Dison, Kelly Brook, Micaela Browde, Ryan Kramer.



Danial Noris, Tori Bench, Nina Gordin, Joshua Joffe and Kathryn Henning.



Ryan Kramer, Eve Kollenberg, Mathew Sive, Hannah Milner, Bradley Mervis and Jayna Goldstuck.



Tali Nates and David Bilchitz.



Courtneigh Cloud, Jane Rosen ad Kim Nates.



Cheryl and Arthur Goldstuck with Corinne Ossendryver.

Young Jews feature in M&G 200 list



Antony Seeff.



Kayli Vee Levitan.



Amanda Blankfield-Koseff.



Nadav Ossendryver.

ANT KATZ

The 10th annual Mail & Guardian accolade to young South Africans, published last Friday, features four outstanding young people of Jewish descent among the 200 listed.

Amanda Blankfield-Koseff, founder and CEO of Empowervate Trust; **Antony Seeff**, CEO of cell innovation business Tariffic; **Kayli Vee Levitan** of The Street Store in Cape Town; and **Nadav Ossendryver**, CEO and founder of Latest-Sightings.com, are the four.*

The project was started in 2006; the first edition featured 100 notable South Africans under the age of 35.

“Since then the publication has evolved,” says M&G editor Angela Quintal. The numbers have varied from 100 to 300 in 2009 and now back to 200. “The style of the profiles has evolved from short and sharp biographies to slightly more personal and in-depth profiles of people on the list.”

The guide starts out with an alumnus section looking at some of the people who have featured in Young South Africans over the past nine editions, like Trevor Noah (2010), Julius Malema (2009, 2010), Lauren Beukes (2009), Michael Jordaan (2008) and Bryan Habana (2007).

SA Jewry can be very proud of the fact that with 0,001 per cent of the population, it boasts at least two per cent of the “winners”!

Amanda Blankfield-Koseff is listed in “Who’s Who SA” as having founded the Youth Citizens Action Programme in 2009. She has been the CEO since April 2013.

The programme uses a project

management manual that explains to youth how to create social projects in their schools and communities. It has been running for several years in all nine provinces and the Department of Basic Education is involved on an implementation level, says Blankfield-Koseff.

She learned the ropes during five and a half years at Afrika Tikkun where she handled marketing, events, and communications in the community and youth development space. She has an honours in communication.

Four outstanding young South African Jews are listed in this year’s Mail & Guardian 200 list.

Antony Seeff is CEO of cell innovation business Tariffic, an independent company launched in 2013 with the objective of analysing and optimising cell phone spend of business users and high-net-worth individuals.

The software was complex, says Seeff, but Tariffic has tweaked the service to the point where customers now achieve “an average of 30 to 40 per cent savings”.

In October 2013, technology pundit Arthur Goldstuck said that Tariffic would give cell phone providers who over-sell their customers, a bruising. Now it’s happened, says Antony, adding that there are “well over 10 000 permutations (of contracts) on offer”.

Kayli Vee Levitan is the owner of The Street Store in Cape Town and is an accomplished and well-read food blogger. She also supports programmes of the Cape Council of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies.

The Street Store clothes the homeless - in their first 15 months it put clothes on over 200 000 homeless backs - “a number I can’t even start to imagine,” says Levitan.

“The Street Store is like my baby. I love it, no, I cherish it and everyone who is a part of it, with all my heart and soul,” wrote Levitan on her blog.

Nadav Ossendryver is the CEO and founder of Latest-Sightings.com. This multi-award-winning conservationist founded Latest Sightings, at just 15. Today the 18-year-old is an example of what a young entrepreneur can accomplish using technology.

Channelling his passion for wildlife, conservation and his love of the Kruger National Park, he has created an online, real-time, wildlife spotting service for visitors to the park. Latest Sightings uses the concept of crowd sourcing, combining social media such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, BBM groups, a website and an iPhone, Windows and Android app, to inform visitors to the park (as well as enthusiasts worldwide) where interesting animals and birds have just been spotted.

The Kruger Sightings YouTube channel is the most watched South African-based channel with close to 100 million views to date.

*If we missed anyone else of Jewish descent in the list, we apologise.

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Israel trip opens young SA leaders’ minds

DAVID SAKS

Four participants in the recent “Young South African Leaders” visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories, shared their experiences and insights with Gauteng Jewish leaders and community members at a report-back evening last Thursday. Included in the group was the chairman of the Wits branch of Sasco and the current secretary general of the Wits SRC.

The event, originally to have taken place at Investec in Sandton, in the end was held at the HOD Centre following indications that anti-Israel activists might try to disrupt the proceedings.

In light of past disruptive tactics by BDS and its supporters, it was decided to change the venue to one where the coming and going of visitors could be more easily controlled. In the end, no demonstrations were mounted, and the evening went ahead without incident.

The visit to Israel took place under the auspices of the South Africa-Israel Forum (SAIF), an organisation that brings South African leaders on focused programmes to Israel and the Palestinian territories.

In his introductory address, SAIF director Dan Brotman emphasised that the aim of such visits was not to make participants “pro-Israel”. Rather, the intention was simply to expose them to a different perspective from that provided by the local media by having them see Israel at first hand and learn about the on-the-ground realities there, by engaging with Israelis and Palestinians.

While each of the four participants had his or her particular perspective to share, certain common themes emerged in the course of their presentations, as well as on a video screened beforehand providing comments by others who had gone on the trip.

All stressed how, from their very arrival in Israel, they had been encouraged to continually ask questions and engage as widely as they could with people from across the political and ethnic spectrum.


How little prior exposure they had had to the Israeli point of view also became evident; each of the speakers had been thoroughly immersed in the BDS perspective, and indeed had themselves been active in anti-Israel activities on campus.

Nevertheless, this had not prevented them from accepting an invitation to visit Israel and hear another perspective, and far from dissuading them, the pressure exerted on them by BDS not to do so (including financial incentives) served only to heighten their curiosity as to what it was BDS was so anxious to prevent them from being exposed to.

With regard to the visit itself, each presenter remarked on how all the individuals they had spoken to, while having widely differing perspectives on certain issues, nevertheless all expressed a common desire to achieve peace and co-existence.

As a result, they had come away regarding themselves as being neither pro-Israel nor pro-Palestinian but rather pro-peace and with a strong desire to promote dialogue and educate people in South Africa as to ways in which this could be achieved.

All four presenters also spoke about the intimidation and abuse



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that they had been subjected to, both before and after the trip, by BDS-SA, an organisation that promotes a comprehensive boycott of Israel by South Africa, and its supporters within the ANC.

They had several scathing things to say about BDS, not only about how its members had tried to bully them into withdrawing from the trip, but also for the way it went about depicting the Israel-Palestine issue.

Inter alia, BDS was criticised for suppressing intellectual debate in favour of invoking one-sided emotional responses, discouraging engagement with Jews on the basis that they had nothing worthwhile to say and for piggy-backing on the black liberation struggle to advance a personal agenda aimed not at bringing about peace, but at demonising and boycotting an entire nation.

It was suggested that BDS ultimately opposed anything that might promote peaceful engagement because their very funding and livelihoods were dependent on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remaining unresolved.

Israeli Deputy Ambassador Michael Freeman thanked and commended all those who had stood up to the threats and abuse by going to Israel to find out more about what was happening there.

There were those who wanted a negotiated, two-state solution aimed at achieving peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians, he said, and those seeking a one-state solution to be imposed following Israel’s destruction. The latter were on the wrong side of justice, and would be shown to be on the wrong side of history as well.

Community Columns

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Jewish communal organisations a hive of activity

This week, the Cape Council welcomed on board its new executive director, Daniel Levitt, while Chaya Singer joined the staff of the National Board. I likewise welcome Daniel and Chaya to our professional team. We wish them all success in their challenging new positions and look forward to working with them.

* * *


The SAJBD, as has been frequently stressed in this column, sees its role as being to combine protecting the civil rights and security of South African Jewry with involving the community in general public affairs.


Our community, at the organisational and individual level, has much to contribute in terms of skills, knowledge and resources, and the Board is always looking for ways to facilitate this. What I always find so heartening is how very much community members want to contribute in some way to the betterment of their society, and the varied and innovative ways in which so many are already doing so.

Last week, the Board’s Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban branches were all involved in activities aimed at achieving these goals. The Cape Council held another successful B-JEN (Black-Jewish Entrepreneurs’ Network) event, hosted once again by Investec.

B-JEN was launched by the Cape Council, in partnership with the SA Black Entrepreneurs Forum, in March 2013, and was successfully introduced in Johannesburg the following year.

It acts as a networking forum for black and Jewish entrepreneurs to get together to share their experiences and discuss potential business opportunities. To date, the initiative has brought together some 200 emerging and established entrepreneurs, many of whom have





Above Board

Mary Kluk

National Chairman

since either gone into business or started potential conversations as a result.

* * *

In KwaZulu-Natal, the Council for KZN Jewry’s two vice presidents, Alana Baranov and Jeremy Droyman, met with the leadership of the ANC’s Harry Gwala Regional District at their Ixopo offices.

It was an extremely warm and constructive meeting, where various possible ways in which the Jewish community in the province could work with the branches and wards of the ANC in social upliftment projects were discussed.

Particular interest was expressed in the work of the Durban Holocaust Centre, and the role it plays in promoting tolerance and anti-racism in a province that only recently experienced a serious wave of xenophobic violence.

* * *

Finally, in Johannesburg on Tuesday, we were privileged to host Reserve Bank Governor Lesetja Kganyago at a dinner, again hosted by Investec, in the course of which he addressed and engaged with Jewish business leaders.

It was an enjoyable and informative evening for all those present, myself included. Such initiatives do much to build relationships between our community and important government portfolios, and we will continue to look to hosting similar events in future. In the course of the same week, Gauteng Council chairman Sean Zagnoev and other Council members attended a conference on religious fundamentalism organised by the Gauteng Legislature and ANC provincial branch.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00.

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

World News in Brief

Jewish doctors ‘create diseases’ and ‘control pharmaceutical industry’

JERUSALEM - Sheikh Khaled Al-Mughrabi, a teacher of Islam at the Al-Aqsa Mosque on Jerusalem’s Temple Mount, is claiming that Jewish doctors manufacture diseases in labs and almost completely own the global pharmaceutical industry.

“They own about 95 per cent of the world’s pharmaceutical industry,” Al-Mughrabi said in his most recent class, Palestinian Media Watch reported last Sunday, citing a July 31 post on the Al-Msjed Al-Aqsa YouTube channel.

“Why do I mention the pharmaceutical industry? Many diseases were created in labs – viruses created by doctors who were bought, trained, and taught by the Rothschild family, the Freemasons, the Zionists, or the Jews to create and spread disease so they will be able to sell medicine for it. More than 95 per cent of the pharmaceutical industry is owned by the children of Israel.” (JNS.org)

Iran nuke deal: Egypt, Saudi Arabia sign defence pact

CAIRO - In the wake of the Iran nuclear deal, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have signed a pact boosting military and economic co-operation between the two leading Arab Sunni Muslim states.

Last week Thursday, a Saudi delegation led by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visited Cairo and met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

“The two sides stressed the need to exert all efforts to boost security and stability in the region, and to work together to protect Arab national security,” Sisi’s office said, AFP reported.

According to the “Cairo Declaration” pact, both sides will work towards developing military co-operation, including establishing a Joint Arab Force, as well as enhancing joint co-operation and investment in the fields of energy, electricity, and transportation, Al-Ahram reported. Both countries also said they would strengthen co-operation in politics, culture, and media “to jointly counter the dangers of the current regional destabilisation”. (JNS.org)

Disclaimer
The letters page is intended to provide an opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report.

The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za

Guidelines for letters
Letters of up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.

IRAN DEAL: SPLENDID IT’S NOT, BUT THE BEST AVAILABLE

I want to correct the quotation attributed to me in last week’s Jewish Report. I never used the word “splendid” to describe the Iran deal brokered by the US.

My point can be simply described thus: It is common cause that in the contemporary era, making a nuclear bomb is hardly complex for a country like Iran. The issue on which I assume we all agree, is to prevent this from occurring.

The deal struck by President [Barack] Obama is, in an imperfect world, the best option available to achieve that vital goal. Splendid it is not but

the best of the available options it is.

I await a better option to be put on the table and the critics shoulder the burden to make a showing here.

Regrettable as it is, the way the Republican party, its supporters and many within this community react to President Obama, is profoundly racist. No other president has ever been subjected to so vile a series of personal attacks.

[Mr Justice] Dennis Davis
Cape Town

TOO MANY JEWISH BATTLES FOUGHT ON TOO MANY FRONTS

If there’s one thing I’ve learned of the state of Judaism and indeed the Cape Town Jewish community since I have been in Judaism for the past 15 years, is how much antagonism, prejudice and snobbery remain.

The failure to bridge the gap between the various factions continue to fragment, hurt and demoralise Jews across the divide. Sadly, it’s a very old one, long before my time. It’s not only ideology which is the main culprit and politics, but also gender issues and petty racism that rear their ugly head too often.

Women, gays, converts and indeed blacks are still treated among certain factions as non-equals and considered to be an embarrassment and blight on the Jewish nation. The BDS movement has confused the issue even more. Its membership is drawn from across the factionalist spectrum.

On the legitimacy of the State of Israel there remains a large section which disagrees that it should be exclusively Jewish but inclusive of all Palestinians. Too many battles are fought on too many fronts. Few are directed at healing internal strife.

Pride, bigotry and obstinacy to forge unity among the Jews never cease to disappoint and amaze me.

Only a few brave souls who strive to break from their narrow-minded enclaves are making headway, but at a very slow and frustrating pace. At each turn these men and women, for merely attempting to foster unity and wellbeing among all Jews, are met by many self-righteous bigots.

Hypocrisy oozes from these sanctimonious cliques who tend to bask in their antiquated

smugness and positional titles, because they believe themselves to be right and never wrong.

If Torah rules were strictly adhered to by all of us, then we’d all be prophets. But we’re not. Torah-based Jewish standards are disregarded in favour of halachic provisions and few are alert to see what a dichotomous state this has created.

Within this minefield it is not holiness being pursued but an obsessional occupation with end-less commentary and minutiae. Thus we have no time to live the essence of the law as instructed, which is to love G-d and our fellow human beings. Bottom line: The ability to love, hold fellowship and show forgiveness must start with the family first.

Jews are a family regardless of factionalism, gender, political affiliation, colour and whether one is gay or not. We don’t always have to agree with all things factional and with everyone’s opinion - including that of the rabbi.

It’s human and okay to disagree. But mercy, compassion and forgiveness are not negotiable. These are sacrosanct biblical pillars to be upheld by true believers. All Israel’s prophets lived by these. So until we make this mental and indeed spiritual transition, to hold everything about G-d dear and close to the heart, to not be judgemental but to search for understanding, peace and unity with “Am Yisrael”, we dare not pretend to be Jews.

Bless the nation of Israel first and the world will be blessed. That is what is required. That is the law.

C B Jantjies
Rugby, Cape Town

JVJP DISPLAYS AN UNACCEPTABLE BIAS TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST

Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (JVJP) posted a letter in the mainstream press last week signed by 83 supporters. “Espousing Humanism” being the core feature of their Judaism. I certainly commend them for their bold stand that highlights how we as a people tolerate dissent and criticism, without fear of intimidation - unlike the intimidation experienced from the likes of BDS, Sasco and ANCYL, by a group of young leaders recently returned from ar fact-finding trip to Israel

One of the “core features” would be telling it like it is and not stopping halfway. Reading their letter marking a year since the Gaza war, the uninformed would think that Israel simply invaded Gaza with no provocation whatsoever, killing “mostly innocent civilians”. Painting Israel with the same brush as Islamic State.

Almost a year ago a donor conference raised over \$5bn for the reconstruction of Gaza - this included the 10 000 homes destroyed by Egypt

THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH

Eureka! We have found the Achilles heel of the BDS movement as well as the ANC anti-Israel lobby. The answer to all their propaganda is truth.

As soon as the news broke that a group of young black students and business people had been on a visit to Israel, the BDS/ANC factions have been throwing their toys out of the cot.

To prevent these young people from going to Israel, they offered each one R40 000 to cancel their journey. But nothing can stop the truth from coming out.

The knee-jerk reaction from the BDS/ANC camp proves that all we have to do to crush these idiots, is to get the truth out there and now that we know where their weakness is, we need to drive home our advantage.

It should become a priority of the SA Jewish community, together with the Israel Embassy, to send as many young black academics and business people as possible to Israel. By doing this and allowing the future leaders of this country to see the truth, we will annihilate the BDS/ANC movements.

This must be done professionally and we can take a leaf out of the book of Dan Brotman and the SA Israel Forum. We need look no further than Dan and his plan and let us support them

with all the means at our disposal.

Just a note of warning: The BDS/ANC movements are hurt and they will come out fighting, so we must not let our guard down.

We have taken them on and we are winning. We must be like a mailed fist. Let’s smash them up, once and for all.

Sonny Myerson
Oranjezicht, Cape Town



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Cold couldn't dampen spirits of an eventual memorable day

DAVID POULTON

We were welcomed into the remote bush of the Magaliesberg's "Spirit of Adventure" on Monday July 27. Although the cold morning had dampened spirits somewhat, we all started to thaw out as the sun rose over the mountains on what would be a great day of learning, teamwork and activities for the King David Victory Park learners.

We were quickly split into four teams, before getting a crash course on the core concepts of leadership - what it entails and how we all could get a step or two closer to becoming effective leaders.

Shortly after we were sent off for the first activity of the day. Using very simple tools such as planks, tyres, barrels, ropes, boxes and our bodies, we faced challenging problems that we needed to solve in the shortest time possible.

A great deal of fun was had by all with some arguments about just how to tackle the task. We successfully pulled through and achieved the goal in the end. However, it was after lunch when the real challenge started.

Each team had to use the parts we were given to build a cart; we then had to race around the designated track against the other teams in our carts. This took a lot of planning and of course pushing!

And finally the last event of the day - we were quickly guided through each section of our last task, before we immersed ourselves in it... the assault course! Climbing nets, swinging on ropes, scaling walls, wading

through a river and cheering in our final war cry - were some of the most memorable moments.

This time the cold didn't affect us and we left the camp with a sense of elation and pride at being able to beat the challenge. We spent an exhilarating day among friends, new and old, as we enjoyed the opportunity to unite as a real team. It was truly a day to remember.



Micaela Tucker and Matthew Sive.

Photo: Yael Gordon

Service-based leadership at KDL



Photo: Jodi Starkowitz

MERYL MALKIN AND LISA KLOTZ, SOCIAL WORKERS AT KDHL

"Be the change you wish to see in the world," Mahatma Ghandi said. In the spirit of his words, those who hold leadership positions are those who have shown dedication and commitment to their ideologies, hard work for their cause and a love and passion for bettering the lives of their community, their country and the world.

Similarly, the King David High School Linksfield leadership system has adopted a new and exciting process whereby those who are elected to positions of leadership in their grade 11 or grade 12 year continue to serve their school and be an example of how being involved allows one to be an agent of change.

The leadership policy at the school is based on a committee system. There are eight committees namely: Awareness; Cultural; Environmental; Judaica; Outreach; Service; SMAC (sound, media and communications); and Sport.

In order to be eligible for election to the student leadership body, a grade 11 pupil must have been an active member of a committee for at least one year and have attended at least 80 per cent of the weekly committee meetings.

The executive student leaders of the school, namely the head boy/girl and deputy head boy/girl are then elected from the body of student leaders.

The committee system is service based. Service-based leadership is deliberate, focused and crucial to the success of the school.

The student leaders for the 2015/6 term are: Shai Aarons (head of Awareness Committee); Dalya Abadi, Sigalle Bachrach, Benjamin Breger, Tanna Collet, Ariella Eisenberg, Jayden Gelman (head of Service Committee); Gabriel Herbert, Kerry Izerel, Hannah Jossel (head of Environmental Committee); Roni Katz, Deena Katzen, Erin Lazarus (head of Sport Committee); Bas-math Mati Leder, Milan Levy (head of SMAC Committee); Gabriella Lipshitz (head of Outreach Committee); Eitan Malkin (head of Cultural Committee); Amy-Lee Modlin, Tyler Richter, Gordi Riesenburger, Adam Sandler, Daniel Schwartz, Daniel Shainfeld, Jamie Smith, Alexander Soldin, Noah Tradonsky, Cheyney Travis and Jordan Upiter.

The vice head student leaders are Talia Ogus and Chadd Silver and the head student leaders are Jessa Marx (head of Judaica Committee) and Daniel Gewer.

Illustrating to tots concept of 'opposites'

SUE BENJAMIN

Sydenham Pre-School held an "Opposites Day" last Friday to encourage the children to think creatively about opposite pairs. Concrete illustrations such as clothing help them better understand opposites. Pictured is the middle group dressed in their "opposites".



Letters

POLLARD'S 'SPYING' WAS NOT AGAINST THE UNITED STATES

I feel obligated as a human being, as a Jew and as an Israeli, to comment on an article which appeared on page 2 of last week's edition of the SA Jewish Report, headlined "US said to release Jewish spy, Jonathan Pollard", where it is said that Pollard had been convicted "over giving Israel classified information on America".

Well, I apologise for being blatant, but this is not so. The information Pollard gave Israel was only about some of Israel's hostile neighbouring states' plans to have weapons of mass destruction and use it against Israel.

In other words, what Pollard did was nothing against the US - and for that he is imprisoned in a terrible US prison. So again, as I always ask: How

come other countries seem to consider the US as anything but "civilised"?

I know that some US officials made up other accusations against Pollard, just like they do against other people and states in the world.

In any case, I strongly believe that it is the duty of every human being, especially every Jew and Israeli, to do everything they can to help Pollard's cause.

Avner Eliyahu Romm
Jerusalem

It has since been officially announced that Pollard is to be released before the end of the year. - Editor

LIMMUD 2015 GETS BOTH THUMBS UP!

Olga Meshoe. Dina Brawer. Annika Herroth Rothstein. These were just a few of the outstanding female presenters at this year's fantastic Limmud in Johannesburg.

They are strong women of faith who engaged, challenged and inspired their audiences, particularly other women.

May we glean inspiration from them and take it forward to enrich our communities, our countries and the world! Well done the Limmud team for a fantastic Limmud 2015!

Michele Engelberg
Johannesburg

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The Power to Surprise

Ray of hope that bullies needn't always win



BARBARIC YAWP

David Saks

Advocating for Israel, as anyone engaged in that thankless task knows, is being rendered all but impossible in an environment where the thinking on the issue is becoming progressively more unhinged.

How does one put across a reasoned, factually argued case when brute invective, ad hominem abuse, brazen untruths, omissions and emotive sloganising is all that is coming from the other side?

This would be less of a problem if the latter approach was confined to individual letter writers or spokespeople for organisations that have an overt anti-Israel agenda.

The problem is that overwhelmingly, the same unbalanced, emotion-driven rhetoric is being served up by those who, at least theoretically, should be expected - simply from a professional point of view - to adopt a reasonably nonpartisan approach that weighs and takes into account all conflicting claims. They include university academics, political leaders and the mainstream media in general.

I am not even bemoaning the absence of occasional commentary explicitly supportive of Israel. What is becoming more and more apparent is that even the taking of a neutral, even-handed stance on the question is being thrust off the table. Nowadays, no-one can attempt a middle-of-the-road analysis without being reviled as a Zionist stooge and therefore an apologist for colonialism, racism, apartheid, ethnic cleaning and baby killing.

Under the circumstances, it is to be expected that those without any particular axe to grind prefer to stay out of the whole debate rather than jeopardise their professional standing. When it comes to Israel, a pernicious form of ultra-leftist post-colonial McCarthyism has taken root, with those espousing virulent anti-Israel positions being given free rein to impose their ideology on everyone else while forcing all dissenting opinion to the margins.

I was for many years grateful to be a product of the humanities faculty at Rhodes University. It was particularly shocking to learn, therefore, that shortly after last year's Gaza conflict, members of that faculty voted by a substantial margin in favour of a resolution making any participation by Israeli academics (as well as "official representatives from Israel") in university programmes, academic or otherwise, conditional on their first condemning the actions of the Israeli government.

Specifically, it was resolved that Israelis be "requested" prior to being formally invited on campus to make a statement "renouncing the use of lethal military force by the Israeli government against unarmed civilians in Palestine".

That Israel was deliberately targeting civilians was presented not as an interpretation,

and a strenuously contested one at that, but as a given fact from which no dissent was allowed.

What it amounted to was that an institution ostensibly founded on the principles of free intellectual enquiry and debate, was dictating to other scholars what opinion they were required to adhere to as a precondition for being allowed to practise their profession. It is scandalous that such a resolution could have been seriously debated at all, let alone passed - and with just a handful of dissenting voices to boot.

I have little doubt that many, if not most, of those voting in favour of the resolution, did so out of fear of being labelled as Zionist sympathisers and ostracised by their peers. It is some comfort at least that the university itself declined to endorse the policy.

However, the incident was depressing evidence of how, far from making a reasoned, scholarly contribution to the discussion as one would expect professional intellectuals to do, academics are among the worst offenders when it comes to spreading jaundiced misinformation.

Nor is it a new development for Israeli academics - over and above their counterparts from anywhere else in the world - to be confronted with demands that they condemn their own country before being allowed to speak, regardless of what their subject might be.

A few years ago, an Israeli national arriving to deliver a paper at the annual SA Sociological Association (SASA) conference was informed at the last minute that he was expected to make such a statement; when he refused, the entire gathering staged a walk-out, without a single person remaining to protest against this shameful treatment of a colleague.

Subsequently, it was made official SASA policy that Israeli academics be included in its programmes only once they had made an appropriate statement distancing themselves from Israel's actions.

The outlook looks bleak indeed, but fortunately, not all appears to be lost. Recently, a group of young South African leaders stood up to a sustained campaign of abuse, threats and intimidation to go on a six-day exploratory visit to Israel under the auspices of the SA-Israel Forum.

None of them had been in any way pro-Israel to start with, and not a few had even taken an active part in boycott campaigns against it. On hearing them report back on their visit, there is no doubt that their views have undergone a profound change, not because they have suddenly become pro-Israel and/or anti-Palestinian, but because they have heard and honestly engaged with views differing from the narrative that had been presented to them as the sole truth and come to their own conclusions.

It was a rare but welcome indication that the bullies needn't always win, and that space still remains for the Israel-Palestine question to be honestly, constructively and, perhaps above all, civilly debated in our society.

World News in Brief

76% of Israelis think Israel must fight Iran nuclear deal

JERUSALEM - More than three-quarters of the Israeli public believes that Israel needs to press on with efforts to torpedo the Iran nuclear deal, a new Israel Hayom survey conducted by New Wave Research has revealed. According to the poll, 76 per cent of Hebrew-speaking Jewish Israelis believe Israel should continue fighting the deal, while only 15 per cent think that Israel should not fight it. In the survey - a random selection of 500 individuals over the age of 18 - the Israeli public's decisiveness on the nuclear issue was also reflected in the general opinion regarding President Barack Obama, who is seen as having led world powers toward the agreement with Iran. Asked whether they thought Obama was looking out for Israel's interests, 73 per cent said no, and only 20 per cent believe Obama had Israel's best interest at heart. (JNS.org)



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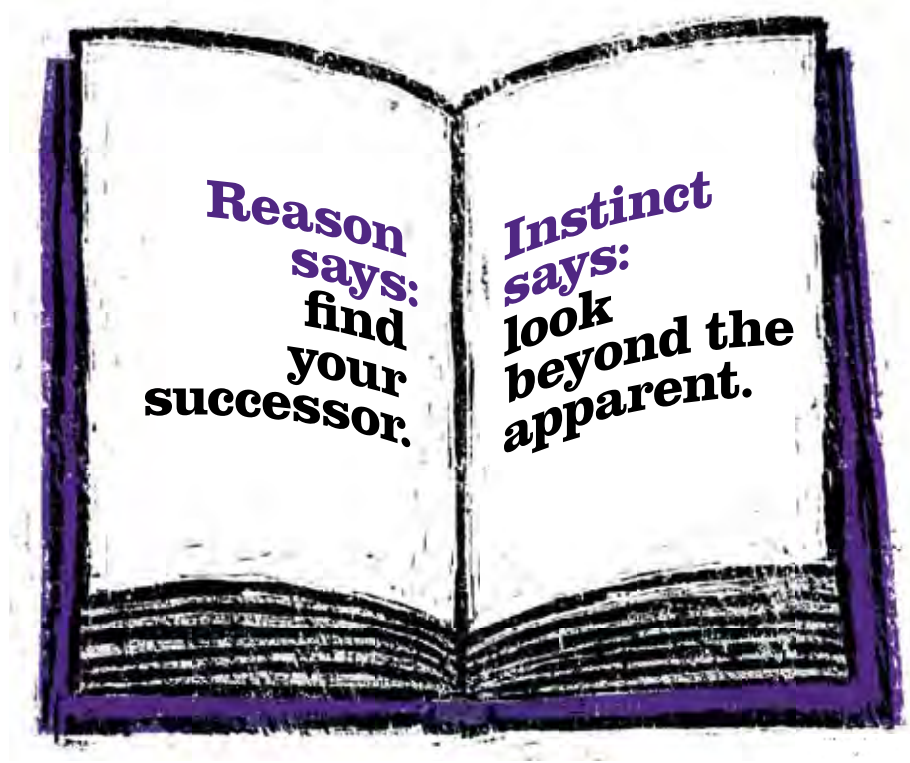


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Today, Friday (August 7)

Information: (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

Tuesday (August 11)

• Partnership2Gether screens the documentary “Wonderful Women”, exploring the meaning of being a Jewish woman. It reveals the complex relationship between haredi and secular women in Beit Shemesh/Mateh Yehudah. Israeli producers Hila Timor-Ashur and Gila Jaffe will introduce a panel discussion on how the women have bridged gaps and overcome stereotypes through dialogue. Phone for venue: Time: 19:00. Cost: R20 (incl tea, coffee and cake). Booking is essential. Information: E-mail: p2g@israelcentre.co.za or tel (011) 645-2551 or (011) 645-2560,

Wednesday (August 12)

• Cape Town Holocaust Centre in partnership with the Institute for Justice & Reconciliation, hosts a film screening: “A Snake Gives Birth to a Snake”, followed by a panel discussion. Venue: 88 Hatfield Street, Gardens. Time: 18:00. Information: (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

• RCHCC in partnership with the JH&GC and the Embassy of Poland hosts a talk by Dr Annamaria Orla-Bukowska Jagiellonian of the University of Krakow, on “Rethinking Poles and Jews: Troubled Past, Brighter Future”, the story of Polish Jewry. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R80 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net

• UJW Adult Education Division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the dept of English at Wits, on “The Prodigal Summer” - a novel by Barbara Kingsolver. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

News and Analysis

Nuclear deal: What can Iran hide in 24 days?



US Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz, left, testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee about the Iran nuclear deal, on July 29.

RON KAMPEAS WASHINGTON

Congress has until mid- to late September to consider whether to reject the nuclear restrictions for the sanctions rollback deal reached by Iran and six major powers on July 14. Some of the debate is over the meaning of certain provisions in the accord. Here’s a breakdown of differences in how the sides interpret parts of the deal.

The 24 days

All sides agree that the deal has a rigorous inspections regime for Iran’s known sites: “24/7” scrutiny, as President Barack Obama has put it, with inspectors and video monitoring.

But what happens when intelligence agencies suspect nuclear weapons activity at an unmonitored site?

Under the agreement, Iran has 14 days to work out terms to check the site in question with a joint commission composed of its own representatives along with those from the United States, Britain, France, Germany, the European Union, Russia and China. If, after 14 days, terms are not agreed upon, the commission has up to seven days for a majority of its members to decide on terms of inspection. Iran must comply within three days - a total of 24 days.

Obama and his Cabinet have said that detectable signs of nuclear enrichment activity outlast 24 days - by centuries, even.

But critics say there are other activities related to nuclear weaponisation that can go undetected, such as computer modelling for nuclear devices, explosives testing and the building of nuclear warheads, says Mark Dubowitz, director of the Foundation of Defence of Democracies.

“That kind of activity may not involve actual enrichment where there would be traces of uranium to detect,” he told JTA.

Additionally, a small centrifuge plant with advanced centrifuges in a containment system could be rapidly moved without leaving traces, according to Senate testimony given last week Tuesday by David Albright, a former US nuclear inspector who is now president of the Institute for Science and International Security.

Deal proponents say the mining and transportation of the uranium needed for a contained enrichment site would be impossible to hide, given

the numerous monitoring and verification choke points.

Additionally, Iran had little to gain from such small-scale cheating like testing explosives, said Alireza Nader, an Iran analyst with the Rand Corp.

Preventing sabotage

Among the agreement’s provisions aimed at ensuring nuclear safety is “co-operation through training and workshops to strengthen Iran’s ability to protect against, and respond to nuclear security threats, including sabotage, as well as to enable effective and sustainable nuclear security and physical protection systems”.

Senator Marco Rubio, Republican Florida, argues that this provision sets the United States and its traditional allies in the Middle East on a collision course by requiring the US to help Iran defend itself against Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other US allies in the region.

But Daryl Kimball, president of the Arms Control Association, says that is not the intention of the provision. Rather it’s meant to maintain security at civilian nuclear sites so terrorists can’t access them or steal equipment for other countries. The provision does not oblige the United States to avoid sabotage operations like Stuxnet, the computer virus believed to have been designed by Israel and the US that wrecked Iran’s centrifuges in 2010.

But Dubowitz says the wording may give Iran legal cover to solicit assistance from other countries, such as China, in stopping cyber attacks.

Ghasan Soleymani

Soleymani, the general in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps whose Quds force is believed to have trained Hezbollah and helped carry out some of the worst Assad regime atrocities during the ongoing Syrian civil war, has appeared on a broad array of sanctions lists since 2007. In the agreement, he appears on a long list of entities and individuals to be removed from “nuclear-related” sanctions lists.

Critics say that this and other delistings open up the floodgates to global financial activity by the Revolutionary Guard.

Deal defenders note that Soleymani still appears on multiple lists, in the US and elsewhere, sanctioning him for terrorist activity. (JTA)

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Sport is able to overcome political barriers

JACK MILNER

Wouldn't it be wonderful if sport was left to sportsmen and politics to politicians? Two recent incidents proved that if politics was left out of sports, the world would be a much better place. Alas, this would be an ideal world...

The first took place at the Special Olympics World Games recently staged in Los Angeles. The event hosted some 6 500 athletes with special needs from 165 nations from around the world, including those who politically did not see eye to eye.

Right now the relations between Israel and Iran are at a low point, highlighted by Israel's fervent opposition to the current nuclear deal

brokered by US President Barack Obama and his European colleagues.

However, in a show of mutual sportsmanship, the delegations from the two nations found common ground and bonded, even breaking diplomatic protocol and posting pictures of Israeli athletes alongside Iranian ones.

On their Facebook page the Israeli team wrote alongside a picture of cyclist Alon Dolev and an Iranian rider identified as Yaser Tahmasbi: "At the Special Olympics there is peace."

"During the different competitions at this year's world games, exciting and emotional encounters with athletes from countries that do not have diplomatic ties with Israel are taking place. Such encounters don't happen every day."



Cyclist Alon Dolev from Israel and Iranian rider Yaser Tahmasbi form a bond during the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles.

There is also a photograph of Reuven Astrachan, head of the Israeli delegation, hugging his Iranian counterpart, Asghar Dadkhah, along with other photos posted with the words: "Make sport not war."

The interaction between the two delegations apparently began when they found themselves together on a cross-Atlantic flight from France to Los Angeles. It's a 12-hour flight and the two teams ended up sitting next to one another. They started to talk about the subject common to both teams - sport.

The connection seemed to have caught the attention of the Games' organisers, who decided to orchestrate the official torch-passing ceremony so that the Iranian representative would pass the torch on to an Israeli. That is exactly what happened.

Iran has been one of the most vocal Muslim nations to have boycotted sporting events involving Israel. In 2011, the Iranian National Olympic Committee reportedly issued a statement saying it was "a general policy of our country, to refrain from competing against athletes of the Zionist regime".

The most recent such incident was a volleyball match scheduled for July 21 in Japan and promptly forfeited by the Iranian team, citing alleged injuries by their athletes. National teams and athletes competing in Olympic events can face sanctions for boycotting meetings for political reasons. "Injuries" are therefore often cited.

The other incident concerns Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter Jackie Gosh, who is a Sunni Muslim. Gosh, a 32-year-old Circassian Israeli Muslim fighter from Abu Ghosh, says he takes pride in fighting under the Israeli flag.

He became observant about eight years ago and is now scrupulous in following his religion's tenets, praying five times a day and fasting during the holy month of Ramadan.

Gosh is also very proud of his Israeli nationality and sees no contradiction between his Islamic faith and his patriotism, or even participating in certain Jewish religious ceremonies. A video on Gosh shows him receiving the traditional Jewish blessing before entering a fight.

When he fights - mostly in Eastern Europe - he always carries an Israeli flag with him.

In fact, for Gosh, winning his fights is very much a matter of Israeli pride.

"I love to go around the world and win in these fights so I can put the flag in their face," he says.

Israel's Circassians originated in the northern Caucasus and they arrived in pre-state Israel towards the end of the 19th century. Today, the Israeli Circassian community numbers approximately 4 000, mainly residing in the villages of Kfar Kama and Rehaniya.

The Circassians are among only three minority groups in Israel who, like the country's Jewish citizens, are obligated to serve in the Israel Defence Forces, the other two being the Druze and the Bedouins.

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