



When wealth buys health

Ravit Hecht
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Diskin: PM, Barak are motivated by messianism; I don't trust them

By Barak Ravid

The former head of the Shin Bet security service has accused Benjamin Netanyahu and his defense minister Ehud Barak of deceiving the people on both Iran's nuclear program and the peace process with the Palestinians, saying he has no faith in their leadership.

Yuval Diskin made his comments Friday to a group of retirees who gather weekly at a Kfar Sava restaurant to hear politicians and security officials speak. In such a setting, it is likely he knew he was being filmed.

Diskin's remarks come a few months after Meir Dagan, who headed the Mossad while Diskin headed the Shin Bet, criticized Netanyahu and Barak in a very similar way.

"I have no faith in the current leadership, which must lead us during an event on the scale of war with Iran or a regional war," said Diskin, who headed the Shin Bet from 2005 to 2011.

Diskin called Netanyahu and Barak "two messianics - one from Akirov and the Asuta project, the other from Gaza Street and Caesarea," referring to the two politicians' upscale homes. "Believe me, I've observed them up close ... They're not people who I, on a personal level, trust to lead Israel in an event of that scale and carry it off. These aren't people who I'd want to have holding the wheel."

Diskin added that Netanyahu and Barak were not being truthful about the Iranian nuclear program. "They're misleading the public on the Iran issue," he said. "They tell the public that if Israel acts, Iran won't have a nuclear bomb. This is misleading. Actually, many experts say an Israeli attack would accelerate the Iranian nuclear race."

Diskin said Netanyahu was also misleading the public about the negotiations with the



Former Shin Bet chief Yuval Diskin. He said Friday "I have no faith in the current leadership."

Palestinians. "Forget about the stories they're selling you that Abu Mazen [Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas] doesn't want to talk. They're not talking to the Palestinians because this government has no interest in talking to the Palestinians. I was there until a year ago. I know from up close what's happening."

Diskin said Netanyahu knew that if he took a step forward in talks with the Palestinians his coalition would break up. "Abu Mazen has made mistakes but there's no connection," Diskin said. He said the people had an interest in the Palestinian issue, not the government.

Netanyahu and Barak did not respond to Diskin's barbs,

though aides and ministers from their parties - Likud and Atzmaut - came out with statements attacking him. A few minutes before last night's main news broadcasts, Netanyahu and Barak's aides released very similar statements, calling Diskin's statements "irresponsible," "embarrassing" and "petty."

Sources close to the prime minister said Diskin was frustrated because Netanyahu had not appointed him Mossad chief and appointed Yoram Cohen to succeed him as head of the Shin Bet, over Diskin's objections. "If he has no faith, why did he extend his term by a year under Netanyahu, serving six years instead of five?"

Why did he want to be head of the Mossad under Netanyahu?" a Netanyahu aide said last night.

Barak associates said Diskin made the remarks as a prelude to a political career, even though the "cooling-off" period after his retirement from government service did not yet allow him to enter political life.

Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman weighed in as well. Speaking on Channel 2's "Meet the Press" yesterday, he said that if Diskin had no faith in the prime minister and the defense minister while he was serving, he should have resigned.

Diskin also commented on

last summer's social protest and the tent city on Tel Aviv's Rothschild Boulevard. He compared it to the revolution that began in Cairo's Tahrir Square last year.

"What's the difference between the so-called revolutionaries of Rothschild Boulevard and those in Tahrir Square? There's a small but significant difference - the guys in Tahrir Square were ready to pay a price, and the guys on Rothschild Boulevard, not so much."

According to Diskin, the minute all the singing and festivities were over on Rothschild Boulevard, "the summer was over and they went back to the university."

Diskin's salvo / Amos Harel

Shot down - again

Last summer Meir Dagan called an attack on Iran the stupidest idea he ever heard, but it was Friday's full-fledged assault by Dagan's close friend former Shin Bet chief Yuval Diskin, on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak, that poured fuel on the fire of the Iranian issue. Since the end of his term as head of the Mossad last January, Dagan seems to have been on a self-ordained divine mission to stop the bombing, prompting him to say many harsh things. Until now though, Diskin, who shares those same views, had kept a low profile. The scathing and personal attack he unleashed against the two leaders was clearly planned ahead of time: When asked about Iran during his meeting with residents of Kfar Sava on Friday, Diskin promptly pulled out of his pocket a note on which he had written a Biblical verse.

The accusation that Netanyahu and Barak are tainted with messianism in their attitude toward the Iran issue is whispered every so often by senior officials in the security services. So is the claim that the two cannot be depended on to decide on such a sensitive issue. However, this is the first time that an official, who is not part of a rival political party, has used such wording in public. In doing so, Diskin is trying to undermine the very legitimacy of Netanyahu's and Barak's status as decision-makers

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Election fever / Yossi Verter

Déjà vu for Bibi

Benjamin Netanyahu has been there and done that, yet once again he is now facing a line-up of challengers with strong defense credentials, as he did in the 1999 elections.

Thirteen years ago he contended not only against Ehud Barak, who defeated him, but against his defense minister Yitzhak Mordechai, who had quit his cabinet, outgoing Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and former Shin Bet chief Ami Ayalon. They all ganged up against him and announced at every opportunity they had that Netanyahu was not to be trusted.

Thirteen years later none of those men remain in the political arena except Netanyahu, who is prime minister for the second time round and Barak, who has shifted from the attacker's position to the attacked.

Yet once again, as Netanyahu asks for the public's confidence in the run-up to the elections, he faces a concerted, hostile, relentless choir of ex-defense officials. These consist of former Mossad, IDF and Shin Bet chiefs - Meir Dagan, Gabi Ashkenazi and, as of Friday, Yuval Diskin.

Diskin appeared at a meeting of defense establishment pensioners in Kfar Sava contrived to be spontaneous and impromptu, filmed with an amateur's camera. If Diskin's comments had not been so scathing and alarming they

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Firebombing in refugee-heavy neighborhood sparks clashes with old-timers

By Yaniv Kubovich, Ilan Lior and Dana Weiler-Polak

About 200 people converged on Mesilat Yesharim Street in the south Tel Aviv Shapira neighborhood on Friday afternoon to express solidarity with African asylum seekers living in the area. The residents were thought to be the targets of firebombs thrown several hours earlier at apartments and a kindergarten used by the community.

The demonstrators, carrying signs with antiracism messages, were met by dozens of area residents, some of whom tore the signs and cursed out the activists. Police officers dispatched to the scene separated the groups, who continued to shout at each other from opposite sides of the street as a few dozen African nationals watched from a distant street corner.

At one point, the two main groups broke into small clusters and spoke frankly. "We're not racists. We oppose violence, no matter who it's against," Orion Tzezana, a 30-year-old mother of two who has lived in Shapira for six years, said to a protester in her 20s who called Tzezana and her friends racists when it came to foreigners.

"It's important that everyone who came to demonstrate today, and all other Israelis, recognize that we in this neighborhood get all the waste of the State of Israel," Tzezana said. "We are neighbors of the Sudanese and the Eritreans, and we live with them all year round in harmony, but it's intolerable for one neighborhood to bear the burden of their absorption. The State of Israel decided they can come and stay here, so someone should see to it that they are distributed among everyone."

"It's intolerable for us to lend a hand to their absorption, while in the north of the city they aren't lifting even a fingernail," she added. "Today people stand here with signs accusing us, who live with them, of racism. They don't live with them. In their buildings there isn't even a single apartment with refugees. Tell me please, who's the racist here - me or them?"

"It's a one-sided demonstration," shouts Shapira resident Ovadia Sasson, 24, at the protesters. "You have to understand that these refugees sit on our streets, raping and robbing, and no one writes about that or takes to the streets over it. Yesterday a few young people carried out an action, one we did not agree with, and immediately everyone comes to demonstrate. It's impossible to be one-sided about the issue, to come only when one side is hurt. Where is everyone when every day we are dealing with the implications of the refugees in our neighborhoods?" Sasson says.

The Tel Aviv District Police says it has not made any arrests, but is continuing to investigate the firebombings. The police did not inform the public about the latest events in Shapira. News of the Molotov

kind of monument, a living monument," said Surowiec, who has had commemorative plaques erected in front of the trees. "With the help of nature, I try to continue a generational mission of deepening the memory of the victims of the Holocaust. 'My project is effectively based on giving back the 'inheritance' to its owners."

Biennale director Artur Zmijewski, also Polish, says it seems paradoxical to his compatriots that a place where Germans committed one of the worst crimes against humanity is not in Germany, but in Poland.

This installation, one of many at the Biennale which is not confined to a gallery or museum, is therefore partly about the "politics of history," he said.

The Holocaust and the Palestinian territories are strong themes at the Biennale this year, which is run by the contemporary art center KW in former East Berlin but sprawls throughout the entire city.

This weekend also marks the opening of an exhibition in the Berlin Medical Historical Museum of Israeli artist Aya Ben Ron.

The birch trees, called Birke in German, lent their name to the Birkenau camp where as many as 1.5 million people, mostly Jews, perished between 1940 and 1945. The theme of this year's contemporary arts festival in Berlin is political art.

"This is an attempt to create a new



The Shapira neighborhood preschool after the attack early Friday morning.

Daniel Bar-On

An artist brings Birkenau to Berlin

By Daniel Rauchwerger
 Haaretz, Correspondent and Reuters

BERLIN - "Berlin-Birkenau," a new installation by Polish artist Lukasz Surowiec, was put in place in the German capital last week as part of the Berlin Biennale. Surowiec, 26, took hundreds of birch trees from the area surrounding the Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp in Poland and placed them around the German capital.

Also featuring in this year's Biennale are works by Israeli artist Yael Bartana and Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar.

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Rights group: Blind Chinese activist under U.S. protection

Reuters

BEIJING - Blind Chinese activist Chen Guangcheng is under U.S. protection in Beijing after an audacious escape from 19 months under house arrest, a U.S.-based group said yesterday, in a drama that threatens to ignite new tensions between the two governments.

The United States has not confirmed publicly reports that Chen, who slipped away from under the noses of guards and eyes and ears of surveillance equipment around his village home in Shandong province, fled into the U.S. embassy.

China has also declined direct public comment on Chen's reported escape, which threatens to overshadow a two-day

meeting with top Obama administration officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in Beijing later this week. But Texas-based ChinaAid said it "learned from a source close to the Chen Guangcheng situation that Chen is under U.S. protection and high level talks are currently under way between U.S. and Chinese officials regarding Chen's status."

"Because of Chen's wide popularity, the Obama administration must stand firmly with him or risk losing credibility as a defender of freedom and the rule of law," Bob Fu, president of the religious

and political rights advocacy group that has long campaigned for Chen's freedom, said in an email.

Pu Zhiqiang, a Beijing lawyer and rights advocate, said reliable contacts also told him Chen took refuge in U.S. embassy grounds.

"Everyone knew about the suffering of Chen Guangcheng and his family but nobody dared raise his head," he told Reuters, referring to Chinese officials. "Chen Guangcheng has been the most typical victim of this lawless, boundless exercise of power," said Pu. "But the day has finally come when he has escaped from it."



Palestinians loading a huge key onto a truck in the West Bank refugee camp of Aida ahead of its display at the Berlin Biennale. The key symbolizes the Palestinian "right of return" to properties lost in 1948.

See IHT for full coverage

Summer session opens with Labor motion to dissolve Knesset

By Ophir Bar-Zohar

The Knesset opens its summer session this week with election fever in the air, as opposition parties call for early elections and coalition sources admit the government is unlikely to complete the year.

Opposition leader MK Shaul Mofaz yesterday called for pushing elections up to October, while Labor and Meretz intend to submit proposals to disperse the Knesset this week.

"General elections must be held on the first possible date right after the holidays, on Tuesday October 16," Mofaz said yesterday.

Likud sources said Knesset elections – which are scheduled for November 2013 – are likely to be held between September and November of this year.

Netanyahu is already meeting strategic advisors and survey experts, a political source said. "Netanyahu's associates are pressing him to push up the elections," the source said.

One possible cause for holding early elections is the controversial Tal Law, which exempts ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students from mandatory military service. The law, which the High Court of Justice declared unconstitutional in February, is to expire in August, compelling

the government to deal with the explosive issue.

Foreign Minister and Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avigdor Lieberman said on Channel 2's "Meet the Press" yesterday his party will decide whether to go for early elections depending on the Knesset's May 9 vote on legislation to replace the Tal Law.

The party insists on "enlistment for everyone," Lieberman said. "We're not going to let anyone off the hook – Haredim, minorities, everyone," he said.

"Our obligation to the coalition is over. We have an obligation to the voters [as well], and since the coalition didn't com-

promise with us, we are going to make decisions," he said.

A number of coalition parties believe dispersing the Knesset over the Tal Law would be to their advantage. The ultra-Orthodox parties will portray themselves as fighting for their voters' interests, while Yisrael Beiteinu and Atzmaut will call for sharing the burden equally and compete with Yair Lapid's party.

The government is also facing other contentious issues, such as the need to proceed with a deep budget slash and the evacuation of illegal West Bank outposts, as ordered by the Supreme Court.

"Whichever way you look at it, the

government will not make it to the end of the year," a Likud source said.

Another Likud source said "Netanyahu doesn't want to be the one to push up the elections. He also doesn't want to hold them after failing to extend the budget."

Labor leader MK Shelly Yacimovich yesterday denied coordinating her move to disperse the Knesset with Netanyahu. Political sources said Yacimovich would not risk submitting the proposal without an agreement with Netanyahu, because if the Knesset rejects the proposal, she would have to wait six months until she could submit it again.

Yacimovich called on all the opposition parties to join her motion to push up elections. "This is not the time for groundless slander and petty politics. We all face the challenge of uniting forces and toppling Netanyahu's government," she said yesterday.

Mofaz held consultations with Kadima Knesset members over the weekend about a date for primary elections in the party.

He said the Netanyahu government's days are numbered and called on the prime minister to reach an agreed date for general elections. Otherwise Kadima would submit its own proposal to disperse the Knesset, he said.

State reverses course, seeks reprieve for Beit El's Ulpana demolitions



Olivier Fitoussi

Beit El's Ulpana neighborhood yesterday. The state reversed on evacuation orders for the area, highlighting "big picture."

By Chaim Levinson and Tomer Zarchin

In a major reversal, the state has withdrawn its pledge to allow the demolition of structures built on private Palestinian land in the West Bank settlement of Beit El.

Referring to Beit El's Ulpana neighborhood, the state told the High Court of Justice on Friday that "the implications of the demolition of the buildings could be severe" for the settlers. It said that since the construction started in the 1980s, demolishing the buildings could have "broader social implications" for other construction in Beit El and in other settlements.

Attorney Michael Sfar, who is working to have the buildings taken down, said the

government had "declared war on the rule of law."

The state's announcement was signed by the State Prosecutor's Office and the Justice Ministry's department of High Court petitions.

The state, which was responding to a High Court petition by Sfar, says it is "well aware of the significance" of its reversal, but that "circumstances require a reevaluation of the situation."

It said "the prime minister and the forum of [senior] ministers request a reevaluation of the means for implementing the policy on which they have decided" – referring to the demolition of the buildings.

It conceded that a probe by the Israel Defense Forces' Civil Administration "revealed that parts of the settlement of Beit El were built

over the years not in accordance with the law, in an area most of which is on private Palestinian land."

But it had opted for "a re-evaluation of the priorities of enforcing the law in the region, along with the planning and ownership implications and the political, public and operational aspects."

The state added that the "overall high priority of dealing with construction on private land" would continue. But "according to the new principles, each and every building should not be examined narrowly, and priorities for enforcement cannot be set in Judea and Samaria without seeing the whole picture." It said Beit El reflected the "need for an updated policy."

According to Sfar, "the Israeli government today has declared war on the rule of law. In its political zeal to help steal Palestinian land, it is destroying the basis of values on which the state was founded."

The head of Peace Now, Yariv Oppenheimer, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "and his ministers are breaking a pledge to the High Court in a crude and unprecedented manner and are placing the settlers in the territories above the law," Oppenheimer said the government had decided "to satisfy a few thousand settlers who are members of the Likud Central Committee."

Vice Prime Minister Silvan Shalom said on a visit

to Ulpana on Friday that he sought a way to allow the buildings to remain. He said "it's inconceivable that people who came to live here legally should find themselves under threat of eviction."

According to Shalom, the matter should be treated as a land dispute and solved in the courts, the way such disputes are solved on the other side of the Green Line.

Legal figures said they were surprised that Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein had thrown his support behind such a controversial move by Netanyahu.

One said yesterday that Weinstein had gone far beyond what had been acceptable to previous attorney generals, and that "international law cannot be ignored. It's hard to believe that the High Court would support such a policy."

The people in the Ulpana neighborhood welcomed the government's reversal.

In a statement, the residents said "all government officials now understand that the Ulpana neighborhood is just the tip of the iceberg of 9,000 housing units in Judea and Samara that the government must find solutions for. In any case, in the Galilee, the Negev, East Jerusalem and throughout the free world, flourishing neighborhoods are not razed to the ground, even if the government made a mistake and established a neighborhood on land where [legal] arrangements had not been made."

cocktail firebombs came from refugee and asylum-seeker advocacy organizations.

The district police spokesman's office initially said the incident was a fire in which no one was injured and therefore was of no interest to the media. Officials later admitted to an error in assessing the incident and its significance.

Over the weekend, someone drew a red heart on the sidewalk of the alley linking Israel Misalant and Abudirham streets, presumably in solidarity with the African asylum seekers in the nearby ground-floor apartment, into which one of the Molotov cocktails was tossed late Thursday night. When the incident occurred, two asylum seekers from Eritrea were sleeping on mattresses in the yard, just meters from the site of the explosion. They rushed to put out the fire,



Daniel Bar-On

Activists clashing with Shapira neighborhood residents after immigrant homes and a preschool were firebombed Friday.

SHAPIRA

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which destroyed two upholstered chairs as well as blankets and clothing. Seven people were inside the one-room apartment at the time.

"We never imagined something this this," Gabriel Barhan, 29, an asylum seeker from Eritrea who lives in the apartment said yesterday. He came to Israel just three months ago, and picks up one or two days of casual work a week that he says barely suffices for his rent and basic necessities. "I'm afraid," Barhan said. "We don't know if it will continue. We don't know who did this, but they must hate us very much."

Tension between the long-standing Israeli residents of south Tel Aviv and the foreign refugees, asylum seekers and labor migrants now living alongside them, is not new. According to the Interior Ministry's population registry, in 2011 more than 17,000 unauthorized foreign nationals – mostly from Sudan and Eritrea – sneaked into Israel through the border with Egypt. After their identities are checked at Ketzot Detention

Center, most are bused to the Tel Aviv Central Bus Station area, in the south of the city.

City officials estimate that around 40,000 labor migrants and more than 20,000 asylum seekers live in south Tel Aviv. Most live in the disadvantaged Shapira, Hatikva, Neve Sha'an and Kiryat Shalom neighborhoods, as well as the area surrounding the bus station.

Veteran residents of these neighborhoods say the demographic changes have made their lives intolerable. They complain of physical assaults, sexual harassment, home robberies, thefts and public drug and alcohol abuse, all perpetrated by African nationals. At the same time, they say, rents in the neighborhoods have soared as landlords take advantage of the possibility of renting out small apartments to large numbers of foreign nationals. Long-standing residents have organized conferences over the issue, held demonstrations and even broke up a Tel Aviv city council meeting last year.

supported by the Americans: there is no certainty that an Israeli attack will stop the Iranian nuclear project. Moreover, it might even push it forward, because following such an attack the leadership in Teheran would have perfect pretext to return to the project, claiming that it needs it for self-defense.

The White House is now devoting most of its efforts to making sure that Israel does not attack Iran before U.S. elections in November. The assumption is that a war in the Gulf will immediately spark an oil crisis, raising prices for American consumers and may even cost the president the election.

In 2013, Washington will apparently listen more attentively to a discussion about a military attack by Israel or the United States, but it is too soon to tell.

SALVO

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on this question. Dagan has not yet gone that far.

As expected, Likud and Atzmaut ministers and MKs responded within hours with a counter-attack on Diskin, raising three central arguments: that's no way to talk; he should have made these remarks behind closed doors while in office; and after all, he was a poor Shin Bet chief. One may argue over style here (what do the luxury homes of Netanyahu and Barak, men-

tioned by Diskin, have to do with anything, anyhow?). But Diskin in fact did present his opinion clearly before he retired. And with regard to his performance in that office, he was actually one of the better Shin Bet directors we have had in recent decades. They tried that kind of mud-slinging against Dagan at the time. We can expect that now, too, it will not be very successful.

What lit a fire under Diskin? The roots apparently lie in a dramatic meeting that took place less than two years ago, at which an alliance of top security officials – Dagan, Diskin and then-IDF Chief

Gabi Ashkenazi – with the aid of minister Moshe Ya'alon, blocked decisive ideas laid out by Netanyahu and Barak. Diskin, who had been appointed by Ariel Sharon, derived no pleasure from working closely with either the prime minister or the defense minister. Tensions flared near the end of Diskin's term, when Netanyahu pushed him to become Dagan's successor as Mossad head, but changed his mind at the last minute. Then Netanyahu appointed Yoram Cohen to replace Diskin as Shin Bet head, over Diskin's opposition and to everyone's surprise.

One cannot ignore the timing of Diskin's attack. Last Wednesday, Haaretz published an Independence Day interview with IDF Chief of Staff Benny Gantz. Alongside assurances that an IDF attack was "practical and possible," the IDF chief described the

leadership in Tehran as "very rational," and expressed doubt that Iran would dare to complete its nuclear weapon. The American media, hungry for any moderate signs from Jerusalem, jumped on Gantz's words. Barak, who is trying at all costs, to preserve the image of an Israeli attack as a real threat, was quick to respond to Gantz's statement. In a detailed speech on Independence Day, Barak called the Ayatollah regime "not rational in the Western sense of the word," and reminded the crowd that the role of the IDF is to prepare operational options. A close reading of Barak's speech shows that like his other statements over the past year, the defense minister presents a set of detailed arguments in favor of an Israeli attack.

Diskin, in contrast, presented the viewpoint also

supported by the Americans: there is no certainty that an Israeli attack will stop the Iranian nuclear project. Moreover, it might even push it forward, because following such an attack the leadership in Teheran would have perfect pretext to return to the project, claiming that it needs it for self-defense.

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DEJA VU

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would have been funny.

He called Netanyahu and Barak "the messianics of Akirov and Assuta, Caesarea and Gaza Street." That was uncalled for. What has real estate got to do with performance and policy? One could expect a man like Diskin to be more businesslike, rational and choose a more appropriate stage than the "Majdi forum" in Kfar Sava.

Why has Diskin kept quiet for a whole year? Perhaps he sentenced himself to a voluntary cooling-off period. Or maybe it's to do with the impending elections. Diskin's statements will reverberate in the Knesset in the next few days, as the three opposition party leaders raise motions to disperse the Knesset and advance the elections.

Netanyahu will have to make a difficult decision. He must either support the proposals and begin talks on an agreed election date, or thwart the proposals, making it clear he wants elections only at the beginning of 2013.

To carry out the second option Netanyahu will need his coalition partners. Yesterday he found that the most important one, Yisrael Beiteinu chairman Avigdor Lieberman, is already careening gleefully on a collision course otherwise known as the alternative Tal Law.

"On May 9, after we raise our proposal to enlist everyone, we'll know what the election date is," Lieberman asserted yesterday on Channel 2's "Meet the Press."

He also said his obligation to the coalition was over. In other words, Lieberman is giving Netanyahu a choice – either support us in the Knesset and burn the bridges with your ultra-Orthodox partners, or go against us, and I will bring about early elections.

This is the dilemma Netanyahu is facing this week. On the one hand, it's difficult. On the other hand, it is easy. As far as political matters go, Netanyahu has not been one to take the initiative. He has been dragged along. This is his chance to take the reins, go to the Knesset and announce, as Ehud Barak did in the winter of 2000: "Do you want elections? I'm ready for elections" – and hope the outcome is different.



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Police fire tear gas, water cannon at Malaysian reform protesters

The Associated Press

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia – Police clashed with demonstrators yesterday during one of Malaysia's largest street rallies in years, with protesters demanding fair rules for upcoming national elections. At least 25,000 demonstrators swamped Malaysia's capital, hoping to pressure Prime Minister Najib Razak's ruling coalition – which has held power for nearly 55 years – to overhaul electoral policies before polls that could be held as early as June.

The police said in a statement that 222 people were arrested in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's largest city. Lawyers said most were expected to be released soon after having their details recorded, but it was not immediately clear if they would be charged later with any offense.

Officials said three protesters and 20 police were injured in the demonstration, where police used tear gas and chemical-laced water during disturbances.

Authorities insist the elections will be free and fair, rejecting activists' claims that the Election Commission is biased and that voter registration lists are tainted with fraudulent names.

Demonstrators wearing yellow T-shirts, waving banners and chanting slogans poured into downtown Kuala Lumpur, massing near a public square that police had sealed off with barbed wire and barricades.

"I'm here because I'm a Malaysian and I love my country," said information technology manager Burd Lim. "There's no election that's perfect, but I want one that's fair enough."

The demonstration remained peaceful for several hours, prompting organizers to declare it a success and ask people to head home. But when a small group appeared to suddenly breach the police barriers, authorities began firing tear gas and water laced with stinging chemicals at the crowd.

Baton-wielding police backed by trucks mounted with water cannon sporadically fired tear gas at some demonstrators for at least an hour, before much of the crowd was dispersed. People fled into streets and stores nearby, leaving shoes, bottles and other belongings scattered on the ground.

Video footage by independent news website Malaysia-kini showed angry demonstrators overturning a police car that allegedly hit two people.

Home Minister Hishammuddin Hussein said that police acted "with utmost restraint," but opposition leaders and rights groups said the use of tear gas was unjustified.

"By launching a crackdown on peaceful protesters on the streets of Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian government is once again showing its contempt for its people's basic rights and freedoms," said Phil Robertson, Human Rights Watch's deputy director for Asia.

Federal police spokesman Rasdi Ramli estimated there were about 25,000 demonstrators, but many witnesses and some Malaysian news organizations said there were far more. Malaysia-kini said there were 100,000, while The Sun

newspaper estimated 80,000.

"We all want change today," said Ambiga Sreenevasan, one of the demonstration's leaders.

The rally's organizers have also sought longer election campaigning periods and changes to ensure citizens living abroad can cast ballots, as well as international observers for the polls and fairer access for all political parties to the government-linked media.

But despite the large turnout for yesterday's demonstration, there was no indication that Prime Minister Najib's National Front coalition would agree to major changes to satisfy the activists.

"If [elections] are not clean, not fair, show the evidence,"

Najib was quoted as saying by the national news agency, Bernama. "We do not want to be elected through cheating. We are a government chosen by the people. The majority of the people chose us because they know [we] are better" than the opposition.

After about 20,000 demonstrators staged a similar rally that was also dispersed by tear gas last July, authorities established a panel to study electoral regulations and agreed for voters to have their fingers stained with indelible ink while casting ballots to curb multiple voting. However, activists say those decisions fall short of what's needed.

Speculation has intensified that Najib might dissolve Parliament next month.



A protester throwing a tear gas canister back at police in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

U.S. Secret Service clamps down on boozy staff

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Embarrassed by a recent prostitution scandal involving its staff in South America, the U.S. Secret Service issued new rules of conduct to agents and employees on Friday.

The Secret Service will now assign chaperones on some trips to enforce the new rules, which make it clear that excessive drinking, entertaining foreigners in hotel rooms and cavorting in disreputable establishments are no longer tolerated.

The stricter measures apply even when traveling personally are off duty.

The agency-wide changes were intended to stanch the embarrassing disclosures since April 13, when a prostitution scandal erupted in Cartagena involving 12 Secret Service agents, officers and supervisors and 12 more enlisted military personnel. The staff were in Colombia ahead of President Obama's visit to the Summit of the Americas.

The embattled Secret Service director, Mark Sullivan, urged agents and other employees to "consider your conduct through the lens of the past several weeks."

Sullivan added: "The absence of a specific, published standard of conduct covering an act or behavior does not mean that the act is condoned, is permissible or will not call for – and result in – corrective or disciplinary action."

Ethics classes will be conducted for agency employees next week.

News in Brief

Bin Laden's family deported to Saudi Arabia

Pakistan deported the three widows and 11 children of Osama bin Laden to Saudi Arabia on Friday, nearly a year after U.S. special forces killed the Al-Qaida leader in Pakistan. A Pakistani court sentenced the women to 45 days in prison this month for entering Pakistan illegally and ordered their deportation after the end of the prison term. "The plane carrying Amal and (her brother) Zakariya al-Sadeh and the rest of the family is heading to (the Saudi Red Sea city of) Jeddah," Ambassador Abdo Ali Abdulrahman told Reuters by telephone from Islamabad early on Friday. The Interior Ministry, which was in charge of the family, said in a statement: "They have been deported to the country of their choice, Saudi Arabia, today." (Reuters)

Ukraine postpones hearing for former PM due to health

A Ukrainian court yesterday postponed a hearing in the second criminal case against the jailed former prime minister and opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko, whose treatment in prison has raised concerns in Europe. The judge agreed to postpone the hearing to May 21, due to the poor state of her health. Tymoshenko is on a hunger strike to protest alleged abuse in a Kharkiv prison. She is serving a seven-year prison term on charges of abusing her powers as prime minister. The West has strongly condemned the case as politically motivated and threatened to freeze cooperation with Ukraine. In the second case, she is charged with evading taxes. (Associated Press)



US rescuers to aid dolphin's return to sea

A healthy two-meter-long dolphin became stranded after swimming into a narrow wetlands channel along the southern California coast on Friday. Rescuers are hoping the animal will find its own way to the open waters of the Pacific because any attempt to capture it could be dangerous to the dolphin and rescuers. The dolphin was spotted in a channel of the Bolsa Chica wetlands, circling in shallow waters as crowds grew along the banks and TV helicopters flew overhead. Lifeguards on paddleboards entered the water to test the dolphin's reaction, and a decision was made to let the strong and fast dolphin try to find its own way out. (Associated Press)

Sometimes, to spot a great idea you need a little help

Israel's Leading Internet Convention **TheMarker.COM.VENTION2012**

Co-Chaired by Dr. Yossi Vardi, Chairman International Technologies and Guy Rolnik, Founder and Editor-in-Chief, TheMarker

Technology Track	Marketing Track	Digital University Track
08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration	08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration	08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration
09:30-09:45 Opening and Welcome Dr. Yossi Vardi, Chairman, International Technologies Guy Rolnik, Founder and Editor-in-Chief, TheMarker	09:30-09:45 Opening and Welcome Sivan Klingebail – Chief Editor, TheMarker Magazine Dr. Eva Berger – Dean at School of Media Studies, The College of Management Academic Studies	9:30-9:40 Opening and Welcome Elihay Vidal, Deputy Editor, TheMarker.com
09:45-10:30 Opening Panel Moderator: Dr. Yossi Vardi Speakers: Alec Ross, Senior Advisor for Innovation to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Macon Phillips, White House Director of New Media	09:45-10:40 Panel: "Tweet a Campaign" – Marketing and Advertising in the Digital Era Moderator: Sivan Klingebail, Editor TheMarker Magazine Speakers: Hagit Kamin, VP Marketing, Paz-Yellow, Enon Landenberg, Chief Interaction Officer at Publicis Israel, Yossi Lubaton, CEO at Saatchi & Saatchi BBR, Merav Spektorovsky Sasson, Head of Direct Banking, Bank Hapoalim, Ilan Yehousha, CEO at Walla!, Dan Chen, CEO at Tapuz People	9:40-9:55 Dudi Balsar , Founder, Under.Me 9:55-10:10 TBA 10:10-10:30 Andrew Bonar , Deliverability Director, Emailvision
10:30-11:00 Big Idea to Market Leader George Conrades, Executive Chairman of Akamai	10:40-11:00 Unleashing the Power of Beauty through Digital Georges-Edouard Dias - Vice President Senior E-Business, L'oreal	10:30-11:00 Workshop: We Made it and It's Not an Ad – Brands Learn to Talk Sagi Chemetz, Founder & CEO, Blink
11:00-11:30 Coffee Break	11:00-11:30 Coffee Break	11:00-11:30 Coffee Break
11:30-11:50 Laurent Le Moal , VP, PayPal	11:30-11:40 Facebook Session: Social Network Gourmet Moderator: Chef Omer Miller , 'Dining Room' and 'Shulhan' Restaurants	11:30-12:20 Panel: The Economics of Crowdsourcing Moderator: Lior Zoref , Digital Marketing Advisor, Speaker and Blogger Speakers: Ran Haklai , General Manager, uTest Israel Yael Elish , VP Product & Social Media Marketing, Waze Timor Gordon , Founder, digiti Raphael Ozen , Founder & CTO, BillGuard Tomer Ashur , Chairman, Wikimedia Israel
11:50-12:10 Amit Menipaz , Senior Director, eBay	11:40-12:00 Building Essential Connections Ciaran Quilty , Head of CEEMEA and Gaming, Global Marketing Solutions, Facebook	12:20-12:50 Reinventing Brick & Mortar Retail through Digital Services Workshop By: Georges-Edouard Dias - Vice President Senior E-Business, L'oreal
12:10-12:20 What the American VCs Are Looking For Nilly Goldenberg , Founder & CEO, Brandsforce	12:00-12:20 Digital Lectures – The Next Generation: The Future of TV Elad Nafshi , VP Video Product Management, Comcast	12:50-13:10 Who's Afraid of Daphne Leaf? How to stop fearing consumers and how to restore faith in the branding Eldad Wienberg , CEO Mccann Digital Israel
12:20-12:45 Crowdfunding with Indiegogo Across the Globe Slava Rubin , Founder & CEO, Indiegogo	12:20-12:35 Dr. Tali Weiss , CEO and Head of Research, TrendsSpotting 12:35-12:50 Gilad Zirkal , CTO & Co-founder, Hashtagart	13:10-13:30 From iPhone to 'Bat-Mitzvah' and Social revolutions - How do products, services, ideas and behaviors spread and become socially popular? Dr. Liraz Lasry , Marketing and Trends lecturer and researcher, The College of Management Academic Studies
12:45-13:30 Venture Capital Panel: Just Pick Up From the Floor – Super Angels and Micro VC Moderator: Guy Rolnik Speakers: Avichay Nissenbaum, General Partner at Iool ventures Moshe Lichtman , Angel Investor, Former president of Microsoft Israel Rina Sheanski , General Partner at Carmel Ventures Nir Tenzer , VP Business Development and Platform Strategy, Microsoft Israel	13:00-13:10 Itay Nagler , New Media Content Developer 13:10-13:20 Online Content Marketing – the hottest trend in 2012 Gilad de Vries , Vice President, Brands and Agencies, Outbrain 13:20-13:30 Ghada Zoabi , Founder & CEO of Arabic news site - BOKRA	13:40-14:30 LUNCH
13:30-14:30 LUNCH	13:30-14:30 LUNCH	13:40-14:30 LUNCH
14:30-14:40 Releasing the Traffic – Comparing Internet Infrastructure in Israel and the World Guy Caspi , CEO, Tamares Telecom	14:30-14:50 MK Moshe Kahlon - Minister of Communications 14:50-15:10 Personal Dialogue: Amir Tayeg , High Tech section Editor, TheMarker interviewing Michael Golan , Founder of Golan Telecom	14:30- 15:00 TBA 15:00-16:15 Facebook Workshop-The Next Stage – How to succeed with Facebook Ads All the methods for an effective Facebook marketing campaign: budget management, campaign development, optimization and targeting specific audiences. A workshop geared towards digital marketing and budget managers. Elad Brindt , Facebook Europe
14:40-14:55 thetime Report - Israeli Internet Industry Yoni Kish , Marketing Strategy Expert	15:10-16:00 Panel: Hello? Where's the Money? Mobile Advertising and Marketing Moderator: Elihay Vidal , Deputy Editor, TheMarker.com Speakers: Noam Bardin , CEO Waze Rona Ben David , CEO, OnTheMob Zohar Levkowitz , Founder, Amobee Omy Argaman , Co-Founder, VP Business Development, Moblin Moshe Hogege , Industry Head Export, Google Israel Nir Korczak , Industry Head Export, Google Israel	
14:45-15:40 Exit Panel: Is Building for Forever Worth Aspiring For? Moderator: Nathan Lipson Head of TheMarker's "Israel 2021" Initiative Speakers: Ran Har Nevo , SVP Video, AOL Eyal Herzog , Entrepreneur Roni Zehavi , Former CEO & Co-Founder, Cotendo Eran Shir , Head Creative Innovation Center, Yahoo!	16:00-16:15 Cross Media Audience and Cross Content Audience in Convergent Media Prof. Hillel Nossek (ph.D.) , Head of MA program, School of media studies, The College of Management Academic Studies	
15:40 – 16:25 Panel: Integrating the Orthodox Sector in The High-Tech Industry Moderator: Guy Rolnik Speakers: Elisha Yannay , Chairman of the Israel Association of Electronics and Information Technology Moshe Friedman , Orthodox Entrepreneur		

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MCCANN ERICSSON



Raiders of the lost pensions

An alleged NIS 15 billion of pension funds are currently unclaimed. An increasing number of companies will – for a fee – track down pensions, but the truth is that the search is surprisingly simple

By Sharon Shpurer

It's Israel's 64th birthday. Only three more years until retirement, and one can't help but ponder the day after, when a whole lifetime of work will end and with it the routine of getting a pay slip at the start of the month.

This day always entails a shock. Not only due to thoughts about the time that has passed and the free time lying ahead, but also because of thoughts about the future quality of life and ability to sustain a decent existence in light of the expected drop in income and the reliance on a pension.

At this stage in life, every shekel is important and must not get lost. But in the Israel of 2012, there is an enormous sum of money – said to be about NIS 15 billion – that has “got lost” from hundreds and thousands of savers. This money is still lying unclaimed in the provident funds (*kupot gemel*) and the pension funds.

How does so much money get lost? There are many and varied reasons. This could happen when a person dies and his family does not have full information about his assets. It happens when people change their address or their place of work and do not pass the new information to the insurance companies or investment houses. And it also occurs thanks to the structure of the pension market in Israel, which has changed dramatically in the past decade.

In the context of these changes, the various funds that were held in the past by the banks have been transferred into the hands of insurance companies or investment houses. There have also been many mergers in the market, often accompanied by changes in fund names that have been purchased or in the computer systems. This process has also caused many problems for the data banks the companies keep on their customers.

Internet database

Exactly two years ago, Oded Sarig, the commissioner of capital markets, insurance and savings in the Finance Ministry, was the guest of journalists Orly Vilnai and Guy Meroz on their television program “Orly and Guy Ltd.” The show dealt with lost pension monies in Israel and exposed the dimensions of the phenomenon for the first time.

Vilnai and Meroz asked Sarig: “When will there be an Internet database in Israel that will enable everyone to locate the list of the companies that are managing his or his relatives’ pension monies, as there are in countries abroad?”

Sarig refused to give a direct answer. “Deadlines,” he said, “are only in productions and not in the reality.”

Two years have passed since then. This week, the commissioner’s office informed Haaretz that it is “acting to establish a central Internet search engine as soon as 2013, which will enable the general public to find out easily, quickly and for free where the monies are to which he is entitled.”

However, it turns out that, even when Sarig does commit to a deadline, he does not always succeed in abiding by it. Indeed, the treasury only recently announced the postponement of a new smart model for managing pension monies, which was supposed to have adjusted the risks of managing savings to the age of the saver. Even before that, the ministry postponed, twice, the date for giving compensation to members of funds whose monies were not transferred to them despite their request. It also postponed a move aimed at making the industry more efficient.

During the two years that have elapsed since the program was broadcast, innumerable companies have sprung up that offer to find lost money for their clients – for 15 to 20 percent of that money, plus VAT. This is a market that has a tremendous potential for profits, totaling more than NIS 2.5 billion. Those same entrepreneurs know that as long as the com-



A pensioner in Tel Aviv. Pensions often become “lost” when the recipient dies and his family does not have full information about his assets.

Alex Levac

missioner of capital markets, insurance and savings carries in the establishment of the online database, they will be able to benefit from chunks of this lost money. This is because the public, which for the most part has no financial education, would prefer to share the lost money the company will locate for them rather than undertake the task of finding it themselves. The incentive increases considerably when it becomes clear that if the money is not found, there is no fee to be paid.

A pension adviser estimated that in the pension funds there are a quarter of a million owners of frozen rights – that is, one out of every 27 people in Israel owns money lost in a fund.

Forty-year-old entrepreneur Ehud (Udi) Oren, the owner of an insurance agency, drew his inspiration from Orly and Guy’s program and set up a small company called Capital – The Israeli Company for Locating Monies. Within just 18 months, Capital – by means of prominent investors and a well-oiled marketing machine – has become the largest in its field. During this time the company has been contacted by many thousands of clients, who have agreed to pay it 17.5 percent (including VAT) if it finds their lost money for them.

The expected establishment of the Internet database is no threat to the entrepreneurs. As evidence of this, Oren had no trouble finding prominent investors for his new company. Within a short time he brought in businessman Noam Lanir,

who made his fortune from gambling businesses on the Internet and currently owns the Internet translation and content company Babylon (presently worth NIS 1 billion).

Lanir bought 25 percent of Capital, and his business partner, Oron Zell, bought another 30 percent. Though Lanir and Zell have no experience in the financial field, they believed they could provide added value to the company with the help of their expertise in the area of marketing on the Internet. Capital has chosen to keep its famous shareholders in the shade and they, for their part, have preferred to remain under the radar. For the role of the face of the company, Oren cast two well-known figures: veteran journalist Gideon Reicher, who became known for his struggles to help consumers; and a former commissioner of capital markets, insurance and savings, Tzipi Samet, a well-known expert in the area of pension savings. Reicher is starring in the company’s radio campaign; in a video on its website; and on the recorded answer message to people who phone the company.

The text is constant: “Hello. This is Gideon Reicher. A-maz-ing. Did you know that almost all of us and also our parents have a lot of money that has simply gone missing? Tens of thousands of shekels that have been forgotten in provident funds and the pension funds and are crying out, ‘Save us!’ There is a very good chance that tens of thousands of shekels are waiting there for you as well. Capital will find this money for you. The examination is free and without any obligation. Capital is simple and easy.”

“Every time Reicher is broadcast on the radio,” Oren says, “the switchboard at Capital gets overloaded. This can amount to hundreds of calls a day.”

Reicher has also been appointed the company’s ombudsman. However, in reality he only plays a “representative” role. One of the employees at Capital has told Haaretz that Reicher “doesn’t sit

here and hardly ever comes in. Nor does he speak with clients.”

Oren stresses that “clients who have a problem with our service can contact Reicher,” and admits that thus far only one client has applied to him. Samet, who was appointed chair of the company, does not come in to the Capital offices, either. She does appear on the company’s website alongside Reicher, but she is not involved in Capital’s day-to-day activity. According to Oren, “It was Samet who brought the company to meetings with organizations and created working interfaces. We meet every so often at board meetings.”

People don’t forget

In Israel there are no official figures on the exact extent of lost money. In 2005 the Knesset Research and Information Center published a report in which it was estimated at about NIS 15 billion. A pension adviser who was mentioned in the report estimated that in the pension funds there are a quarter of a million owners of frozen rights – that is, one out of every 27 people in Israel owns money lost in a pension fund.

A former executive at one of the large insurance companies, who is very familiar with the subject, rejects these estimates. According to him, the extent of the lost money is NIS 40 to 80 billion. At the Finance Ministry, they do not agree with his estimates. According to a senior official at the ministry, “People don’t usually forget or lose a large sum of money, and the sums for which the connection with their owners has been lost are small – a few tens of thousands of shekels.” At the ministry they prefer to talk about ranges of between NIS 5 billion to 15 billion.

TheMarker insurance reporter Noam Bar explained why companies are being tardy in the search for the beneficiaries: “From the perspective of the insurance companies it’s a double win,” he wrote recently. “They benefit from every minute

the money stays with them because of the management fees, and also they do not need to fear that the money will be pulled out or transferred to a competitor. Worse than that, often they exploit the severing of the relationship with the savings owners and increase the management fees in those accounts to the maximum allowed by law. With respect to the bulk of the lost provident fund monies that are located, it turns out that the management fees charged have amounted to 1.99 percent – the maximal possible ceiling – while the average management fees in the industry stood at 0.87 percent at the end of 2010.”

About a week ago, Lily Levy – whose late mother was insured at Psagot – filed a class action for NIS 3.8 billion against the investment house. Levy claimed that “instead of attempting to locate beneficiaries and trying to inform them concerning the monies of the fund member who has died, as it is supposed to, Psagot does exactly the opposite and intentionally and actively acts to cut off contact, erects obstacles and makes it difficult for people who contact them to get basic information about the deceased fund member. Psagot has chosen to stop the sending of reports entirely, has increased management fees clandestinely and has raised them in violation of the law.”

Levy says that only seven years after her mother passed away did she learn by chance that her mother had an account with the Gadish provident fund, which was sold to Psagot in 2008. In this suit she detailed her many attempts to confirm with Psagot the existence of the fund. When she finally located the account, it emerged that Psagot had for a long time been charging management fees of 1.6 percent.

A computer and a stamp

So what exactly is it that companies like Capital do? Well, they don’t do anything that can’t be done at home with a computer, telephone, and some en-

velopes and stamps. In the first stage they find out who the saver’s employers were. This entails filling out an identity card number on the National Insurance Institute website, which sends a list of the employers over the years to your home address (according to the Population Registry). In the second phase, once the list of employers has been received, the companies can check with them where they managed the money, something that can be done on the phone. And then they contact the relevant bodies by phone or in writing and check if there are monies managed there that belong to the person with the given ID number.

Sometimes, the process is even simpler. In Israel there are about 80 organizations that manage public monies in provident funds or pension funds. The locating companies send out dozens of letters, usually by e-mail, in which the content is identical and only the addressee changes, checking whether the lost money is managed at a given address. That’s it. That’s the whole thing. For the locating companies this is a gold mine. Usually they maintain a small staff; sometimes they don’t even have offices, and operate only through a website or an external customer service center. In addition to the tremendous profit they make from finding the money, they also profit through another channel: after finding the money, they will offer the client an alternative insurance plan. If the client accepts, they will also benefit from some of the management fees in the new plan.

Oren does not think that charging 15 percent of the lost pension monies if they are found is excessive. “Usually,” he says, “the lost sums are small – several thousand shekels per client – and then he pays only a few hundred shekels altogether. It’s like winning the lottery. There, too, you pay income tax.”

But Oren is forgetting one important thing: This is not lottery money or some other chance windfall. This is money that was obtained through hard work, and there is no reason for the public to share it with anyone apart from those charging management fees.

After being contacted for this article, Noam Lanir – one of the shareholders in Capital – has informed Haaretz: “I have looked into the field and I have decided to pull out of it. This is an area that should be taken care of by the state, which calculates everything. The solution is not one company or another.”

Gideon Reicher, however, commented: “I very much believe in the company and therefore I have lended a hand to its activities. Of course I receive compensation, but not without believing in the rightness of the body I am advertising. I do not talk with clients – but when there is a complaint, it is possible to contact me.”

Tzipi Samet added: “I do not sit at the company, nor am I involved in its activity, because there is no need. I was a partner to planning the company, in conversations with regulators and institutional elements. There are efficient sites today that make it possible to do a short search on the computer and get answers.”

Psagot has responded: “This case [Levy’s class action] is not about lost monies. Bank Hapoalim informed the deceased’s family about the presence of money in the provident fund and the plaintiff was listed as a beneficiary in the fund when it was transferred to Psagot. The plaintiff has claimed that she was not informed of the increase in the management fees and therefore she has received a full reimbursement. The commissioner’s examination has found there is no scope for intervention in the matter and the plaintiff has even chosen to continue to manage the fund at Psagot.”

“Psagot has fulfilled all the legal requirements and we are examining the utilization of our legal rights vis-a-vis the attorneys who have filed the suit.”

sudoku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

The game board is divided into 81 squares, with nine horizontal rows and nine vertical columns. A few numbers already appear in some of the squares. The aim is to fill in numerals 1 to 9 in each of the empty squares, so that every row and column and every box (a group of nine squares outlined in boldface) contains all of the numerals 1 to 9. None of the numerals may recur in the same row, column or box.

3	4	8	7	6	1	9	5	2
2	1	7	5	4	9	8	6	3
9	5	6	2	8	3	4	1	7
1	2	5	3	7	4	6	8	9
8	7	3	6	9	5	2	4	1
6	9	4	8	1	2	3	7	5
4	6	1	9	3	7	5	2	8
5	8	9	1	2	6	7	3	4
7	3	2	4	5	8	1	9	6

Tips and a computerized version of Sudoku can be found at www.sudoku.com

	4			8				6
		8		6	4		9	3
	6							
4		9		5	3			8
				1				
6			7	4		5		2
							2	
1	5		4	8		6		
7			9				1	

Difficulty: Easy

BERLIN

Continued from page A1

The Berlin Biennale was founded in 1998, inspired by the Venice Biennale, and aims to showcase little established young artists and provide a forum for experimentation.

The seventh edition officially opened on Friday and runs through July 1, but many projects such as Surowiec’s began ahead of the official opening.

Zmijewski, 45, has said he wants “the exhibition to become a political space that resembles a parliament more than a museum.”

Bartana, 41, will hold the “First International Congress of The Jewish Renaissance Movement,” a symbolic project calling for the return of Jews to Poland that she created through video artwork.

“We call for the return of 3.3 million Jews to Poland to symbolize the possibility of our collective imagination – to right the wrongs history has

imposed,” Bartana says.

From May 11-13, she hosts a “parliamentary debate” on the questions: “How should the EU change in order to welcome the Other? How should Poland change within a reimagined EU? How should Israel change to become part of the Middle East?”

Jarrar used the Biennale to develop his artist-activist project staking out Palestinians’ right to a sovereign state.

Jarrar, 36, shot to international prominence last year by offering unofficial passport stamps of his own design to foreigners arriving in the occupied territories.

For the Biennale, he created a postage stamp for the “State of Palestine” with a drawing of the Palestine Sun Bird flying near delicate flowers.

The stamp was issued by Deutsche Post and can be used in the regular mail. More than 20,000 stamps have been sold so far.

“After I printed official post stamps in Germany and Netherlands, people started using



A still taken from “Zamach (Assassination), 2011” by artist Yael Bartana, which is being shown at the 7th Berlin Biennale.

these stamps to send letters all over the world,” he wrote in an email.

“We are not allowed in the Palestinian post office to print postage stamps with the words ‘State of Palestine.’”

Jarrar said he felt artists should be politically engaged and not just leave it up to politicians to act.

“We should think and work hard to speak out against injustice,” he said. “We should make art that will make a dif-

ference.”

Ben Ron’s solo show “A Voyage To Cythera,” named for the Baudelaire poem, part of his “Fleurs de Mal,” is comprised of sculptures, video and sound installations and was designed for the city’s medical history museum. The main theme addressed by the artist in her project is the perception and representation of the body in art and medicine. The exhibition opens today and will run through September 9.

Opinion & Comment

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Memorial for the rule of law

At the same time that the prime minister and his cabinet protest against what they call "the delegitimization of the State of Israel" – and not only of the occupation – the government is constantly taking actions that underline the illegitimacy of its policies in the occupied territories. The Netanyahu government rallies to the side of developers who built and sold homes on land that belongs to others, despite demolition orders, a peremptory ruling by the High Court of Justice and the prime minister's own promise to carry it out by the end of this month.

On Friday, the State Attorney's Office notified the High Court that the government was retracting its promise to carry out the eviction order against the Ulpana neighborhood of the Beit El settlement in the West Bank. Unlike the case of the Migron outpost, in which the state requested an extension of three and a half years so that the community could be moved to an adjacent hill, this time the government is requesting a stay in order to review the implementation of the policy of demolishing buildings constructed on private land in the West Bank, including those built without permits in Beit El's Ulpana neighborhood. In its request to the court, the state posited "foreign relations, public and operational considerations" against the rule of law and the right to private property.

It is hard to imagine a foreign-relations consideration that supports giving official authorization to robbing the property of a person living under Israeli occupation. It must be hoped that elected officials are not implying that a majority of the Israeli public wants a government that violates orders and rulings of the Supreme Court. The pretext of "operational considerations" gives rise to the proliferation of unauthorized outposts such as Ulpana under the noses of Civil Administration inspectors and Israel Defense Forces officers.

It is a pity that the attorney general is helping to teach the public that some Israelis are above the law, and that it is permitted to spit in the face of the highest judicial instance in the land on their behalf. One might have expected Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein to avoid putting his signature to a document that marks another disturbance to the system of checks and balances in Israeli democracy. Nothing is left but to hope that the Supreme Court will not relinquish its – our – honor. It must find personally responsible, and punish harshly, everyone who lends a hand to turning Ulpana into a memorial for the rule of law and justice in Israel.



Eran Wolkowski | eranwol@haaretz.co.il

Gideon Levy

The spirit of '48

After we are done being appropriately and understandably shocked by the Ulpana neighborhood affair, by the cabinet's scandalous conduct, the absolute impotence of its attorney general and the unthinkable position of the State Attorney's Office, which volunteered its services in support of breaking the law; after we have finished reeling from the depiction of land swindlers as "normative people" and from the undermining of the High Court of Justice, we must ask: How is this anything other than business as usual in the State of Israel?

The generation of 1948 is disappearing, but its spirit has never diminished. In 1948, new immigrants were brought straight from the ships into abandoned Palestinian homes with pots of food still simmering in the kitchen, and no one asked too many questions. In 2012, the Israeli government is trying to whitewash the theft of Palestinian lands, all the while scorning the law. A single straight line – a single, perpetual mode of conduct – runs from 1948 to 2012: Palestinian property is ownerless, always abandoned property, even when this is demonstrably not the case, and Israeli Jews are free to do whatever they want with it. It was catch-as-catch-can with regard to Palestinian property in 1948, and it's catch-as-catch-can in 2012, in a never-ending game. Now, as then, the arrogation is authorized and sanctioned. Now, as then, a crime is a crime.

Still, there is a difference between 1948 and 2012. The expulsion and flight of the Palestinians, the usurpation of property and the prevention of the refugees' return in 1948 were the result of Israel's War of Independence. But 64 years later, the state is nearly a superpower, it holds sovereignty, yet it continues to wield control using the same corrupt means, as if it were still battling for its independence. What was arguably unavoidable in 1948 is nothing more than the gratification of the land lust of a group of powerful Israelis whose greed has the backing of the state. What was arguably a war crime then is now a violation and distortion of the laws of the state. What was at the time accepted by most of the world's nations is today accepted by none.

Back then, the state claimed various and sundry legal justifications such as "absentee property," and even the grotesque word pairing "present absentees" (*nokhehim nifkadim*); now the talk is of "state lands" and "survey lands" – preposterous when the subject is occupied land. To this we can add the grabbing of private land and its transfer to settlers merely because they managed to cleverly take control of it. In the Israeli Wild East, as in the American Wild West.

In between, the state also expropriated thousands of dunams of Arab land – always Arab land – over the years, using various pretexts. In Israel circa 2012, when Jews go to

live in the Negev it is "pioneering," "making the desert bloom." Bedouin settlements, even on their own land, is considered "appropriation," "a national threat." What has changed?

Nothing has changed since 1948. The expulsions and ethnic cleansings of 1948 would have been forgiven and forgotten had they ended then, in 1948. But 1948 is here, between the buildings of Ulpana in Beit El and the Jordan Valley, which Israel seeks to cleanse, slowly and gradually. Thus it is impossible to forgive and forget the sins of 1948. Were Israel to declare today: Injustice was done, it was the result of a war waged by the Arabs, but since then the state has done everything possible to end the injustice and perhaps also to atone for it, because then only a few people thought to question its legitimacy. But when the constant appropriation of dunam after (privately owned) dunam never ceases, when messianic faith dictates that Jews have the exclusive right to this land, the international delegitimization campaign against Israel is understandable.

The homes of Ulpana themselves, more than all the hostile editorials, flotillas and "flytillas," are the hot-house of Israel's delegitimization. The attitude of the state and its institutions to this act of theft in Samaria sends a single, clear message to Israelis and the world: We will never stop this crushing, ultranationalist melody – then as now, in 1948 and in 2012.

Amir Oren

Who will restrain the Shin Bet?

Former National Security Council head Uzi Arad was recently cleared of allegations, made last year, that he had blurted some terrible security secret. The Shin Bet security service that quizzed him, the Mossad – whose research section Arad once headed – and the attorney general's senior aide, Raz Nizri, all took pains to put the pieces together again.

This is not good enough for Arad, who was deeply offended by the way he was treated by the Shin Bet, his former colleagues in the Prime Minister's Office and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself. Represented by attorneys Shlomo Cohen and Eyal Rozovsky, Arad will not let go of his persecutors, whom he suspects of exceeding their authority and abusing their power.

But the troubling question, beyond conniving against a senior official and leadership intrigues, is who will restrain the Shin Bet?

Arad's investigation was triggered by a momentary alarm that gripped Netanyahu over a trifling matter – a situation to which he is prone. In the summer of 2010, the Obama administration worked hard to appease Israel, which feared that President Barack Obama had retracted a long-standing presidential understanding not to infringe on Israel's strategic deterrence. Officials in Washington, D.C., and Jerusalem drafted a letter from Obama to Netanyahu. On the Israeli side it was crafted by Arad.

Some Israelis, not Arad, hastened to expose a marginal civilian-commercial point intended for later publication – that the American side had authorized Israel, as an exception to the rule, to conduct talks on the purchase of nuclear power reactors, even though it is not party to the nonproliferation treaty.

It is doubtful whether the reactors' advantage, in reducing the dependence on fuel and gas, would exceed their harm. See last year's Fukushima disaster in Japan as a case in point; or Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas placing them on their target list.

In the spring of 2010, interested parties had started boasting openly of the reactor innovation. In the summer, some Israelis published this clause from Obama's letter. Gary Seymour, the White House official in charge of arms control and nonproliferation, was angered by the publication and considered canceling a visit to Israel.

The storm died down within days. But meanwhile Netanyahu got alarmed, asked the Atomic Energy Committee for a damage estimate

(not from the Defense Ministry's experts on the issue) and launched a Shin Bet investigation – with the attorney general's approval – but without any supervision over proceedings.

The attorney general usually assigns a supervising attorney for sensitive police inquiries that involve quizzing senior officials, from the prime minister to the chief of staff, and are to determine whether they would be indicted. He does not assign a supervisor to Shin Bet investigations, although not all of them deal with foiling an imminent terror attack or blocking an urgent security breach.

The attorney general, who approves the investigation, is indifferent to the goings-on in the investigations themselves. In his opinion, as Nizri said, the Shin Bet can be relied on not to "invent arguments or a memorandum."

The Shin Bet's most offensive measure during interrogations of senior Israeli officials is to revoke the suspect's security clearance. The law enables the suspect to appeal such a move before a committee headed by a retired district court judge. But the Shin Bet interrogators who terrified Arad did not offer him this option. Afterward, Nizri argued in their name that Arad's clearance had been canceled automatically with the termination of his post in the PMO.

But the state comptroller was troubled to find in the Boaz Harpaz affair – involving a forged document to discredit Maj. Gen. Yoav Galant's chances of becoming chief of staff – that no procedure exists for revoking the security clearance of various has-beens, including prime ministers, defense ministers and Shin Bet chiefs. Some of these ex-officials continue – courtesy of their successors – to be privy to secrets, despite the commercial conflict of interests this involves.

Supervision of the Shin Bet is weak, despite past experience and the failure to operate an ombudsman for interregos' complaints. The State Prosecutor's Office has been dragging its feet in filling this post for a year and a half, since the decision to transfer the ombudsman's office from the Shin Bet to the prosecution office.

Despite the Shin Bet's lofty statements about "vision," "calling" and "values," it is a power-intoxicated organization of which everyone – even its democratic masters – are afraid. The Shin Bet is by nature a Rottweiler, not a poodle, and if not restrained it will attack, even its owners.

Ravit Hecht

When wealth buys health

Almost a decade ago, the government decided as a result of massive public pressure to open a public hospital in Ashdod. After repeated delays and an initial failed tender, the government published another tender in 2009, which generated a single response – from Assouta, the Maccabi Health Maintenance Organization's private medical service. The state, which was scared to death of having to build a hospital itself, provided Assouta with grants and benefits intended to cover most of the costs of establishing the hospital.

But that was not enough. Assouta asked for and received a license to operate private medical services that could account for up to 20 to 25 percent of its income. In other words, more than one-fifth of the resources of a public hospital – built with state support in a city in which the residents' income is lower than average – are intended for people with means and expensive supplemental or private insurance. Wealthy patients can choose the doctor they want to perform diagnoses and surgery, and operating rooms will be reserved for them as first priority. The rest will take what is left.

Since the 2002 decision by then-Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein that operating private health services in public hospitals is illegal, hospital directors and senior physicians have been arguing that without private medical services the public health system will collapse. Private medical services, they say, is the last ammunition they have that allows them to augment their dwindling income and prevent doctors from fleeing to more lucrative clinics and private hospitals.

It is difficult to level complaints at

Assouta, which is a commercial company interested in the bottom line. It is also difficult to complain about health-care workers, who flee from the public sector, where they have to struggle to eke out a living, to the private sector, which rewards them handsomely. Just recently Deputy Health Minister Yaakov Litzman announced the launch of a pilot project to train high school students and graduates as nurses in public hospitals, thus eroding even further the already low status of nurses in Israel, who shouldering unreasonably heavy burdens for low pay.

But it is difficult if not impossible to accept the position of the state in institutionalizing a situation whereby people who can purchase life-extending treatments do so, and people who cannot must wait in line (sometimes for months) and make due with inferior treatment. When the state agrees to this situation, it is knowingly and openly giving up on its weaker citizens.

This is not happening because of the ultra-Orthodox. It is not happening because of the Arabs, or because of the need for the Iron Dome missile defense system. It is happening because decision-makers know only one side of reality. When our ministers or their family members need an MRI or complex surgery, they receive devoted and immediate care from the leading experts.

They do not have to wait nerve-racking months for a test or surgery, fretting about how to fund care for elderly parents or a sick child. They do not know this side of things at all. So why should they care about hundreds of thousands of patients left abandoned in public hospitals?

Aner Shalev

Freedom as a solution

Ultimately Syria will be liberated. When Syria is liberated, we won't hear about dozens (sometimes hundreds) of people being murdered there in a single day. When Syria is liberated, its prisons won't be filled with tens of thousands of people, its soldiers won't rape women and its hospitals won't be turned into torture facilities. When Syria is liberated, the Alawite minority won't terrorize the rest of the population, and Syrian blood won't be shed with impunity.

When Syria is liberated, Lebanon will be a better country, too, rather than a hostage of Hezbollah. This won't happen in a week or a month, but it will happen. It won't happen because of the world's response. It will happen despite the lack of a response.

Ultimately Iran will be liberated. When Iran is liberated, it won't invest most of its resources in developing weapons of mass destruction. When Iran is liberated, it won't oppress and starve its people, and women won't be stoned to death. When Iran is liberated, it will hold free elections that won't be rigged to prevent freedom.

The Iranian people deserve another form of government, and they will get one. This won't happen in a week or a month, but it will happen. It won't happen because of the world's response. It will happen despite the lack of a response.

Iran's nuclear capability per se doesn't endanger Israel and world peace. The problem is Iran's regime. Many countries have a nuclear capability, including a military one, but they don't pose a risk. A vibrant, creative, knowledge-seeking people cannot be denied progress and modern technology. The clock's hands cannot be turned back. Iran cannot be bombed back into the Stone Age.

Iranian technology and science cannot be erased; the same is true about Iranians' desire for human rights and prosperity, and about the courage of the hungry people and angry students who shouted "Death to Ahmadinejad," risk-



Officials of key world powers and Iran meeting in Istanbul this month. Iran's nuclear capability per se doesn't endanger Israel and world peace. The problem is Iran's regime. But the talks with Tehran validate the ayatollahs' regime.

ing their lives. The assault on the Iranian president's car two and a half weeks ago shows the deep rift between the people and the regime. The regime already lost its legitimacy in June 2009 when it rigged the elections and violently quashed a non-violent protest calling for new elections and democracy.

World leaders have abandoned Iran's freedom-seeking people – an embarrassing silence. Instead of supporting them, cutting off all contact with a regime that lost its legitimacy and calling for fair elections, the Western world has helped

enable oppression and created the impression that freedom is a limited right with no place in the Middle East.

The negotiations between Iran and the major powers – on uranium, not human rights – validate the ayatollahs' regime. The talks are another betrayal of the Iranian people. To grasp the magnitude of the Iranian delegation's achievement, it's enough to watch European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton wrapped up in a shawl and bowing to the Iranian foreign minister at the opening of the Istanbul talks. The leaks about the emerg-

ing agreement reflect the life raft the regime is being offered, while the people are being abandoned.

Israel and the Western world must support the Syrian and Iranian people in their struggle against tyrants who slaughter their own people. Anyone ignoring the other's suffering and acting to save himself will end up ruining himself. When Iran is liberated, the question of whether it has a nuclear program won't be an existential question. The solution to the Iranian nuclear problem is not destruction, but freedom.



Barca gets a new man Page B6

TheMarker

Israel's Leading Business Newspaper

Dollar 3.750 -0.21% ▼ Euro 4.956 0.15% ▲ Tel Aviv 25 1,162.95 Nasdaq 3,069.20 0.61% ▲

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Israeli and Egyptian diplomats confer in secret on natural gas controversy

By Avi Bar-Eli and Itai Trilnick

Officially, the Israeli government has tried to minimize the diplomatic importance of last Sunday's announcement by Egypt's state-owned natural gas company that it was canceling its contract to Israel. Behind the scenes, however, the reality was somewhat different, belying the government's stance that the matter was simply a commercial dispute.

A day after last week's unilateral announcement by EGAS, a senior official from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem was dispatched to Cairo. In the course of the visit, the Israeli official met with his Egyptian government counterparts and discussed the gas contract. He returned to Israel several hours later.

At the Foreign Ministry's request, Egypt's ambassador to Israel, Yasser Reda, also met with Israel's Deputy Foreign Minister, Daniel Ayalon, to clarify the situation. The Prime Minister's Office has declined to comment for this report.

Over the weekend, German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle called on the Egyptians to adhere to their peace agreement with Israel, asking that they refrain from turning the spat over gas supplies into a political issue.

Also over the weekend, shareholders in EMG (Eastern Mediterranean Gas) – which had contracted for the supply of gas from Egypt to Israel – provided their initial

reaction to the Egyptian account of the circumstances that led to the revocation of the supply contract.

Egypt's EGAS has claimed that EMG owes the Egyptian firm \$56 million for the small quantities of gas that have been supplied over the past year. Supplies have been repeatedly disrupted by sabotage to the supply lines in Sinai.

In a statement, EMG's stockholders told Reuters that it was misleading to couch the disagreement between EMG and EGAS as purely a commercial dispute. The supply contract between the two entities had government backing, the statement said. EMG noted that the gas supply deal was the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the Egyptian and Israeli governments, which the partnership said links it specifically to the 1979 peace agreement between the two countries.

This reference is apparently to a 2005 Egyptian government commitment to guarantee the annual supply of 7 billion cubic meters of natural gas over a period of 20 years.

EMG also took issue with the Egyptian position that the partnership was in arrears in its payments to Egypt for the gas that has been supplied.

EMG pointed the finger at Egyptian natural gas companies for what it called a failure to protect the supply pipeline and to repair it immediately after it was damaged. Egypt has barely supplied any gas



Flames rise from an Egyptian pipeline station after an attack in the Sinai last July.

since February 2011, EMG said; as a result, it is actually EGAS that owes money to EMG rather than the other way around.

EMG said its shareholders around the world are considering legal action over the

matter and will probably demand substantial damages from the Egyptians in the context of bilateral treaties between the two countries. EMG is also currently pursuing an arbitration action against the Egyptians in Switzerland, over its claim that the Egyptians have violated their obligation to supply gas.

EMG is owned by a consortium of shareholders, including a 10% stake held by EGAS itself. The Thai government gas company holds a 25%

stake; Israeli businessman Yossi Maiman's companies – Ampal-American Israel Corp. and Merhav – own another 11%, with the remaining interests held by businessmen Sam Zell and David Fisher, and Israeli institutional investors.

Heading for a fall? / Zvi Zrahiya

Early elections could derail economic reforms

Whether the end of the current government is brought about by economic issues such as the cost of living, political controversies over drafting ultra-Orthodox recruits or the demolition of unauthorized settlement outposts, there is unanimity among politicians that the next elections will be held sooner rather than later.

By law, they must be held by the fall of next year, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has already begun consultations with members of his cabinet and with the heads of other parliamentary parties – including the new leader of the opposition, Kadima chairman Shaul Mofaz – about bringing the date forward.

Mofaz announced yesterday that elections should be held this year, in October. The Knesset's summer session opens today, and Labor Party leader Shelly Yacimovich is expected to introduce a Knesset motion tomorrow calling for the dissolution of parliament.

The prevailing thinking is that elections will probably be held this September or October. A fall election could cut short the summer session and complicate the passage of some of the economic reform proposals that Netanyahu has been touting.

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin has called for the Knesset to be dissolved as soon as agreement is reached on a date for elections. Vice Prime

Minister Moshe Ya'alon predicted that, in any event, the current governing coalition could collapse if a solution is not found to the issue of settlement outposts.

Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, whose Yisrael Beiteinu party is a major coalition partner, is awaiting a decision on a possible criminal indictment. He is thought to prefer resigning following a plea agreement and returning to the Knesset after new elections.

Although Netanyahu has declared his opposition to bringing the elections forward, he is still planning for the prospect. Within his current coalition, conflict over the criteria for housing benefits and whether they would favor the ultra-Orthodox could vex Netanyahu, as could the 2013 budget.

Concern over new protests

The prime minister is also said to be concerned that last summer's protests over the cost of living and other social welfare issues – which are expected to erupt again this summer – will erode his power.

Advisers in his Likud party are counseling that he move up elections. Along the way, they say Netanyahu should throw the public some bones, like lowering the price of gasoline rather than continuing to come in for criticism on the social welfare front.

Supermarket suppliers: Price hikes on consumer goods just a matter of time

Projected increases in food prices

Fairy dishwashing liquid	Palmolive soap, 4-bar pack	Poseidon/Williger tuna	Quaker oatmeal	Heinz mayonnaise	StarKist tuna
4%–6%	8%	10%	5%	10%	5%–15%

By Adi Dovrat-Meseritz

Food manufacturers and the makers of basic consumer products are warning that price increases are on the way this summer as companies grapple with increased costs. Price promotions, meanwhile, are likely to become more rare.

"There's no alternative to price increases," said Gilad Zilberberg, an owner of the Meir Beigel food firm and the chairman of the Manufacturers Association committee representing small and mid-sized firms. "Input costs keep going up and companies have no way of absorbing them. The cost of energy, raw materials and taxes continues to go up, and the companies are feeling the effects dramatically."

Wholesalers have been warning the major supermarket chains about higher wholesale costs. For example,

Diplomat, the distribution company for a range of consumer products, announced that next month the price of StarKist tuna will go up by 5% to 15%, Heinz mayonnaise by 10%, and Quaker oatmeal by about 5%.

Another distributor, Neto, which sells Williger and Poseidon brand tuna to retailers, announced a 10% increase for tuna several months ago, but gave the supermarket chains the chance to stock up on the product at the old price. So shoppers are expected to notice the difference when current stocks are depleted.

Starting next month

StarKist and Neto had planned to raise prices several months ago, but held off due to last year's protests over food prices. The consumer products distributor S. Shestovitch announced price

increases on several Palmolive products, to take effect at the beginning of next month. This includes four-packs of Palmolive bars of soap, on which the company will be raising prices by about 8%, and Palmolive dishwashing liquid, which is going up by about 5%.

Procter & Gamble has raised the price of Patene and Head & Shoulders shampoos, Fairy dishwashing liquid and Wella hair care products by 4% to 6%, but it has lowered the price of Gillette shaving products by about 10%.

The price hikes raise the question of whether high-profile companies like Tnuva, Strauss Elite, Osem and Unilever will follow suit, causing a broader wave of price increases.

The price increases already announced have been by lower-profile companies – companies that are less likely to be targets of consumer boycotts like the ones against the price of cottage cheese and Pesek Zman candy bars.

Cautious companies

One senior source in the food industry warned that many other products will have to become dearer.

"Due to the higher costs of electricity, fuel and water, we already should have increased prices," he said. "But because of the social protests, all the companies have been cautious and absorbed the cost increases to avoid being

at the center of the protests. But that won't continue in the long term."

He said price increases will happen this summer. "All the consumer product companies want to see if the protests come back in a big way. The big firms like Osem, Tnuva and Strauss will have to raise prices, because otherwise no one will buy shares in their companies and the owners will suffer."

Until the manufacturers take the plunge and raise prices, they are going easy on promotional sales – a move that doesn't create the negative media coverage that price increases do.

"We're reducing the number and extent of price promotions and cutting advertising, but that can't continue in the long term," said a source at a major food manufacturer. He said that this summer "everyone will be raising prices."

He acknowledged that manufacturers are under pressure from retail chains not to hike prices. Rather than being the first companies to lift prices, the major manufacturers are looking to gauge how the public reacts to price rises by smaller manufacturers, he said.

The early price hikes will come from manufacturers that hold market shares of around 40% to 50% – near monopoly status, the source said. "Loyalty to their products is high, so consumers will buy the product even if it costs a few shekels more," he said.

Fitch retains Israel's high credit rating, with stable outlook, despite Iran tensions

Reuters

Fitch Ratings this week affirmed Israel's high long-term foreign and local currency ratings at 'A' and 'A+' respectively, declaring the country's outlook as stable despite ongoing tensions with Iran.

"The Outlooks on the long-term IDRs (Issuer Default Ratings) are stable," Fitch said in a statement. "Fitch

has simultaneously affirmed Israel's short-term IDR at 'F1' and Country Ceiling at 'AA-.' Fitch added, citing Israel's strong institutions and solid recent macroeconomic performance; rich, diversified economy; and strong external balance sheet against a high level of government debt and long-standing geopolitical concerns."

Fitch official Richard Fox said the rating does not "in-

corporate event risk in the shape of a possible attack on Iran's nuclear facilities."

The statement added that with sanctions against Iran in place, and with nuclear talks resumed, hostilities in the region were "unlikely."

However, the Fitch missive warned against the immediate impact of a military deterioration taking place, saying in "that event, it would likely lead to immediate negative

rating action, with the final rating outcome depending on the extent of the economic and physical damage that Israel might suffer.

"Conversely," Fox continued, "the rating does not factor in the longer-term benefits of Israel's newly-discovered natural gas resources, as substantial benefits will only accrue beyond the rating time horizon," he added.

Bank Leumi Romania officials quizzed in criminal probe

By Sivan Aizescu

Four senior officials from Bank Leumi Romania, including CEO Manfred Rauchwerger, have been questioned by government authorities there. Indictments are expected to be filed soon, according to Romanian news websites. The investigation was sparked after a complaint by a disgruntled customer who owes the bank a substantial sum.

The case is being pursued by the national anticorruption agency in the Eastern European country. Romanian government authorities acted following a complaint by a customer who is subject to receivership proceedings and owes Bank Leumi Romania more than a million euros.

The dispute between the customer and the bank centers around whether the bank was authorized to delay the transfer of funds directed to him.

A Bank Leumi spokesman said the case was the result of a long-standing dispute with the customer. "It is the bank's intention to present the lack of good faith of [the customer] to the court, as well as the conduct of the bank and its employees, which was in accordance with all customary rules." The spokesman expressed confidence that the court would side with the bank.

The Romanian probe is just one of an unusual number of investigations into the conduct of Bank Leumi affiliates in a number of countries.

The case in Romania follows another investigation against a Leumi affiliate that is being conducted by American tax authorities. The authorities are investigating suspicions that Bank Leumi Switzerland was involved in tax evasion, allegedly committed by customers of Bank Leumi USA.

Sending a letter not only costs more, but will also take longer

By Sivan Aizescu

The Communications Ministry has given the Israeli postal service permission to stop sorting mail overnight in an effort to save on wage costs. The move is expected to add a day to mail delivery times, but will save NIS 15 million a year, says Israel Post.

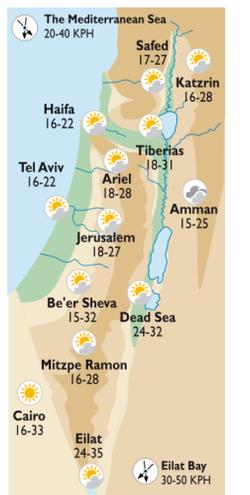
In another move designed to put the postal company on firmer financial footing, the price of sending a regular domestic letter was recently increased from NIS 1.70 to NIS 2, which postal sources say will provide about NIS 33 million in additional revenue.

Israel Post finished last year with a net profit of NIS 15 million, due to accounting adjustments that reinstated sums that had been set aside in the past; without those adjustments, the postal company would have actually lost NIS 48 million in 2011.

The two cost-saving measures approved by the Communications Ministry – the increase in the cost of a regular domestic stamp and permission to end overnight mail sorting – followed a major campaign by senior officials at Israel Post, who had warned that the postal system was in dire financial straits. The director general of Israel Post, Haim Almozni, had even told TheMarker that if the postal service did not solve the problems it was facing, it faced bankruptcy.

Nonetheless, Israel Post released financial reports this month that showed that it was far from broke, prompting speculation that the warnings were an effort to exert pressure on the communications and finance ministries. One postal official said that there was no movement on the two issues until the warning was issued.

Weather



Monday Tuesday Wednesday
Sunrise: 05:56 Sunset: 19:18

Air pollution index: 28.412
low ● medium ● high ●●●
Jerusalem ●●● Tel Aviv ●●● Haifa ●●● Krayot ●●●
Be'er Sheva ●●● Karmiel ●●● Afula ●●● Modin ●●●
pollution forecast for this morning: medium

A bit warmer than usual

Today will be partly cloudy and warmer than usual, mainly in the hills and inland. Light showers are possible. Tomorrow and Tuesday will be clear to partly cloudy and slightly cooler, though light rain is possible Tuesday in the north and center of the country.



Dan Keinan

Sports

Basketball (W) / Final

Ramle survives late collapse

Takes 2-1 lead back home

By Steve Klein

Elitzur Ramle survived one of the uglier – and stranger – games it has played against Maccabi Ashdod this year, when it escaped with a 60-58 win at Maccabi Ashdod. The victory puts Ramle within a game of claiming its second consecutive Premier League crown with the next game at home.

Neither team looked impressive during the first half, and toward the end of the game, both teams suffered from uncharacteristic lapses. In addition, Ramle overcame two debatable intentional foul calls in the second half.

The two teams traded the lead as Ashdod took a 26-24 advantage into the break.

Ramle went back up in the third quarter and was ahead

42-39 when a turnover led to the first intentional foul call. However, Ashdod got only three points out between its free throws and its possession, leaving the game knotted at 42 apiece.

Tanisha Wright dominated the fourth quarter for Ramle, finishing with 24 points, six assists and seven rebounds, and a three-pointer put the visitors up 59-49. However, Ashdod proceeded to run off the next eight points, capped by a basket by Ashley Shields – who woke up in the second half to finish with 16 points.

Ramle became oddly sloppy, and when Ashdod stole the ball, Ramle's Alana Beard was called for an intentional foul with 7.1 seconds left, even though it seemed she made a legitimate attempt to take



Wright earlier this month. She carried Ramle for most of last night.

the ball. However, Plenette Pierson only converted one free throw and on the ensuing inbound pass from Naomi Kolodny, Pierson threw an errant pass across the center line, committing a backcourt violation.

Ashdod was forced to foul Tanisha Wright, who hit her first free throw and intentionally missed her second to make Ashdod put up a Hail Mary that fell short.

Game 4 will be held Monday in Ramle.

Basketball / Israel in Europe

Do it again

After winning the Balkan League, Gilboa plans to stick around next season

By Arie Livnat

Gilboa/Galil sees the franchise's first European trophy in historic terms, albeit in the third-tier Balkan League.

"It's a European title in every respect," said team captain Avishay Gordon, after Monday's dramatic overtime win in Gan Ner over Levski Sofia. "We made history for Gilboa as well as Israel. It's not on the level of the state championship, yet it is still exciting."

Gordon says he finds it regretful that people tend to disregard the competition.

"Two very good teams reached the final who could have participated in the Eurocup," he says.

Gordon recalls that at the beginning of the season Gilboa set the goal of reaching the final four in the Super League, the State Cup and the Balkan League. "We missed out on the cup because of an embarrassing loss to Hapoel Tel Aviv, and I saw how nuts the guys were in the Balkan semifinal against Hapoel," he says. "We played at home in the final and really wanted to win."

Gilboa owner Haim Ohayon says he was surprised by what he saw in the final: "We didn't expect that level of basketball. We thought we'd have an easier time. The Bulgarians stepped up their game. It's a Euroleague-level team. It was almost impossible to beat them."

Barak Peleg, the team's assistant coach, says he was not surprised by how well Levski played. He asserts that the team trailed for most of the game because it didn't prepare for the final as it should have, thinking everything would work out. "It dawned on us in the second half that we had time to set things right," he says.

Coach Lior Lubin gives credit to his players for rallying to his 13-point deficit

in the final quarter. He says that during the time-outs the coaching staff tried to shake the players out of their gloom. "We tried all kinds of defenses and we tried to get them to change the rhythm," he says. "During the final five minutes the players realized it was time to pick themselves up."

Gilboa's success this season was not just on-court but also within the organization. Shai Stricks, the league CEO, says he is pleased with the way Gan Ner hosted the playoffs. "The Final Four was organized exceptionally well," he says. "All the association heads of the participating teams were there. The teams got everything they expected, and 2,000 spectators came to the arena."

Peleg, the assistant coach, says it was worthwhile even though the level of play in the league was not particularly great outside the Final Four. "We traveled to away games against teams we didn't know with a certain style of play," he says. "We didn't know where we were going, but we learned along the way. We gave minutes to the younger guys who don't play much in the local league."

This season was the first in the Balkan League's four-year existence that Israeli teams competed. Hapoel Tel Aviv, which was in the National League this season, wanted to accumulate European experience. Gilboa passed on the Eurocup and Euroleague qualifiers to join the Balkan League.

Ohayon says that not only is he not sorry about the decision, he plans to keep Gilboa in the league another season. "It's one of the competitions that better suit us. We've had our fill of the Euroleague and the Eurocup," he asserts, adding that the team had to deal with threats and fines in the other competitions and could have saved itself the grief by joining the Balkan League sooner.

Sports Shorts

Israeli judokas stumble on first day of European Championships

Israeli judokas Artiom Arshansky (men's 60 kg) and Roni Schwartz (women's 48 kg) were eliminated from the European Championships that opened yesterday in Chelyabinsk, Russia, losing their last opportunity to qualify for the London Olympics. Arshansky lost in the round of 16, while Schwartz was ousted in the first round. Golan Polak (men's 66 kg) fell in the round of 16 to his Slovenian opponent. Polak can only qualify now if Soso Palelashvili wins a medal in the men's 73 kg category and gets an automatic bid, opening a spot for Polak to get an invitational ticket to London. (Tal Ben Ezra)

Israel's tennis men get eliminated in Bucharest and Barcelona tournaments

Israel's tennis fortunes turned sour yesterday as its top men were eliminated by seeded opponents. In the singles at the Nastase Tiriac Trophy in Bucharest, Dudi Sela faced the daunting task of taking on top seed Gilles Simon of France, who beat him in March at Indian Wells, California. While Sela took Simon to three sets on that occasion, he went down 6-4, 6-2 yesterday. At the Barcelona Open, Andy Ram and Yoni Erlich came close in the doubles against the third-seeded combo of Mahesh Bhupathi and Nenad Zimonjic, but the Indian-Serbian duo toughed it out in the tie-breaker to beat the Israelis 7-6, 4-6, 10-6. (Haaretz Sports Staff)

Israelis sink in French sailing standings

Weak outings dropped windsurfer Shahaar Zubari second to fifth in the rankings at the Semaine Olympique Française in Hyeres, just ahead of the medal round in the RS:X. In the 470, Gidi Klingler and Eran Sela are in seventh in the men's, while Vered Buskila and Gil Cohen are ranked 10th in the women's. (Arie Livnat)



WE'RE IN: Atletico de Madrid's Adrian Lopez, right, celebrating after scoring against Valencia during the second leg Europa League semifinal soccer match in Valencia. The 1-0 win assured his team would move on to the Europa League final against Athletic Bilbao, which beat Sporting 3-1. (Haaretz Sports Staff)

Basketball / Super League

Bernie Fine, embroiled in sex scandal, picked as consultant for Maccabi Haifa

By Tal Ben Ezra

Maccabi Haifa yesterday appointed the controversial former Syracuse assistant coach Bernie Fine as the new consultant for its basketball team.

Syracuse fired Fine in November after allegations of child molestation arose against him. Fine, 66, worked at Syracuse for 35 years. He

denies any wrongdoing.

Haaretz has learned that Haifa officials recently explored Fine's legal standing, as well as his desire to coach in Israel. They decided not to bring Fine to Israel but rather to allow him to carry out his new role from the United States. "Fine will serve as consultant from his U.S. residence, and will advise the management of the team on

decisions regarding players and next season's coach," the club announced in a formal statement.

Accusations by former players and ball boys led to the release of a tape by ESPN in which the coach's wife, Laurie Fine, apparently admitted that she had concerns about her husband being involved in sexual molestation. After the release of the

taped conversation between Laurie Fine and former ball boy Bobby Davis, two other people working under Fine complained about him. The blow to the school's image apparently became too great to keep him on.

State authorities reportedly did not charge Fine due to the statute of limitations, as the allegations span from the 1970s to the late 1990s.



FLYING ANGEL: Los Angeles Angels shortstop Erick Aybar, right, leaping above Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Ray Desmond Jennings after forcing him out at second base during the fifth inning of their MLB American League baseball game in St. Petersburg, Florida. The Rays rallied with two runs in the ninth inning to win 4-3. (Haaretz Sports Staff)

sudoku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

The game board is divided into 81 squares, with nine horizontal rows and nine vertical columns. A few numbers already appear in some of the squares. The aim is to fill in numerals 1 to 9 in each of the empty squares, so that every row and column and every box (a group of nine squares outlined in boldface) contains all of the numerals 1 to 9. None of the numerals may recur in the same row, column or box.

3	7	2	9	6	1	8	5	4
4	9	6	5	8	2	3	1	7
1	8	5	4	7	3	2	9	6
5	3	8	6	2	7	1	4	9
6	1	4	3	9	5	7	2	8
9	2	7	8	1	4	6	3	5
7	4	9	2	3	8	5	6	1
2	6	1	7	5	9	4	8	3
8	5	3	1	4	6	9	7	2

	4	8	7					
2			5	4				
					3		1	
1	5					6		
		3	6		5	2		
		4					3	5
	6		9					
				2	6			4
					8	1	9	

Difficulty: Hard

Tips and a computerized version of Sudoku can be found at www.sudoku.com



Countdown to London 2012

What happened this week?

Synchronized swimming: Anastasia Gloushkov and Ina Yofe finished the first round of the Olympic trial in 16th, one short of what they needed to qualify. However, they punched their ticket to London by winning the second round.

Fencing: The final Olympic trials for European fencers, which was held in Bratislava, left Israel without any representation in London. Both Maor Hatuel and Dalaila Hatuel got close but fell short. The others were eliminated in the early stages.

Shooting: Sergei Richter, who already booked his Olympic spot, won the silver medal at the World Cup in London. At 701.1 points, he was just half a point from gold.

Badminton: Misha Zilberman reached the finals of a

tournament in Tahiti, losing 2-0 to his Malaysian rival. He gained several qualification points that will likely make him the first Israeli badminton player in the Olympics.

Coming up:

Judo: The European Championships continue today with Alice Slesinger, Yarden Gerbi and Soso Palelashvili entering the picture. Arik Zeevi competes Sunday along with Uri Sasson. Both Sasson and Palelashvili keep their Olympic dream alive.

Athletics: The Israel 10,000-meter Championship will be held at Hadar Yosef on Wednesday. Tesame Mugase, the Israel record holder, will try to meet the international standard to qualify for London.



Mugase

Scoreboard

BASKETBALL		6-2, 6-2			
Women's Premier League					
Finals, Game 3					
Elitzur Ramle 60, MAC. ASHDOD 58		[5] S. Stosur (AUS) def. J. Goerges (GER) 6-2, 2-6, 6-3			
(Elitzur Ramle leads 2-1)		A. Kerber (GER) def. [6] C. Wozniacki (DEN) 6-1, 6-2			
TENNIS					
ATP Nastase Tiriac Trophy					
Singles, second round (selected result)					
[1] G. Simon (FRA) def. D. Sela (ISR) 6-4, 6-2		M. Barthel (GER) def. [7] M. Bartoli (FRA) 6-3, 6-1			
ATP Barcelona Open					
Doubles, second round (selected result)					
[3] M. Bhupathi / N. Zimonjic (IND/SRB) def. J. Erlich / A. Ram (ISR) 7-6 (4), 4-6, 10-6		[8] L. Na (CHN) def. A. Amanmuradova (UZB) 6-4, 6-4			
Singles, third round					
[1] R. Nadal (ESP) def. R. Farah (COL) 6-2, 6-3		WTA Fez Grand Prix			
[2] A. Murray (GBR) def. S. Giraldo (COL) 6-1, 6-2		Singles, quarterfinals			
[3] D. Ferrer (ESP) def. [13] A. Montanes (ESP) 6-0, 6-2		[5] S. Halep (ROU) def. [1] A. Medina Garrigues (ESP) 6-2, 6-1			
[6] J. Tseng (SRB) def. F. Gil (POR) 6-2, 6-2		M. Johansson (FRA) def. [3] P. Cetkovska (CZE) 6-3, 6-4			
[9] F. Verdasco (ESP) def. K. Anderson (RSA) 6-4, 6-4		K. Bertans (NED) def. G. Muguruza Blanco (ESP) 6-1, 6-4			
[11] M. Paonici (CAN) def. [8] N. Almagro (ESP) 6-3, 6-3		L. Pous-Tio (ESP) def. I. Begu (ROU) 6-4, 6-1			
[7] F. Lopez (ESP) def. J. Nieminen (FIN) 6-3, 6-1		BASEBALL			
[8] K. Nishikori (JPN) def. [17] A. Ramos (ESP) 7-6 (2), 6-3		American League			
WTA Porsche Grand Prix		Kansas City 4, CLEVELAND 2			
Singles, second round (selected result)		Seattle 5, DETROIT 4			
[1] V. Azarenka (BLR) def. A. Petkovic (GER) 6-2, 4-4 (retired)		TAMPA BAY 4, LA. ANGELS 3			
[3] P. Kvitova (CZE) def. F. Schiavone (ITA) 6-2, 6-2		National League			
		San Francisco 6, CINCINNATI 5			
		N.Y. METS 3, MIAMI 2			
		SOCCER			
		Europa League			
		Athletic Bilbao 3, Sporting 1 (4-3 agg.)			
		Valencia 0, Atletico Madrid 1 (2-5 agg.)			
		[3] P. Kvitova (CZE) def. F. Schiavone (ITA)			

(Haaretz Staff and Agencies)

Live on Television

- Fri. 12:00, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Fri. 13:30, 5+ Live, HD: Tennis, ATP Barcelona Open, quarterfinal
- Fri. 14:30, ONE: Basketball, Mac. Be'er Yaakov vs. Elitzur Yavneh
- Fri. 15:00, Sport 2: Judo, European Championships
- Fri. 15:00, Eurosport: Cycling, Tour of Turkey, Stage 6
- Fri. 15:00, Eurosport 2: Tennis, WTA Porsche Grand Prix, quarterfinal
- Fri. 15:10, Sport 5: Motor racing, Spanish GP
- Fri. 15:30, Sport 5+: Tennis, ATP Barcelona Open, quarterfinal
- Fri. 16:00, Sport 5, HD: Handball, quarters, Hap. Rishon vs. Bnei Herzliya
- Fri. 16:00, 5+ Live, HD: Soccer, Bnei Lod vs. Hap. Jerusalem
- Fri. 16:00, Fox Sports: Golf, Spain Open, 2nd round
- Fri. 16:30, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Fri. 18:00, 5+ Live, HD: Tennis, ATP Barcelona Open, quarterfinal
- Fri. 19:30, Eurosport: Tennis, WTA Porsche Grand Prix, quarterfinal
- Fri. 21:00, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Fri. 21:30, Sport 2: Soccer, Genk vs. Anderlecht
- Fri. 22:00, ESPN: Golf, Zurich Classic of New Orleans, 2nd round
- Sat. 02:00, Fox Sports: NHL, playoffs, 1st round
- Sat. 02:30, ESPN: NASCAR, Richmond Sprint Cup
- Sat. 12:00, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Sat. 12:30, ESPN: Australian football, St. Kilda vs. Melbourne
- Sat. 14:00, Sport 5, HD: Motor racing, Spanish GP, qualifying heats
- Sat. 14:30, 5+ Live, HD: Tennis, ATP Barcelona Open, semifinal
- Sat. 15:00, Sport 1: Soccer, Hap. Tel Aviv vs. Bnei Sakhnin
- Sat. 15:00, Sport 2: Judo, European Championships
- Sat. 15:00, Eurosport: Tennis, WTA Porsche Grand Prix, semifinal
- Sat. 15:00, Eurosport 2: Cycling, Tour of Turkey, Stage 7
- Sat. 16:30, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Sat. 17:10, Sport 2: Soccer, Hapoel Rishon vs. Hapoel Be'er Sheva
- Sat. 17:20, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Hap. Petah Tikva vs. Mac. Petah Tikva
- Sat. 19:00, Sport 5, HD: Basketball, Adriatic Lg., Cedevita vs. P. Belgrade
- Sat. 19:00, 5+ Live: Soccer, Getafe vs. Mallorca
- Sat. 19:30, Fox Sports: MLB, Milwaukee Brewers at St. Louis Cardinals
- Sat. 19:30, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Norwich vs. Liverpool
- Sat. 19:30, Sport 2: Soccer, Bnei Yehuda vs. Maccabi Haifa
- Sat. 21:00, Eurosport, Eurosport 2: Snooker, World Championships
- Sat. 21:15, Ch. 10, Sport 5 HD: Basketball, Mac. Tel Aviv vs. Bucodnost
- Sat. 21:45, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Roma vs. Napoli
- Sat. 21:45, Sport 2: Soccer, French Cup, Lyon vs. Quevilly
- Sat. 22:00, Sport 5: NBA, playoffs, regional quarterfinal
- Sat. 22:00, ESPN: NHL, playoffs, regional quarterfinal
- Sat. 22:30, Fox Sports: Golf, Zurich Classic of New Orleans
- Sun. 03:00, ESPN: NBA, playoffs, regional quarterfinal

The caviar kibbutzniks

Elite New York restaurants serve their clientele only the finest caviar – produced at a company with just eight workers on a kibbutz in the Upper Galilee

By Haim Handwerker

NEW YORK – It is evening at Daniel, the New York restaurant of French chef Daniel Boulud on the Upper East Side, which has three Michelin stars. A couple sitting at the bar tastes the caviar. “Fantastic. Simply fantastic,” they say. Even the price – \$470 for 50 grams of highest-quality caviar – doesn’t spoil the taste for them. New York diners are prepared to pay generously for good raw ingredients.

What the couple and the other guests at the prestigious restaurant don’t know is that this fine and costly caviar comes from Israel. “We started serving Israeli caviar at the restaurant four or five years ago and since then it has only improved. And today it is the best there is on the market,” says Jean Francois Bruel, the chef at Daniel. “The quality of Israeli caviar really is excellent. The grain is very firm and the flavor is excellent. Unlike many kinds of caviar, Israeli caviar doesn’t have an aftertaste – in my opinion because it is raised in especially clean water.”

Daniel is not the only respected restaurant that has discovered the wonders of Israeli caviar. “All the chefs and buyers who specialize in fine food appreciate its quality,” says Rod Browne-Mitchell, owner of the Browne Trading Company, a purveyor of high-quality fish and seafood that has been distributing Israeli caviar in the United States for 10 years now.

Eric Ripert, the chef and proprietor of the most important fish restaurant in New York today, Le Bernardin, echoes the compliment. “The Israeli caviar is the best there is today on the market,” declares Ripert, whose restaurant has not only been awarded three Michelin stars but also has held the top spot on the list of popular New York restaurants in the Zagat guide, the city’s most important food guidebook. “There is some not bad caviar on the market,” adds Ripert. “The Chinese have good caviar but the quality of it is not consistent. Germany and Italy have pretty good caviar and there are also products from France and the United States, but what comes from Israel is the nearest thing to the top.”

The “top” caviar, in case you were wondering, is none other than Iranian caviar. “But,” says Ripert, “the sturgeon that grow in the Caspian Sea are in danger of extinction and therefore it is currently forbidden to import caviar from Iran.”

Nevertheless, anyone perusing Daniel’s menu would have a hard time discovering that the caviar has been sourced from Israel. “At prestigious restaurants they don’t emphasize the source of the caviar – not because anyone’s ashamed of its Israeli origins but because we usually don’t mention its source if it



Clockwise from top left: Chef Eric Ripert; Yigal Ben Tzvi, the director of Caviar Galilee; caviar at New York’s Daniel restaurant; and fish pools on Kibbutz Dan.



Photos: Natan Dvir and Dror Artzi

How did it happen that a veteran, socialist kibbutz is producing one of the most extravagant delicacies in the world?

originates at a fish farm and not in nature,” says Bruel. Truth to tell, it is not certain that Bruel and Ripert are even able to say exactly where their caviar comes from. “It comes from some kibbutz,” says Ripert, holding a fancy jar that says “Made in Israel.”

From socialism to extravagance?

Ripert’s “some kibbutz” – the name of which he can’t recall but which has reached the pinnacle of the New York culinary scene – is Kibbutz Dan in the Upper

Galilee, the owner of the Caviar Galilee company under the brand name Karat Caviar. The company that reigns at elite restaurants in the Big Apple, incidentally, employs only eight workers.

How did it happen that the veteran, 73-year-old, socialist kibbutz founded by the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement (which has in the meantime been privatized) is producing one of the most capitalist and extravagant delicacies in the world? “Earning a living isn’t an obscenity. We have to earn a living like anyone else,” says Yigal Ben Tzvi, the director of Caviar Galilee, who

“Israeli caviar is the best there is today on the market,” declares Eric Ripert of New York’s most important fish restaurant, Le Bernardin.

has 35 years of experience in raising fish. “Today the socialism here is more within the kibbutz, though not socialism the way it was 20 years ago. Outwardly we play the capitalist game.”

Ben Tzvi relates that they have been working on the sturgeon farming project at the kibbutz for nearly 15 years. “We raised trout in the Dan springs but because of the competition in Israel we wanted to branch out into other areas. So we raised eels and salmon but they didn’t take well to the conditions – and then along came the idea of raising sturgeon, intended for immigrants from Russia who

were accustomed to eating this fish,” relates Ben Tzvi. In 1998 the kibbutz purchased sturgeon eggs of the osetra species and began raising them for food.

Four years later, in 2002, Ben Tzvi and his colleagues noticed that international caviar prices were on the rise. They already had sturgeon and all that remained was to change the aim of raising them – from whole fish for consumption to laying eggs for caviar. Or, as Ben Tzvi says, “We put two and two together and we made the decision to go with the caviar. We started sorting males and females. We sold the

males for their meat and we keep raising the females until about the age of 10, until the caviar becomes of good quality.”

This was without a doubt a wise business decision. The sturgeon that live in the area of the Caspian Sea, which yield the best caviar, are now on the verge of extinction and there are very strict fishing quotas in the five countries on its shores. Russia, for example, has voluntarily prohibited the catching of sturgeon in order to save the remaining fish population. There is still some illegal fishing but the quantities are very small.

“In recent years there has been a revolution in the caviar market,” says Ben Tzvi. “Seven years ago 95 percent of the caviar in the world came from the Caspian Sea and 5 percent from fish farms, and today the proportions are reversed. Ninety percent comes from farms and 10 percent from nature.” In these circumstances, the fish eggs from the sturgeon in the pools at Kibbutz Dan are in demand worldwide. One third of the kibbutz’s caviar is destined for the American market and the rest is divided among Europe, Russia, Japan, Singapore and Canada. In 2011 the kibbutz sold 3,000 kilograms of caviar and this year it is expecting to sell 4,000 kilos. “Every year we plan to increase production by 1,000 kilos until we reach 8,000 kilos annually,” says Ben Tzvi. “True, we had years when we didn’t make any money but today we are earning well – in 2011 we took in NIS 12 million.”

Beyond that they would prefer to continue to export caviar quietly at Kibbutz Dan, under the media radar. To date, incidentally, they have not received any offers to buy the company or to enter into partnerships, despite the commercial success.

The rabbinate makes waves

What, in fact, makes Kibbutz Dan caviar so superior?

Ben Tzvi: “At fish farms in the United States they produce caviar from the white sturgeon whereas our sturgeon is of the osetra species, which came from the Caspian Sea. It is a purebred fish. This is not a simple task. It’s necessary to tend the female for 10 years until she reaches maturity. We raise the fish in smallish concrete pools of no more than 300 square meters. We change the water twice a day. One of our advantages is that we raise the fish in very good water from the Dan springs. There are farms abroad where they raise the fish in water that isn’t clean or is recycled and this affects the flavor

of the fish and the caviar.”

Why don’t the Americans, for example, import the fish and produce the caviar themselves?

“It is forbidden to bring fish from outside the country into the United States. They are trying to preserve their ecology: There have already been cases in which fish have been brought from one country to another and the foreign fish preyed on and wiped out the local fish. Also, if you have fish in a lake, a bird can take one fish and drop it into a stream or a river and the whole ecological balance will change. This is something the Americans and other countries are trying to avoid.”

And aren’t they afraid of this in Israel?

“Since in Israel there are no sturgeons in nature, there is no fear that ours will compete with them. But we have been required to install means such as nets to prevent sturgeon from escaping into the streams.”

Despite their caviar’s commercial success abroad, the members of Kibbutz Dan do not get to taste it. It is not available on the kibbutz for members or their guests to buy. “We direct all our product to export – that is the big market for caviar. But the truth is we also have a problem selling in Israel,” says Ben Tzvi. “We have a large trout farm. The rabbinical authorities have threatened that if we sell nonkosher fish or caviar in Israel they will take the kosher certificate away from the trout. It’s simply blackmail. We have acceded to them because we have no alternative. The idea here is that if you, as a Jew, sell something nonkosher to another Jew then you are an outcast.”

But maybe even without the rabbinate’s sanctions there isn’t a market for the kibbutzniks’ high-quality caviar in Israel. “There is no demand for this product,” says Avigdor Moshe, chef of Tel Aviv’s prestigious Messa restaurant, when asked why he does not serve caviar there.

Shalom Maharovsky, owner of the Mul-Yam restaurant at Tel Aviv Port, agrees: “Even if I were able to buy the Kibbutz Dan product I wouldn’t. One hundred euros per kilo? I don’t have clients for that. I believe that they could sell to private clients, but not to restaurants.”

As befits his status, we shall grant chef Ripert the right to have the last word on the matter: “I formed my opinion of the excellent Israeli caviar after very many years of experience and after having eaten a huge amount of caviar. I taste every jar that comes into the restaurant because the product is so expensive and we cannot compromise in this matter.”

HOW DIETETIC IS IT?

Continued from page A9

Yotvata Chocolate Milk Drink

Regular, 350 ml
Calories: 74
Carbohydrates: 11.3 g
Fat: 2%
Cholesterol: 7 mg
Price: NIS 6.30



Diet, 250 ml
Calories: 38
Carbohydrates: 5.6 g
Fat: 0%
Cholesterol: 0 mg
Price: NIS 5.30 (17%)

Which is better? Neither drink contributes to losing weight. Anyone wanting to indulge can drink a bit of the diet chocolate milk, but only now and then. “In chocolate drinks, more attention should be given the level of sugar than fat because the added sugar could be substantial and differs greatly between the products,” says Sukman. Mazor explains that the listed calories per 100 milliliters could mislead customers. Chocolate drinks typically contain at least double 20 milliliters and the nutritional figures need to be multiplied accordingly. “In doing so, the chocolate drink turns out equivalent to a sandwich with a sweet spread, not to another diet drink,” she says.



Lurpak Spreadable Butter

Slightly Salted
Calories: 730
Fat: 80%
Cholesterol: 148
Sodium: 400 mg
Price: NIS 13



Lighter
Calories: 540
Fat: 60%
Cholesterol: 92 mg
Sodium: 0 mg
Price: NIS 15 (+15%)

Which is better? Both items are loaded with calories and fat, so neither is recommended for anyone trying to maintain a diet. “While the lighter version managed to reduce fat by almost a third, it’s still butter with 60% fat,” says Mazor. “It’s best not to use the spread too often.” Sukman says the lighter version uses palm

oil, which she doesn’t recommend, so aside from its reduced calories, she wouldn’t suggest switching to it. Willi Food, the importer, replied: “After clarifying with the manufacturer, it turns out the product contains just 0.4% palm oil that gives it a natural yellow color. This oil is of even higher quality than food coloring.”

Pri Hagalil Canned Corn

Sweetcorn Kernels
Calories: 96
Carbohydrates: 19 g
Fat: 1.1%
Sodium: 370 mg
Price: NIS 6.50



Light Corn Kernels
Calories: 59
Carbohydrates: 9 g
Fat: 1.2%
Sodium: 370 mg
Price: NIS 8.00 (+23%)



Which is better? The light corn. Adding sugar, according to both dietitians, is unnecessary since the corn is naturally sweet. “All the values are lower or identical and the taste is similar, so there’s no reason to eat the product with added sugar,” says Sukman. Pri Hagalil

replied: “The strains of corn without added sugar are more expensive and their production costs are also higher. We don’t specify the strain of corn on the product since this has less relevance from a nutritional value standpoint.”

Strauss Cremissimo Ice Cream

Chocolate and Vanilla
Calories: 202
Carbohydrates: 25.2 g
Fat: 9.4%
Price: NIS 23.95



Chocolate and Vanilla Lite
Calories: 68
Carbohydrates: 8 g
Fat: 1.1%
Price: NIS 30.80 (+29%)

Which is better? Lite, but the taste needs getting used to. The lite version has much fewer calories than the regular and both dietitians recommend it. Mazor claims the added dietary fiber in the lite could even increase its advantage. Sukman says the great difference between their nutritional values makes them hard to compare. “The

taste factor plays a big role here,” she says. “Some people would rather abstain from eating ice cream altogether than indulging in the lite version. But anyone enjoying the taste could even have it daily, as opposed to a recommended limit on regular ice cream to a single weekly portion in a controlled manner and subject to one’s state of health.”

Elite Chocolate Bar

Regular
Calories: 519
Carbohydrates: 63 g
Fat: 27%
Sodium: 67 mg
Price: NIS 6.60



Sugar-Free
Calories: 452
Carbohydrates: 59 g
Fat: 28%
Sodium: 115 mg
Price: NIS 11.50 (+74%)



Which is better? No preference. Neither product contributes to maintaining or reducing weight. “The sugar-free bar has no advantage, not even for diabetics,” says Sukman, adding that the nutritional values are very similar and the difference in carbohydrates is negligible. “Both items contain

a large amount of fat and cholesterol,” she said. “Although they have different sources of carbohydrates, the total effect of all the ingredients on the body is similar.” Both dietitians recommend eating chocolate containing a high percentage of cocoa, but not more than a few squares at a time.



Consumer Affairs

How dietetic is dietetic food?

Depends on the item, say two dietitians, comparing a variety of so-called slim brands to the original

By Gabriela Davidovich-Weisberg

Awareness of the need for proper nutrition and keeping trim has been making headway in Israel, but the picture is still far from ideal. The latest state comptroller's report said 44.1% of all Israelis from ages 18 to 64 are overweight, if not obese. "Obesity is defined around the world and in Israel as a chronic disease that can damage many of the body's organs, shorten life expectancy, and raise the risk of heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure," said the report. It goes on to blame the committee for nutritional labeling and the Industry, Trade and Labor Ministry for not going far enough in standardizing nutritional information marked on products, and the Health Ministry for

delaying implementation of a national program for reducing sodium in food products.

The food industry is trying to address the issue by introducing various low-calorie products. "The food industry is generally making an effort to provide dietary solutions for overweight people and diabetics, but obesity rates keep climbing," says Einat Mazor, a clinical dietitian with Clalit health maintenance organization. "The reason is that most people think they can consume the same products without any restrictions while in fact there are no magic solutions. Increased consumption, even of low-calorie products, can cause obesity."

Another side of the problem is difficulty and confusion in choosing suitable foods. The Health Ministry set clear guidelines for food manufac-

urers several years ago on everything connected with classifying and labeling dietary items. A low-calorie product, for instance, has no more than 40 calories for every 100 grams, while in beverages the standard is a maximum of 20 calories per 100 milliliters. Any product meeting these requirements can be labeled "diet."

We set out to check if items classified by such definitions are really healthier and less fattening as commonly believed. Diet, lite, and sugar-free product versions were compared against their standard

counterparts. We sent the lists of ingredients and nutritional values to Mazor and Michal Sukman, a clinical dietitian at Maccabi health maintenance organization, asking them for a comparative analysis of the items and their ingredients and to determine which, if either, is healthier. The dietitians were not told the names of the products and manufacturers.

In most cases they said that while the diet version does indicate lower calories, this doesn't necessarily mean it's recommended. In some cases it is fattening nonetheless and

nutritionally deficient. "All the products contain carbohydrates, meaning they have sugar, even if it doesn't come in the familiar form of white sugar," explains Sukman. "Moreover, they are replete with other additives - removing the sugar sometimes involves adding other substances, often fats."

With some products, there weren't any great differences between the regular and diet versions except in price, with the low-fat variety usually costing more, by as much as 74%. The dietitians advise

against total abstinence from our favorite foods and instead recommend monitoring the amounts we eat and trying not to eat these foods habitually.

Here are some regular and "dietetic" products we presented to Mazor and Sukman for evaluation.

Prices were taken from Mega Ba'ir at Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Center and Tiv Ta'am at Tel Aviv's Top Dan center. Prices for each pair of items were taken from the same store. The nutritional values on all products are per 100 grams or 100 milliliters.

Terminology

The terms "Low-calorie," "dietetic" and "diet" refer to food products and liquid dairy products with no more than 40 calories per 100 grams, or beverages with no more than 20 calories per 100 ml. "Reduced cholesterol/sodium/fat" is a relative term, indicating that one of these substances is reduced by up to two-thirds compared with the regular

version of the food item. "Reduced calories" or "lite" refers to a product whose calorie content is reduced by one-third compared to the original brand.

A "sugar-free" product is one without sucrose (white sugar), but it may contain other types of sugar, such as fructose (fruit sugar) or sugar alcohols like maltitol or sorbitol.



Sometimes, to spot a great idea you need a little help

Baracke Halva

Classic Vanilla-Flavored
Calories: 430
Carbohydrates: 54 g
Fat: 32%
Price: NIS 14.90



Sugar-Free
Calories: 430
Carbohydrates: 54 g
Fat: 32%
Price: NIS 17.40 (+17%)

Which is better? Neither is useful for a diet. The regular product, being cheaper, is a better choice since both have the same amount of calories and carbohydrates. "Halva has a healthful image since it's based on sesame seeds, which are classified among the healthy fats," says Mazor. "This may be true theoretically, but halva as a processed product is loaded with fats, including trans fats associated with heart and vascular disease and the onset of diabetes." Sukman says the only advantage in sugar-free halva is maltitol, an artificial sweetener which breaks down differently and more slowly in the body than white sugar.

Heinz Mayonnaise



Real Mayonnaise
Calories: 608.8
Carbohydrates: 4.56 g
Saturated fat: 9.6%
Sodium: 480 mg
Price: NIS 12.85



Mayolight
Calories: 381
Carbohydrates: 8.2 g
Saturated fat: 3.8%
Sodium: 410 mg
Price: NIS 12.85

Which is better? Mayolight could be more helpful to a diet, but both are a problem with their high carbohydrate and fat content. "These products, processed with a long list of ingredients and high sodium content, are just meant to add flavor," explains Mazor. The big difference is in the ratio of vegetable fat to water, she says. Low-cal products have higher water content and are therefore preferable.

Hotpop Microwave Popcorn

Natural
Calories: 540
Carbohydrates: 51 g
Fat: 30%
Sodium: 1,060 mg
Price: NIS 15



Natural Low-Fat
Calories: 330
Carbohydrates: 67 g
Fat: 7%
Sodium: 1,260 mg
Price: NIS 15



Which is better? Neither product helps in keeping trim and healthy. When unavoidable, the low-fat alternative is the better choice. "The high amount of sodium is worrisome," says Mazor. "An adult's daily sodium intake shouldn't exceed 2,400 milligrams."

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Technology Track	Marketing Track	Digital University Track
08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration	08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration	08:30-09:30 Assembly & Registration
09:30-09:45 Opening and Welcome Dr. Yossi Vardi, Chairman, International Technologies Guy Rolnik, Founder and Editor-in-Chief, TheMarker	09:30-09:45 Opening and Welcome Sivan Klingbail - Chief Editor, TheMarker Magazine Dr. Eva Berger - Daan at School of Media Studies, The College of Management Academic Studies	9:30-9:40 Opening and Welcome Eilhay Vidal, Deputy Editor, TheMarker.com
09:45-10:30 Opening Panel Moderator: Dr. Yossi Vardi Speakers: Alec Ross, Senior Advisor for Innovation to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Macon Phillips, White House Director of New Media	09:45-10:40 Panel: "Tweet a Campaign" - Marketing and Advertising in the Digital Era Moderator: Sivan Klingbail, Editor TheMarker Magazine Speakers: Hagit Kamin, VP Marketing, Paz-Yellow, Eron Landenberg, Chief Interaction Officer at Publicis Israel, Yossi Lubaton-CEO at Saatchi & Saatchi BBR, Merav Spektorovsky Sasson, Head of Direct Banking, Bank Hapoalim, Ilan Yehousha, CEO at Wallal, Dan Chen, CEO at Tapuz People	9:40-9:55 Dudi Balsar , Founder, Under.Me 9:55-10:10 TBA 10:10-10:30 Andrew Bonar , Deliverability Director, Emailvision
10:30-11:00 Big Idea to Market Leader George Conrades, Executive Chairman of Akamai	10:40-11:00 Unleashing the Power of Beauty through Digital Georges-Edouard Dias - Vice President Senior E-Business, L'oreal	10:30-11:00 Workshop: We Made it and It's Not an Ad - Brands Learn to Talk Sagi Chemetz, Founder & CEO, Blink
11:00-11:30 Coffee Break	11:00-11:30 Coffee Break	11:00-11:30 Coffee Break
11:30-11:50 Laurent Le Moal , VP, PayPal	11:30-11:40 Facebook Session: Social Network Gourmet Chef Omer Miller, 'Dining Room' and 'Shulhan' Restaurants	11:30-12:20 Panel: The Economics of Crowdsourcing Moderator: Lior Zoref, Digital Marketing Advisor, Speaker and Blogger Speakers: Ran Haklai, General Manager, uTest Israel Yael Elish, VP Product & Social Media Marketing, Waze Timor Gordon, Founder, digiti Raphael Ozan, Founder & CTO, BillGuard Tomer Ashur, Chairman, Wikimedia Israel
11:50-12:10 Amit Menipaz , Senior Director, eBay	11:40-12:00 Building Essential Connections Ciaran Quilty, Head of CEEMEA and Gaming, Global Marketing Solutions, Facebook	12:20-12:50 Reinventing Brick & Mortar Retail through Digital Services Workshop By: Georges-Edouard Dias - Vice President Senior E-Business, L'oreal
12:10-12:20 What the American VCs are Looking For Nilly Goldenberg, Founder & CEO, Brandsforce	12:00-12:20 The Future of TV Elad Nafshi, VP Video Product Management, Comcast	12:50-13:10 Who's Afraid of Daphne Leaf? How to stop fearing consumers and how to restore faith in the branding Eldad Wienberg, CEO Mccann Digital Israel
12:20-12:45 Crowdfunding with Indiegogo Across the Globe Slava Rubin, Founder & CEO, Indiegogo	12:20-12:35 Dr. Tali Weiss , CEO and Head of Research, TrendsSpotting	13:10-13:30 From iPhone to 'Bat-Mitzvah' and Social revolutions - How do products, services, ideas and behaviors spread and become socially popular? Dr. Liraz Lasry, Marketing and Trends lecturer and researcher, The College of Management Academic Studies
12:45-13:30 Venture Capital Panel: Just Pick Up From the Floor - Super Angels and Micro VC Moderator: Guy Rolnik Speakers: Avichay Nissenbaum, General Partner at lool ventures Moshe Lichtman, Angel Investor, Former president of Microsoft Israel Rina Sheanski, General Partner at Carmel Ventures Nir Tenzer, VP Business Development and Platform Strategy, Microsoft Israel	12:35-12:50 Gilad Zirkal , CTO & Co-founder, Hashtagart	13:30-14:30 LUNCH
13:30-14:30 LUNCH	12:50-13:00 Social Marketing in Content Dr. Dan Erev, The College of Management Academic Studies	13:30-14:30 LUNCH
14:30-14:40 Releasing the Traffic - Comparing Internet Infrastructure in Israel and the World Guy Caspi, CEO, Tamares Telecom	13:00-13:10 Itay Nagler , New Media Content Developer	13:40-14:30 LUNCH
14:40-14:55 TheTime Report - Israeli Internet Industry Yoni Kish, Marketing Astrategy Expert	13:10-13:20 Online Content Marketing - the hottest trend in 2012 Gilad de Vries, Vice President, Brands and Agencies, Outbrain	14:30-15:00 TBA 15:00-16:15 Facebook Workshop-The Next Stage - How to succeed with Facebook Ads All the methods for an effective Facebook marketing campaign: budget management, campaign development, optimization and targeting specific audiences. A workshop geared towards digital marketing and budget managers. Elad Brindt, Facebook Europe
14:45-15:40 Exit Panel: Is Building for Forever Worth Aspiring For? Moderator: Nathan Lipson Head of TheMarker's "Israel 2021" Initiative Speakers: Ran Har Nevo, SVP Video, AOL Eyal Herzog, Entrepreneur Roni Zehavi, Former CEO & Co-Founder, Cotendo Eran Shir, Head Creative Innovation Center, Yahoo!	13:20-13:30 Ghada Zoabi , Founder & CEO of Arabic news site - BOKRA	15:10-16:00 Panel: Hello? Where's the Money? Mobile Advertising and Marketing Moderator: Eilhay Vidal, Deputy Editor, TheMarker.com Speakers: Noam Bardin, CEO Waze Rona Ben David, CEO, OnTheMob Zohar Levkowitz, Founder, Amobee Omry Argaman, Co-Founder, VP Business Development, Moblin Moshe Hogege, Industry Head Export, Google Israel Nir Korczak, Industry Head Export, Google Israel
15:40 - 16:25 Panel: Integrating the Orthodox Sector in The High-Tech Industry Moderator: Guy Rolnik Speakers: Elisha Yannay, Chairman of the Israel Association of Electronics and Information Technology Moshe Friedman, Orthodox Entrepreneur	15:10-16:00 Panel: Hello? Where's the Money? Mobile Advertising and Marketing Moderator: Eilhay Vidal, Deputy Editor, TheMarker.com Speakers: Noam Bardin, CEO Waze Rona Ben David, CEO, OnTheMob Zohar Levkowitz, Founder, Amobee Omry Argaman, Co-Founder, VP Business Development, Moblin Moshe Hogege, Industry Head Export, Google Israel Nir Korczak, Industry Head Export, Google Israel	16:00-16:15 Cross Media Audience and Cross Content Audience in Convergent Media Prof. Hillol Nossek (ph.D.), Head of MA program, School of media studies, The College of Management Academic Studies

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Greece, Cyprus to advance Israeli power line to Europe

By Israel Fisher
TheMarker Correspondent and Reuters

Greece and Cyprus have agreed to an Israeli request to lay a power cable to Europe via the two Mediterranean nations, their electricity authorities stated yesterday.

The 2,000-megawatt cable, dubbed the EuroAsia Interconnector project, would ensure that nations including Greece, Cyprus, Israel and others in southeast Europe and the Mediterranean basin have a regular power supply.

Israel has faced soaring power prices since losing its supply of Egyptian natural gas a year ago, following the revolution there. The supply

became unreliable following the fall of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. This week, Egypt announced that it was halting gas exports to Israel altogether.

Meanwhile, Israel has been drafting emergency plans to address expected power outages this summer.

Cyprus for its part has been facing severe power shortages since a disaster at a production plant last year. Following the incident, local authorities had to bring old plants back online in order to meet local needs.

Also, Europe as a whole is expecting power shortages in the wake of Germany's decision to shutter all of its nuclear

power plants following Japan's Fukushima disaster.

The Israel-to-Europe cable will be built by the Israel Electric Corporation and PPP Quantum Energy, which is controlled by the Greek power utility and Cypriot companies. Israel and Cyprus signed an accord to lay the underwater cable in March. Yesterday's announcement was the official one.

This is the first stage in a process that would bring Israel electricity from mainland Europe.

At 540 nautical miles (1,000 kilometers) long and lying at a maximum depth of 2,000 meters, the cable would be the longest in the world.



Power lines in Ramat Hovav. Israel is facing power shortages. *Eliahu Hershkovitz*

Barak's Akirov home sale was Q1's most expensive

By Arik Mirovsky

The sale of Defense Minister Ehud Barak's home was the country's most expensive real estate transaction during the first quarter.

Barak sold his apartment in Tel Aviv's luxury Akirov Towers for NIS 26 million to businessman Teddy Sagi in March. However, the transaction does not yet appear in the Tax Authority's computer system.

There were several other major real estate sales in Tel Aviv luxury towers that quarter, including the sale of a seven-room apartment in the Hashoftim Tower for NIS 20.5 million, and a NIS 13.9 million sale in the Manhattan Tower.

In total, there were eight sales for more than NIS 10 million in the quarter – a significant drop from the preceding quarter, as well as compared to the first quarter of 2011.

In the first quarter of 2011, some 36 homes changed hands for more than NIS 10 million.



The Akirov Towers. *Yotam Shalev*



Vegetables for sale at Tel Aviv's Carmel Market. *Nir Kafri*

Pass the salad

Israel ranks third in consumption of vegetables, sweets

By Amiram Cohen

Israelis are global leaders when it comes to eating their vegetables, according to OECD figures.

With the average Israeli eating an estimated 197.6 kilograms of veggies every year, Israel ranks third in the world in terms of vegetable consumption, behind Greece (257 kilograms) and Turkey (252.2 kilograms).

Israelis also like their sweets, downing an average of 38.8 kilograms per person each year, according to OECD figures. Here, too, Israel ranks third, trailing behind Luxembourg (59.8 kilograms) and Iceland (53.1 kilograms).

What else is on the Israeli menu? Lots of legumes – 5.1 kilograms per person a year, in fact, again putting Israel in third place. Mexico is first on the list, at 8.4 kilograms per person annually, and Canada is second, at 6.6 kilograms. So what aren't Israelis eating? Compared to others,

they don't eat many eggs. Of the 25 countries that participated in the survey, Israel ranks 21st in egg consumption, with a mere 6.7 kilograms per capita. First is Mexico (19.4 kilograms), and second is Luxembourg (16.2 kilograms).

Israel does decently when it comes to beef consumption, ranking ninth in the OECD, at 68.3 kilograms per person. Of the nations ranked, Portugal comes in first, at 105.9 kilograms per person, followed by Greece, at 103.8 kilograms (Mediterranean diet, anyone?). Note that this ranking does not include any of the countries in South America, where consumption is likely higher.

Despite the impression that Israelis don't eat much fish, the country falls in the middle of the rankings here, too. At 13.4 kilograms per person, Israel comes in 13th. At the top of the list is Portugal, at 45.2 kilograms per person, followed by Iceland, at 38.6 kilograms.

EMG: Egypt didn't halt gas merely over money

Reuters

The decision to halt Egyptian natural gas exports to Israel was not due simply to commercial differences, international shareholders in EMG said yesterday, dismissing claims they were behind in payments.

"Any attempts to characterize this dispute as a mere commercial one is misleading," shareholders in East Mediterranean Gas Co. (EMG) said in a statement to Reuters.

"This is a government-backed contract sealed by a memorandum of understanding between Egypt and Israel that specifically refers to the [1979] peace treaty."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has tried to play down termination of the 2005 deal, saying cancellation of the contract supplying Israel with 40% of its gas needs resulted from a business rather than diplomatic dispute.

Egyptian officials also said it was a trade issue, although there have been growing public calls for Egypt to review ties with Israel since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, for whom a peace treaty with Israel was a cornerstone of regional policy.

Sunday's announcement that Egyptian state-owned oil and gas companies would stop the gas sales, which were part of a 20-year deal, was the

dramatic conclusion to a year of sabotage and pipeline attacks that had already disrupted supplies.

EMG's international shareholders said the Egyptian oil and gas companies act as third-party guarantors of their government's obligations to supply 7 billion cubic meters of gas annually to Israel.

"Egypt's public explanation that EMG was behind on payments is incorrect," said the international shareholders, who include Thai energy giant PTT, U.S. businessman Sam Zell, Israel's Merhav and Ampal-American Israel Corp.

Egypt Natural Gas Co. is also a shareholder in EMG.

The Egyptian oil and gas companies "failed to protect the pipeline from attack, failed to repair it promptly and have delivered almost no gas to EMG since February 2011," the international shareholders said.

The Egyptian oil and gas companies are substantially indebted to EMG as a result of the penalties they have incurred due to their failure to supply the gas, the shareholders said.

They dismissed Egypt's announcement that it is prepared to renegotiate the deal, saying EMG has been negotiating with Egypt for months without success.

Immediate comment was not expected from officials in Egypt.

Record numbers fly to Eilat for holiday

Some 34,000 passengers were scheduled to pass through Ben-Gurion International Airport on Independence Day, half of them heading abroad. A total of 113 flights were scheduled for yesterday. Of these, a record number of passengers were scheduled to fly to Eilat, prompting local airlines Arkia and Israir to add extra flights yesterday and today. Arkia's vice president of marketing, Dudu Mahlev, noted that Israelis generally prefer to stay within the country's borders for Independence Day. Mahlev added that the holiday's timing – right before the beginning of a weekend – probably encouraged many to take off for the southern resort city. (*Zohar Blumenkrantz*)

Exports up 15,000 times since state was founded

By Ora Coren

Israeli exports have increased 15,000 times since the nation was founded, from \$6 million in 1948 to \$90 billion last year, the Israel Export Institute announced yesterday in honor of Israel's 64th anniversary.

Exports per capita increased from \$7 the year the country was founded to \$11,500 as of last year.

"Over the country's 64 years, exports were its engine for development and economic achievement," said Ramzi Gabbay, who heads the institute. "The goal of making Israel one of the top 15 countries in terms of GDP per capita can be achieved only by continuing to increase exports per capita."

Since 1948, exports have expanded at an annual pace of 16.5% in dollar terms, said the institute, which is part of the Industry and Trade Ministry.

Exports contracted during only five years. The sharpest annual drop – 17% – was in 2009, during the global financial crisis. The second sharpest drop, of 13%, was in 2001, when the high-tech bubble burst.

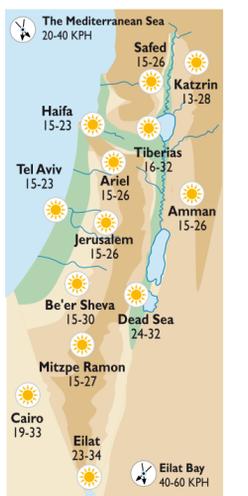
In 1950, Britain was Israel's top export market, with the \$11 million in goods and services exported to that country making up 32% of all exports.

The United States was second, at \$8 million, but topped the list by 1970 – when Iran was No. 10, with \$22 million in Israeli exports.

Israel's first free-trade agreement was signed with Hungary in 1949. Under the deal, Budapest promised to provide Israel with meat, grains and heavy industrial equipment, while Israel committed to export paint, chemi-

cal, thread, citrus fruit and dentures. Israel now has free-trade agreements with 39 countries.

Weather



Friday Saturday Sunday
Sunrise 05:58
Sunset 19:16

Air pollution index: 26.4/12
low medium high
Jerusalem Tel Aviv Haifa Krayot
Be'er Sheva Karmiel Afula Mod'in

Gradual warming

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Sports

Judo / European Championships

Zeevi grabs fourth European crown as judokas make good in Russia

By Tal Ben Ezra

A financial crisis, clashes between coaches and a case of shoplifting – all the problems surrounding Israeli judokas in recent months were forgotten after a glorious European Championship weekend in Chelyabinsk, Russia.

Arik Zeevi struck gold in the men's under 100 kilogram category. Yarden Gerbi won a silver medal in the women's -63kg, while Alice Schlesinger took bronze in the same category. Soso Palelashvili, who only two months ago was arrested on suspicion of stealing toothpaste in Germany, also made the podium with a bronze medal in the men's -73kg category, to conclude a dream weekend.

Israel's coach, Oren Smadja, was overjoyed: "I'm so proud to head a delegation that won four medals, this is unbelievable," he said. "We're one of the strongest teams in the continent."

The party began on Friday when Gerbi, who won her two first fights by ippons, made it all the way to the final, where she lost to a French judoka, after being penalized twice for being passive. Schlesinger also began well, but lost in the semifinals,

only to later win the fight for the bronze medal. "I hope to do better in London," said Schlesinger.

Palelashvili announced before the championship that he would give up his Olympic dream if he didn't make the podium. After beating the reigning Portuguese champion, Palelashvili lost his next fight, leaving him with only a slim chance for a medal. Still, against the odds, Palelashvili won his remaining fights to claim the bronze medal but, nonetheless, still hasn't secured his place in the London Olympics. "I'm glad I finally succeeded," he said. "I saw the girls doing well, and that really strengthened me mentally. All my opponents were very difficult."

But the crowning achievement was Zeevi's fourth European title. "I feel wonderful, completely euphoric," he said yesterday. "I don't think I'll ever win this title again, therefore it's a very special moment for me. I'm so happy to stand on the podium and hear the national anthem playing. Throughout the competition I had conflicting feelings. At times I didn't feel I was at my best, but then I said to myself: 'I'm going to try and win this, I'm going to give my all until the end.'"



Israel's Arik Zeevi celebrating his victory over Georgia's Levan Zhorzholiani during their men's -100kg category final match at the European Judo Championships in Chelyabinsk, yesterday.

Soccer / Spanish La Liga

Tito Vilanova perfect to replace Guardiola at Barcelona, says Puyol

Reuters

MADRID – Tito Vilanova is the ideal person to replace Pep Guardiola as Barcelona coach to continue developing the Catalan club's eye-catching brand of football, captain Carles Puyol said yesterday.

Vilanova is to step up from assistant to take the reins at the Nou Camp next season after Guardiola announced on Friday he would not be continuing beyond the end of the current campaign.

After an astonishing four-year reign, during which he led Barca to 13 titles, including two Champions League triumphs, Guardiola said he needed to take time out to recharge his batteries.

"We all wanted Pep to continue," Barca's shaggy-haired defender Puyol told a news conference. "Once he had decided to go for the reasons he gave, which we understand and respect, the best news we could have had was that Tito Vilanova would be staying."

"It's a blow Guardiola is going, but Tito staying means the



HEIR APPARENT: Barcelona's coach Pep Guardiola, left, with Tito Vilanova, his assistant coach and future replacement at the helm of the Catalan giants.

project continues. Tito knows the team better than anyone, knows a great deal about football, and understands the philosophy perfectly. He is the ideal person to continue the project."

Vilanova, a former Barca

he achieved with the club and admitted no one in the squad had any idea he was not going to renew his contract.

"We hadn't picked it up at all, a week ago I would have bet everything on Pep continuing," Puyol said. "We have to thank Pep for everything he has given us. He marks a before and an after in football."

In the last week, Barca were knocked out of the Champions League by Chelsea and saw their chances of winning a fourth consecutive La Liga crown all but disappear when they lost 2-1 at home to leaders Real Madrid last weekend.

They travel to Madrid to play Rayo Vallecano in La Liga today, seven points behind Real, who host Sevilla earlier today, with four matches left to play.

However, they still have the King's Cup final against Athletic Bilbao, who they beat to lift the trophy in 2009, which offers the chance for a 14th title of the Guardiola era before he leaves.



GOING DOWN: Rishon Letzion players realizing they have been relegated to the Leumit League, after losing 1-0 to Hapoel Be'er Sheva yesterday. Elsewhere in the Premier League, Maccabi won the Petah Tikva derby, Hapoel Tel Aviv beat Bnei Sakhnin 3-1, and Bnei Yehuda improved their chances to play in Europe with a 2-1 defeat of Maccabi Haifa.

Baseball / MLB

Late Rodriguez rally helps Yankees leave Verlander empty-handed again

Reuters

NEW YORK – Derek Jeter scored on a passed ball to give the New York Yankees a 7-6 win over the Detroit Tigers on Friday, spoiling another visit to the Bronx for Detroit ace Justin Verlander.

The Tigers played without slugger Delmon Young, who was charged with a hate crime for allegedly yelling anti-Semitic remarks during a scuffle with tourists outside a hotel near Times Square earlier on Friday (see box).

Alex Rodriguez belted a homer, drove in another run and tied the scores in eighth inning to help send the slumping Tigers to their fifth straight defeat.

"It was a nice win, a nice way to start the home stand with a good win, especially being behind twice in that game and able to come back against a top-notch pitcher like Verlander," Rodriguez said following a 3-for-4 night at the plate, adding, "It's definitely a good sign."

Cy Young winner Verlander, who has not won in New York for almost five years, surrendered five runs on seven hits in six innings.

Yankees starter Ivan Nova

was also wayward, yielding six runs on 11 hits, but three New York relievers found their range before closer Mariano Rivera (1-1) came in on the ninth to get the final three outs for the win.

"Obviously, it could've been a lot better," said Verlander, who has not celebrated a win in New York since Aug. 16, 2007.

"Our team goes out and

gives us six runs against a guy like Nova tonight, you've got to make that work.

"It wasn't easy out there. It was cold and everything, but man, they battled. It's a shame we didn't win."

Trailing 6-5 going into the eighth, Rodriguez scored on Mark Teixeira's sacrifice fly to tie the score.

Jeter then drew a one-out

walk in the ninth, took third on a wild pitch from Tigers reliever Brayan Villarreal, then raced home with the winning run on a passed ball.

"As much as I'd like to say that was great baserunning tonight, basically all I had to do is run," Jeter told reporters.

"But that's how you win games sometimes ... being aggressive. We caught a break."

Tigers outfielder apologizes for anti-Semitic remarks

Detroit Tigers outfielder Delmon Young apologized on Friday for an incident that led to a hate crime charge against him for allegedly yelling anti-Semitic remarks during a scuffle with tourists in New York.

Police say Young, 26, scuffled with four tourists from Illinois outside a hotel near Times Square early on Friday after the group gave money to a panhandler wearing a skullcap.

The baseball player is accused of yelling anti-Semitic remarks during the incident, but it was unclear at whom the remarks were directed, police said.

Young has been charged with aggravated harassment, which is considered a hate crime, authorities said.

"I sincerely regret what happened last

night," Young said in a written statement.

He also apologized to everyone he "affected," which included the Detroit Tigers, the family of team owner Mike Ilitch, and the team's fans.

"I take this matter very seriously and assure everyone that I will do everything I can to improve myself as a person and player," he added.

The team said in a statement it was aware of the allegation against Young, but had no comment.

"It would be inappropriate for us to comment further at this time. Per a provision in the Major League Baseball Basic Agreement, any allegation that involves alcohol is referred to MLB's Employee Assistance Program," the team said. (Reuters)

Live on Television

● Sun. 08:15, Eurosport 2: Australian Football, Richmond vs. West Coast

● Sun. 12:00, 5+ Live, HD: MotoGP, Jerez Race

● Sun. 12:00, Eurosport: Snooker World Championships, last 16

● Sun. 13:00, Sport 5, HD: Soccer, Real Madrid vs. Sevilla

● Sun. 13:30, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Bologna vs. Genoa

● Sun. 14:45, One: Soccer, Celtic vs. Rangers

● Sun. 15:00, Eurosport: FIA World Touring Cars, Bratislava

● Sun. 15:00, Eurosport 2: Cycling, Tour of Turkey, stage 8

● Sun. 15:30, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Chelsea vs. QPR

● Sun. 15:30, Sport 2: Soccer, Twente vs. Ajax Amsterdam

● Sun. 16:00, Sport 5, HD: Soccer, Siena vs. AC Milan

● Sun. 16:30, Eurosport: Snooker World Championships, last 16

● Sun. 17:00, Sport 5+: Tennis, Barcelona final, Nadal vs. Ferrer

● Sun. 18:00, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Tottenham vs. Blackburn

● Sun. 18:00, 5+ Live: Soccer, Auxerre vs. Brest

● Sun. 19:00, 5+ Live, HD: Soccer, Malaga vs. Valencia

● Sun. 19:45, Sport 5+: Basketball, Mac. R. Letzion vs. I. Ashkelon

● Sun. 19:45, One: Basketball, Hap. Tel Aviv vs. I. Nes Tziona

● Sun. 19:55, Sport 5, HD: Basketball, Hap. Jerusalem vs. Hap. Holon

● Sun. 20:00, Sport 2: Soccer, Hap. Ramat Hasharon vs. Beitar Jerusalem

● Sun. 20:00, Eurosport: Tennis, Stuttgart WTA, finals

● Sun. 20:30, Eurosport 2: Futsal, UEFA Cup, final

● Sun. 21:00, Eurosport 2: Snooker World Championships, last 16

● Sun. 22:00, 5+ Gold: Soccer, Lille vs. Paris Saint-Germain

● Sun. 22:00, Sport 1, HD: Soccer, Sao Paulo vs. Santos

● Sun. 22:00, Fox Sports: Golf, New Orleans, last round

● Sun. 22:30, Sport 5, HD: Soccer, Rayo Vallecano vs. Barcelona

● Sun. 22:30, 5+ Live, HD: NBA Playoffs, Denver at LA Lakers

● Mon. 00:30, Sport 2: Soccer, Guarani vs. Ponte Preta

● Mon. 02:00, Fox Sports: NHL Playoffs, Nashville at Phoenix

● Mon. 03:00, ESPN: MLB, Tampa Bay at Texas

Sports Shorts

Maccabi breezes past Buducnost to reach Adriatic League final

Maccabi Tel Aviv easily brushed away Buducnost last night at Nokia Arena with a 82-60 win setting up an Adriatic League final against Cedevita tomorrow. Maccabi struggled in the first quarter, but then stepped up in the second, and a 16-2 run put the game firmly beyond the Montenegrin team's reach. Lior Eliyahu led Maccabi's scorers with 17 points, while Kieth Langford added 16. Earlier in the evening, Partizan Belgrade failed to reach a sixth successive final, surrendering to Cedevita 58-66. (Haaretz Sport Staff)

Southampton returns to Premier League after seven years

Southampton was promoted to the Premier League on Saturday after a 4-0 win over Coventry sealed its return to England's topflight, following a seven-year absence. The Saints scored twice in each half to clinch a second straight promotion and finish as runner-up to Reading in the second-tier League Championship. West Ham finished third despite a 2-1 win over Hull and will enter the playoffs with Blackpool, Birmingham and Cardiff. There are seven Premier League games later Saturday, with Arsenal at Stoke and Newcastle at Wigan. (AP)

Whitney scores in overtime as Coyotes beat Predators in NHL playoffs

Phoenix's Ray Whitney scored in overtime and the Coyotes survived a late goal in regulation to beat the Nashville Predators 4-3 Friday to open the Western Conference semifinals. Phoenix was 33-1 when leading after two periods during the regular season, but has struggled to close out playoff games. The Coyotes allowed four tying third-period goals against Chicago in the first round of the playoffs and did it again, giving up Martin Erat's goal on a power play with 4:42 left. (AP)

Azarenka beats Radwanska for fourth time this year to reach Porsche GP final

Top-ranked Victoria Azarenka of Belarus cruised past Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland 6-1, 6-3 yesterday to reach the final of the Porsche Grand Prix. Azarenka is seeking a tour-high fifth tournament title of the year. She went on a 26-0 start to the year that included winning the Australian Open title. Azarenka dominated the match against the fourth-ranked Radwanska, whose four losses this year have all come against Azarenka. On match point, Azarenka fired a forehand winner to advance to the final against either Maria Sharapova or Petra Kvitova. (AP)

Schalke clinches Champions League place, in Raul's last home game in the Bundesliga

Bundesliga top scorer Klaas-Jan Huntelaar struck twice for Schalke to secure automatic qualification for next season's Champions League with a 4-0 win over Hertha Berlin yesterday. Huntelaar scored in the 32nd minute before taking his season tally to 27 in the 88th, with Lewis Holtby and Real Gonzalez – playing his last game at home for Schalke – also scoring. Elsewhere in Germany, Freiburg's 4-1 win over Cologne saved Hertha from automatic relegation, for now. Hertha is two points behind Cologne going into the final weekend's games. Augsburg and Hamburg are safe after 0-0 draws at Borussia Monchengladbach and at home against Mainz, respectively. Champions Borussia Dortmund won 5-2 at relegated Kaiserslautern, while Bayern Munich defeated Stuttgart 2-0. (AP)

Celtics' Ray Allen doubtful for playoffs opener tonight against Hawks

Boston Celtics guard Ray Allen is still not sure if he'll be able to play in the basketball playoff opener against the Atlanta Hawks tonight. Allen has not played for two weeks because of a sore right ankle. He was shooting around before practice with the team yesterday and said he would take part in some of the "smaller parts" of the workout. But coach Doc Rivers said Allen would not practice and he didn't think he would play in Game 1, either. The 36-year-old shooting guard said he received a cortisone shot on Wednesday. If it weren't for the playoffs, he said, he'd already be undergoing surgery. (AP)

Scoreboard

SOCCER

Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Kiryat Shmona	34	20	10	4	43	21	70
2. Hap. Tel Aviv***	34	15	13	6	59	31	55
3. Bnei Yehuda	34	14	11	9	45	31	53
4. M. Netanya	33	15	8	10	47	41	53
5. Maccabi Haifa	34	14	9	11	52	42	51
6. Bnei Sakhnin**	34	15	7	12	57	45	50
7. Mac. Tel Aviv	33	14	7	12	47	35	49
8. FC Ashdod	34	12	12	10	40	48	

9. R. Hasharon	33	11	10	12	36	43	43
10. Beitar J'ram	33	13	6	14	28	41	43
11. Hapoel Acre	34	11	9	14	45	41	42
12. Hap. Haifa	34	10	9	15	38	41	39
13. H. Be'er Sheva	34	11	6	17	37	57	39
14. M.P. Tikva**	34	9	9	16	35	55	33
15. Rishon Letzion	34	6	9	19	37	64	27
16. H. Petah Tikva*	34	7	11	16	33	51	23

*9 points deducted, **2 points deducted, ***3 points deducted

Championship Playoffs

Hapoel Tel Aviv 3, Bnei Sakhnin 1
Bnei Yehuda x, Maccabi Haifa x
Ironi Kiryat Shmona 1, Ashdod SC 0

Relegation Playoffs

Hapoel Acre 0, Hapoel Haifa 0
Hap. Petah Tikva 0, Mac. Petah Tikva 1
Rishon Letzion 0, Hapoel Be'er Sheva 1

English Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Manchester Utd	35	26	5	4	86	32	83
2. Manchester City	35	25	5	5	88	27	80
3. Arsenal	36	20	6	10	68	44	66
4. Newcastle	35	18	9	8	53	46	63
5. Tottenham	34	17	8	9	57	59	59
6. Chelsea	34	16	10	8	56	38	58
7. Everton	35	14	9	12	46	38	51
8. Liverpool	35	13	10	12	43	37	49
9. Fulham	35	12	10	13	45	46	46
10. West Brom	36	13	7	16	41	47	46
11. Sunderland	36	11	12	13	44	45	45
12. Swansea City	36	11	11	14	43	44	44
13. Norwich City	36	11	10	15	47	63	43
14. Stoke City	35	11	10	14	33	49	43
15. Aston Villa	36	7	16	13	36	50	37
16. Wigan	36	9	10	17	38	60	37
17. QPR	35	9	7	19	57	54	34
18. Bolton	35	10	4	21	41	69	34
19. Blackburn	35	8	7	20	47	73	31
20. Wolves	36	5	9	22	38	79	24

Yesterday

Everton 4, Fulham 0
Stoke 1, Arsenal 1
Sunderland 2, Bolton 2
Swansea 4, Wolves 4
West Bromwich 4, Aston Villa 0

Wigan 4, Newcastle 0

Norwich 0, Liverpool 3

Italian Serie A

Cagliari 0, Chievo 0
Palermo 1, Catania 1
AS Roma 2, Napoli 2

Spanish La Liga

Espanyol 0, Sporting Gijon 3
Getafe 1, Mallorca 3
Levante 3, Granada 1
Real Sociedad 3, Racing Santander 0

German Bundesliga

Leverkusen 1, Hannover 0
Bayern Munich 2, Stuttgart 0
Freiburg 4, Cologne 1
Hamburger SV 0, Mainz 3
Hoffenheim 2, Nurnberg 3
Kaiserslautern 2, Dortmund 5
M'gladbach 0, Augsburg 0
Schalke 4, Hertha 0
Wolfsburg 3, Werder Bremen 1

BASKETBALL

Adriatic League, semifinals

Maccabi Tel Aviv 82, Buducnost 60
Cedevita 68, Partizan 56

TENNIS

Barcelona, semifinals
[3] D. Ferrer (ESP) def. [1] M. Raonic (CAN) 7-6 (2), 7-6 (5)
[1] R. Nadal (ESP) def. [9] F. Verdasco (ESP) 6-0, 6-4.

ICE HOCKEY

NHL

Phoenix 4, Nashville 3 (OT)

BASEBALL

MLB

Oakland 5, BALTIMORE 2
NY YANKEES 7, Detroit 6
CLEVELAND 3, LA Angels 2
Chicago Cubs 5, PHILADELPHIA 1
Seattle 9, TORONTO 5 (10 innings)
Arizona 5, MIAMI 0
Houston 6, CINCINNATI 4
ATLANTA 6, Pittsburgh 1
Tampa Bay 8, TEXAS