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Jewish Times Asia

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ב"ה
**Happy 62nd
Anniversary
to Israel**

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JAPAN'S HARSH SENTENCE FOR YESHIVA STUDENTS TRICKED INTO DRUG RUNNING

By Jessica Zwaiman Lerner

A Japanese court has passed judgment on a second Yeshiva student, Yaakov Grinwald, for his involvement in an attempt to smuggle 90,000 ecstasy pills into that country two years ago.

Grinwald has been sentenced to six years in prison, less 500 days, plus a fine of 4 million Japanese Yen. The Japanese prosecution had requested a 13-year prison sentence, including forced labor.

The judge took into consideration that Grinwald was not actively involved in the crime, did not have actual knowledge of the crime and was an inexperienced student. However, he should have known better.

Israeli Attorney Mordechai Tzivin is representing Mr Grinwald. It is likely, if there is no appeal that Grinwald will be sent to Fuchu prison. He will likely be transferred to Israel eventually, but this could take up to a year.

As previously reported by *Jewish Times Asia*, in May 2009, Grinwald together with Yoel Goldstein and Yosef Banda, were arrested and held in a Japanese jail. A "friend" offered the three students US\$1000 each to carry suitcases with supposed antiques from Amsterdam to Tokyo.

Once in Japan, they were going to be met by a third party to collect the antiques. They were told everything was legal, so the students suspected nothing. Customs officials in Japan detected the drugs inside a false-bottom in each of the three suitcases. The street value



Fuchu prison cell

of the ecstasy pills seized was estimated at US\$3.6 million.

Ben Zion Miller, the drug-smuggler who enticed the Yeshiva students, was arrested by Israeli police in February of 2009 and since has been indicted on a series of drug-trafficking charges. Police believe Miller worked for an Israeli criminal group and may be connected to the notorious Abergil family.

Yosef Banda, who was the first to be tried, and a minor at the time of the arrest, was sentenced to 5 years in prison plus a fine. After sentencing, Japan agreed to deduct 274 days of his imprisonment in that country from the total, as time served. At the end of the 5 years, the Japanese verdict stipulates that the courts in Israel may, under certain circumstances, add another 3 years of imprisonment to his sentence.

Banda was flown from

Tokyo to Israel as part of the Prisoner Transfer Agreement, which Israel signed with Japan. He is the 6th Israeli to be transferred back under this agreement.

The Japanese Justice Minister signed Banda's transfer on 24 February 2010 after 5 months of negotiations. Banda will serve the balance of his sentence in Israel, but it is expected he will be given substantial time off for good behaviour.

For the first time since his apprehension, Banda ate kosher food on his way from the Chiba prison in Japan to the airport in Tokyo, courtesy of his brother Yonah. Banda lost a great deal of weight in prison, because of the inability to provide him with Kosher food there.

Attorney David C. Buxbaum who assisted Banda in Japan said, "I was absolutely delighted to visit with him at the Hong Kong airport, where

he was transferring planes. The Israeli security police who were accompanying him were most kind in letting me talk with him."

Buxbaum said Mr Matsuo, lead counsel and Ms Tarao, trial counsel "did an outstanding job, as did head translator Mitzi Ing."

The prayers and the emotional support from Jewish people and communities around the world have helped to sustain the three students through these hard years.

Goldstein's trial is set to begin in May.

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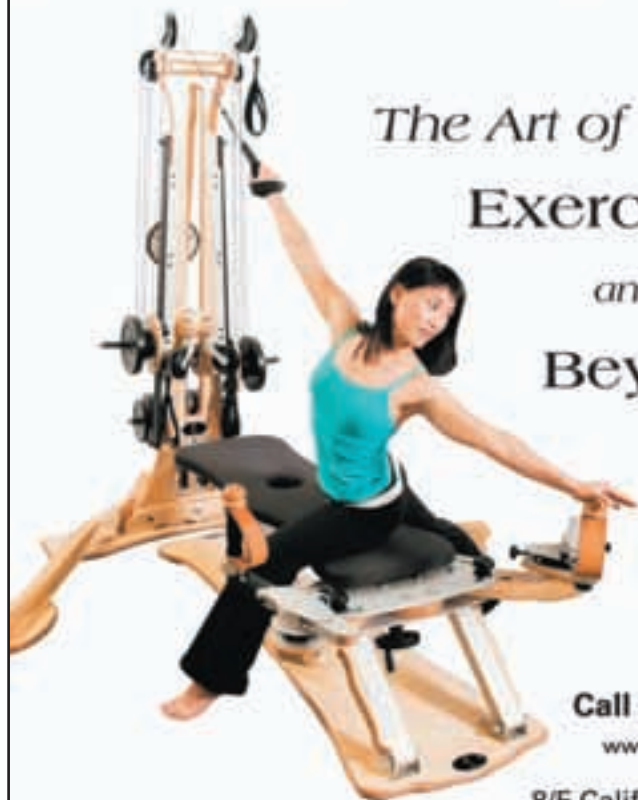
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Leading Asian science institutions attend conference in Israel

For the first time in Israel, 17 presidents and heads of national science institutions and international scientific organisations, convened to express their confidence in and to salute the accomplishments of Israeli science.

And also to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities.

The conference took place during the National Science Week, on 14 March, which coincides with the birthday of Albert Einstein.

The International Presidents' Conference titled "Science and Accountability" took place a week later in Jerusalem at the Israel Academy of Sciences, with the participation of the President of Israel, Mr Shimon Peres, Knesset Chairman Mr Reuven (Ruby) Rivlin and Israel's Science Minister Professor Daniel Hershkovitz.

Among the participants from Asia were leaders from China, Taiwan, India and Japan. Other major country participants included USA, UK, Poland and Sweden.

In addition, participating in the conference, were prominent



Menahem Yaari

Israeli public figures and academy members, among them the four Israeli Nobel Prize winners: Professors Israel Aumann, Aaron Ciechanover, Avram Hershko, and Ada Yonath.

President of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Professor Menahem Yaari, described the conference as a pivotal turning point in the advancement of international scientific relations of the State of Israel and a salute to the prominent standing of Israeli science in the world.

The Academy was established in 1960 on the initiative of Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who chaired the first meeting



Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities celebrating 50 years

of the Academy's General Assembly.

"The founding fathers looked upon the Academy of Sciences' establishment as the creation of a centre of knowledge and scientific authority which can help the young nation when issues of a scientific nature are raised. During the course of the past 50 years, the state seldom turned to the Academy for assistance, but recently, a marked improvement has taken place in this arena," Yaari commented.

He reaffirmed the Academy's willingness to provide knowledge-based assistance to decision-makers, as long as it is required.

Nepal and Israel sign agreement on cooperation in agriculture

Nepal's Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives, Mri-gendra Kumar Singh Yadav, made an official visit to Israel in mid-March, at the invitation of Shalom Simhon, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The visit also coincides with the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment

of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

An Agreement on Cooperation was signed between the government ministers during a reception in Jerusalem. The signatory parties agreed to cooperate to contribute to specific goals of agricultural development, to promote exchange of technical and scientific knowl-

edge, to cooperate between their respective organisations and to develop opportunities for the private sector of both countries.

The visit of Yadav to Israel and the signing of the framework agreement is expected to pave the way for extension and deepening collaboration in the agriculture sector for the mutual interest of Nepal and Israel.

Sri Lanka visited by Ambassador Sofer

After the tensions from the civil fighting subsided, Sri Lanka has become a destination for businessmen and travellers from around the world. These include many from the Jewish community.

Israel has opened talks with the country hoping to form official ties, and recently sent Israel's Ambassador to India, Mr Mark Sofer, on an official visit to the neighbouring country.

The ambassador took the opportunity to visit the local Chabad House, attending an social evening held by shliach Rabbi Mendy Crombie with friends and locals living in Sri Lanka.

Thai foreign worker killed in Qassam attack

Recent unrest and disturbances from Gaza last month killed a Thai foreign worker in Israel.

A rocket fired from Gaza exploded in Netiv Ha'asara, part of the Ashkelon coast.

The Qassam rocket hit a greenhouse and the 30 year old worker was killed. The rocket destroyed adjacent infrastructure.

Anti-Israel rally in Indonesia

Thousands of people took to the streets of the Indonesian capital of Jakarta last month, calling to "defend the al-Aqsa Mosque" against Israel.

According to the *Jakarta Post*, despite heavy rain, supporters of the PSK party marched from the National Monument compound to Hotel Indonesia traffic circle holding banners which read, "Save al-Aqsa Mosque from Zionist Israel" and "One man one dollar to save Palestine". They also held a large carton model of the Temple Mount mosque.

Tri Wisaksana, chairman of the party's Jakarta chapter, promised the bystanders, "We will prove Indonesian people are ready to support any movement to protect al-Aqsa, the third holiest mosque in the world."

According to the newspaper, the rally was a response to "Israeli excavation to build a tunnel that will endanger the foundation of al-Aqsa Mosque."

The party which organised the rally called on the Indonesian government to officially protest the project and gather international support for a United Nations Security Council meeting to condemn Israel.

The rally was also attended by senior Indonesian politicians. Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country. Some 88% of its population of 235 million people follow Islam.

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Regional News

Jewish Chinese traditions seminar held in Taiwan

An international symposium between Jewish and Chinese traditions was held last month at the Academia Sinica's Institute of Literature and Philosophy in Taipei.

Taiwanese and Israeli scholars from the fields of philosophy, literature and history participated in the conference.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Israel Economic and Cultural Office in Taipei and Academia Sinica's Institute.

Two prominent Israeli sinologists, Yoav Ariel and Zhang Ping, participated in the forum.

Ariel, is also one of the founders of Tel Aviv University's Department of East Asian Studies and a prominent scholar



Yoav Ariel

in the fields of western and eastern philosophies. He also serves as the University's Dean of Students.

Zhang, a faculty member in the East Asian Studies department and an expert on Jewish thought, published the first Chinese translation of the *Pirkei Avot*, a classic compilation of ethical teachings from leading rabbinic scholars published nearly 1,800 years ago.

The symposium included additional lectures on aspects related to the Jewish-Chinese dialogue presented by Liu Shu-hsien, Fang Chi-jung, Tsai Yen-jen and many others.



Pirkei Avot available in Chinese

Jewish Times Asia celebrates 4 years

The April 2010 edition marks the 4th anniversary of *Jewish Times Asia*. The monthly newspaper was established by Publisher and Editor-in Chief Philip Jay.

Though Jewish communities have been in Asia for centuries, no prior attempt was made to publish a regional newspaper.

When asked about the impact of *Jewish Times Asia*, Mr Jay commented that the contribution to Jewish news and continuity has increased immensely over the past few years as people are paying more attention to stories coming out of this part of the world.

"When we first launched there was very little quality content, but now we are in a fortunate position to pick and choose what articles to publish," he continued.

"One important area that has definitely impacted and increased cooperation is the relationship with Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the diplomatic core, including the consulates and embassies around the region."

The paper provides the Jewish community a well-researched and unbiased snapshot of news from around the region that all Jewish residents can relate to. It brings business, arts, culture and interviews with local personalities into focus and provides valuable information to locals and visitors on where to find their Jewish connections in Asia.

With today's improved coverage, the print version of *Jewish Times Asia* is available free of charge in all countries in the region to all Jewish communities. The newspaper is also available to read on-line at: www.jewish-timesasia.org.

"As our diverse communities expand and as Asia becomes a powerhouse in the world economy, so will the depth of the news," Mr Jay emphasised.

Jewish Times Asia is poised to become a historical legacy of Jewish life in Asia in the 21st century. It will continue to be an integral part of the fabric of the community, keeping our readers informed all along the way.

Jewish Times Asia wishes to



thank their partners, advertisers and readers for making it a successful publication and most importantly for their continued support.



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Regional News

ZAKA gala dinner to deliver humanitarian support for Asia

To mark the official launch of ZAKA Hong Kong, Macau and China a tribute gala dinner event was held in March at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Hong Kong.

ZAKA, the Israel-based humanitarian volunteer organisation, has now established a ZAKA Rescue and Recovery Organisation and will soon establish a fully equipped ZAKA Centre in Hong Kong to serve the East Asia region. The unit will provide training to local volunteers in emergency preparedness, medical first response and disaster management.

The aim of this civilian volunteer force, which will work in full cooperation with the local emergency and security services, will be to shorten the response time to any mass casualty incident in the region, such as a natural disaster or a terror attack.

During the dinner the newly formed board members were presented with a United Nations-recognised ZAKA volunteer identity card.

ZAKA Chairman and Founder Yehuda Meshi-Zahav spoke during the evening and noted that ZAKA's motto is to help those in need, regardless of race, religion or creed. "God created man in His image. By giving respect to the dead, as well as offering help to the living, we show our respect for the image of God. Not everyone can deal with the difficult scenes that ZAKA volunteers deal with on a daily



Chairman Yehuda Meshi-Zahav honouring Rafael Aharoni as a President of ZAKA

basis at traffic accidents, terror attacks and natural disasters, but everyone can be part of the ZAKA family by supporting the volunteers in their sacred work and ensuring that they have the equipment needed to save lives and honour the dead."

Keynote speaker and former head of the Israel Security Agency Jacob Perry spoke about the current political, diplomatic and security challenges facing Israel and expressed his support for the launch of ZAKA in East Asia: "The people of Israel are used to seeing the men in yellow vests at every terror attack and traffic accident. Now, the rest of the world is also recognising the sacred work of the ZAKA volunteers."

Israel Consul-General to Hong Kong Mr Amikam Levy promised his full support to the new ZAKA unit in East Asia: "ZAKA reflects the basic traditions of Judaism – respect, leadership and saving the souls of every human being."

President of ZAKA Hong Kong, Macau and China, Rafael Aharoni, generously hosted the gala dinner, thereby maximizing the monies raised on the night to

support the establishment of the regional centre and the training of local volunteers. Aharoni extended an invitation to members of the local community across East Asia to become part of the ZAKA family. "Learn how to save lives in the event of a major disaster in our region. We pray that these skills will never be needed – but we must be prepared for every eventuality."

The hundreds of guests watched a movie about ZAKA's life-saving, rescue and recovery work in Israel and overseas, including the most recent opera-

tion in Haiti. ZAKA has operations in the US, England, France, Mexico, Argentina and now Hong Kong.

Local Hong Kong government dignitaries lending their support for the launch included, Tsang Tak-shing, Sec. for Home Affairs, Dr York Chow, Sec. for Food and Health, Prof Gabriel Leung, Under Sec. of Food and Health, Judge Michael Hartmann, Tang King-shing, Police Commissioner, Gregory Lo Chun-hung, Dir. of Fire Services Anthony Ty Wu, Chairman of the Hospital Authority, Dr C H Leong, Chairman of the HK Univ.

Council, Charles Ng, Asst. Dir. General of Invest HK, Cheng Kwok-hung, Senior Superintendent, Police, Tam Yiu-keung, Asst Comm of HK Customs & Excise and Wong Wai Hung, Superintendent of Correctional Services.

A tribute event was also held in Singapore at the home of the Israeli Ambassador Ms Amira Arnon, with keynote speaker Jacob Perry. Volunteers from the Singapore community will fly to Hong Kong for the training programme, which is scheduled to take place in June 2010.



Israel Consul-General to Hong Kong Mr Amikam Levy



Jacob Perry



ZAKA's board of directors

Eran Katz visits Vietnam

Israeli born Eran Katz, world record holder for memory was in Hanoi last month to launch the release of his two best-selling books, *Secret of a super memory* and *Jerome becomes a genius*.

Katz, who won the Guinness world record for remembering a list of 500 digits after hearing same only one time, was at a book launching ceremony held at the Woman and Development Centre, Hanoi, with his publisher Alpha Books. Also in attendance were officials from the Israeli embassy.

Katz shared with partici-

pants some secrets of improving the memory, especially some tips for students in learning foreign languages and preparing for examinations.

Participants delighted in his incredible memory stunts.

Katz donated part of the royalties of these two books to Sao Bien Fund, a charity organisation which was founded and chaired by Vietnamese Miss World Ngo Phuong Lan.

During his three-day visit, Katz also held talks on memory training in Hai Phong, and Ho Chi Minh City.



Congratulations to Israel on her 62nd Anniversary with our heartfelt hope for lasting peace and prosperity

Michael & Judy Green and family

Broza's one night concert deserves an encore

David Broza's one night performance on 6 March at Hong Kong's Leo Center, Canadian School, was truly exceptional. Broza's concert was hosted by the Jewish Womens Association of Hong Kong (JWA), a registered charity.

Broza sang in Spanish, English and Hebrew with his guitar for almost two hours. The packed audience, a mix of local Israeli's and other nationals, delighted in the performance. Between songs he provided introductions and explanations on his inspirations to the lyrics. His voice was incredible and crisp and his interludes with Spanish guitar playing were riveting.

Descriptions of him as charismatic, vibrant and dynamic were validated.

Broza is one of Israel's finest singer/songwriters, and performed his most memorable songs including; *La Mujer Que Yo Quiero* - The woman I love; *The Sebilia river*; *Por Tu Ausencia* - For your absence; *You were born for me*; which got everyone up on their feet; *Como*



David Broza

Tu - Like you; and his biggest hit *Mitachat Lashamaim* - Under the sky; again a huge hit that everybody sang.

During the concert, Broza also played and sang; *Do not ask if I love you* on a signed high quality Yamaha guitar which will be auctioned at the JWA Ball on 25 April.

In his final song at the concert, he invited the talented May Cohen, a student at the

Elsa High School, to sing with him his oldest and most known song; *Yihiye Tov* - It will be good, a song which he wrote in 1977 when President Sadat of Egypt came to visit Israel. It is a song of hope for peace and love. The performance of the two was very moving and got the crowd cheering and standing.

After the concert, Broza was received by the Consul Generals of Israel and Spain and many others who assisted in bringing



May Cohen performing with David Broza

him to Hong Kong.

David Broza was truly overwhelmed with the reception he received in Hong Kong.

Being used to travelling around the world playing constantly around North America and Europe, he said he had never received such a warm welcoming and such a mixed loving audience in his concerts.

He said he will never forget the visit, which took him for the first time in his life East of Jerusalem.



Broza's guitar mastery



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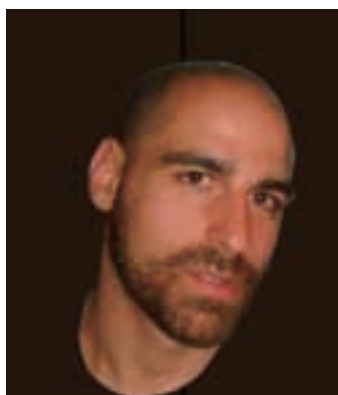
Israeli dancers perform spontaneous dance in Thailand

Capoeira dancer/performer, Ido Portal and choreographer, Nir de Volff staged a special physical improvisational dialogue at the International Dance Festival 2010 in Bangkok. Their performance took place at Benjasiri Park on 7 March.

The show was about trying to copy body and language movement material, with special abilities acquired over the years and tackle moments of truth without preparation in advance.

After spending two months in Bangkok, the two different dancers expressed physically their personal impressions of the city and its energy.

The annual festival organised through The Friends-of-the-Arts Foundation provides three weeks of activities during February and March at three locations across Thailand, in Chiang Mai, Phuket and Bangkok.



Nir de Volff

Over 400 performing artists participate, representing the best of Thailand plus professional performers, artists and dancers from over 15 countries. The festival event also provides dance auditions, workshops, and master classes for experienced students and professionals.

The International Dance Festival, now in its 10th year, attracts an audience of about 100,000.

Sculptor Matti Orloff to exhibit in Hong Kong

Matti Orloff will be showcasing his works from 5-10 May at the Hong Kong Jewish Community Centre.

This will be the first opportunity in Asia to view his artistry.

Orloff was born in 1945 in Petah Tikva, Israel, to one of the city's founding families. His grandfather was also a famous sculptor, Chana Orloff.

Matti graduated from Wingate Institute of Physical Education, was Israel's first table tennis coach and was involved in the national league of volleyball. He had businesses in agriculture and loves art as a hobby.

In the 1980s, he then devoted himself full-time to sculpture and began to publish his works. He uses various metals, especially iron,



stainless steel and copper clay. These materials represent his power. He processes the metals mainly by welding, which gives a wild appearance. The sculptures are an expression of the turbulent conflicts inside him and between him and the surroundings.

Matti builds his sculptures by watching reality. A view or a daily life event becomes a sculpture in his hands and is

charged with a complicated meaning.

Matti's works deal with various subjects: animals, Judaica, nature, music, Jerusalem, Don Quixote and personal portraits for memorials or gifts.

His works are one of a kind, and cannot be duplicated, hence the uniqueness of each and every work.

In Israel two of his sculptures are placed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs building in Jerusalem. Others have appeared at the Yad Vashem Museum, Bar-Ilan University, the Bible Museum in Tel Aviv, and at the Tel Aviv Beit Oz, Sculpture Garden.

Orloff has also exhibited overseas in the U.S. and Germany, amongst other countries.

Coffee with Pina in Korea

Israel's Embassy in South Korea sponsored a screening in March of the film *Coffee with Pina*. The movie is directed by Israeli artist, Ms Lee Yanor. The screening took place at the Arko Arts Library & Information Center in Seoul Arts Center.

The film presents Pina Bausch's choreography, philosophy and her life in a unique way that combines both documentary, fiction and an intimate dialogue with Pina Bausch.

Bausch was one of the most influential figures in European contemporary dance for 30 years, creating a much-imitated fusion of radical theatre, surreal art, sexual drama and danced body language.

Born in Germany in 1940, she was a modern dance choreographer and a leading influence in the development of the Tanztheater style of dance. She was born in Solingen, near Düsseldorf, the third and youngest child of August and Anita Bausch, who owned a café attached to a small hotel.

Bausch began dancing from a young age. In 1955 she entered the Folkwangschule in Essen, then directed by Germany's most influential choreographer Kurt Jooss, one of the founders of German Expressionist dance.

After graduation, she won a scholarship to continue her studies at the Juilliard School in New York City in 1960, where her teachers included Anthony Tu-



Pina Bausch

dor, José Limón, and Paul Taylor. In New York she performed with the Paul Sanasardo and Donya Feuer Dance Company, the New American Ballet and became a member of the Metropolitan Opera Ballet Company.

In 1962, Bausch joined Jooss' new Folkwang Ballett Company as a soloist and assisted Jooss on many of the pieces, before choreographing her first piece in 1968, and in 1969 succeeded Jooss as artistic director.

In 1972, Bausch started as artistic director of the then Wuppertal Opera Ballet, which was later renamed as the Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch. The company has a large repertoire of original pieces, and regularly tours throughout the world.

She died last year on 30 June 2009 at the age of 68, five days after being diagnosed with cancer.

Mazal Tov to the State of Israel on its 62nd Anniversary

From Jewish Times Asia



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Infinity I-China establishes 6 funds with Chinese cities

Infinity I-China is launching six new joint venture RMB private equity funds throughout China as part of a 10 year plan. Infinity said that the goal of the funds is to support the growth of local Chinese businesses through the influx of proven technology and know-how.

The funds will range from RMB 200 million up to a planned RMB 500 million. The funds will be created together with Chinese cities of Beijing, Suzhou, Harbin, Shijiazhuang, Changzhou, Ningbo and Tianjin.

Infinity I-China managing partner Amir Gal-Or said, "Infinity chose to partner with Beijing, Suzhou, Harbin, Shijiazhuang, Changzhou, Ningbo and Tianjin, mainly because of the progressiveness, open-minded thinking and quality of



Amir Gal-Or

leadership in these metropolises. It is the people that are compelling and on which we place the greatest value. Our ongoing relationship with Suzhou is a good example. The joint venture fund in Suzhou marks the third cooperation between Infinity and the fine leadership of this beautiful city. We look forward to long-term and exciting relations with our new friends across the country."

Infinity I-China was founded by Clal Industries and Investments Ltd., China Development Bank and CSVC. Infinity Group currently manages more than US\$700 million through nine funds, seven in China. Infinity has offices in Tel Aviv, Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou, Harbin, Shijiazhuang, Changzhou, Ningbo, Tianjin and New York.

The new funds are the third step in Infinity's ten-year plan for the region, following its 2004 establishment of the first RMB fund in China and its 2008 cross-board fund.

Infinity I-China, is the largest China-Israel fund and the second China-Israel fund of Infinity Group.

A Hong Kong tailor of repute moves shop

Hong Kong's tailors are well known around the world for quality, value for money and service. Custom tailoring is all about the workmanship. One of many established tailors is Peter So.

Mr So has been providing a very personal service to thousands of customers from all over the world and has been in business for more than 50 years.

He and his wife Wendy run Peter So British Tailors, providing customers with a selection of quality cloth, styles and cuts for all individual choice.

Apart from suits, Mr So designs shirts, shoes, jackets and a full range for ladies.

Famous customers include World Cup football Brazilian legend Pelé and Dr Henry Kissinger, one among many from the Jewish community.

The new shop is located on the second floor of 202 Nathan Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon.



TowerJazz expands activities in South Korea

TowerJazz, a specialist technology company serving the semi-conductor sector, has recently extended its collaboration in South Korea in the area of education.

The company will provide expertise and specialty technology from TowerJazz's fab for the IC Design Education Center (IDEC). This will benefit universities in South Korea with access to a broad range of discounted multi-wafer shuttles.

The company has contracts with a number of leading semiconductor companies including C&S Technology Inc., Cesign Inc., GrandTek Technology Co. Ltd., SemiHow Co. Ltd., Taejin Technology Co. Ltd., and Dongwoon Anatech Ltd.

TowerJazz CEO Russell Ellwanger participated in a cooperation ceremony held in February in South Korea by IDEC and professors from leading universities.

IDEC is a joint venture of the Korean government and major semiconductor companies to promote projects for national competitiveness by educating highly qualified design experts at Korean universities.

Ellwanger said, "Korea is a thriving region for technical and manufacturing innovation and will remain a centre for future technological advancements. We feel that our collaboration



with IDEC will be advantageous for the students by providing them practical and challenging experiences at an early stage in their career training."

The company will be extending cooperation to include internships in the design centre in Netanya, to top Ph.D. students of several leading universities.

"We have been encouraged by the wide acceptance of our technical excellence and differentiation as measured by the continued and rising number of customer engagements in South Korea, in which we are targeting several hundreds of millions of revenue over the coming years," he continued.

"This programme is our way of early partnering with the next generation of South Korean technical leadership."

Orckit-Corrigent adds local presence in Thailand

Orckit Communications Ltd, headquartered in Tel-Aviv, is a facility provider of broadband for telecommunication and networking vendors. The company recently announced the establishment of a new office in Thailand.

The company has appointed Monchai Kunwattanakorn as the new VP Sales for Thailand, Laos and Myanmar. Kunwattanakorn brings with him vast sales and business development experience in the telecommunication industry from his previous leadership positions at Nortel, Siemens and Ericsson.

"This announcement, which comes on the heels of three recent office additions in Latin America and South Asia, serves as further proof of Orckit-Corrigent's global expansion and efforts to improve local support in 2010," said Mr Oren Tepper, Vice President, Corporate Sales at Orckit-Corrigent.

"Together with our existing offices in Japan and Korea, as well as our new offices in the Philippines and India, we now have a more solid presence in APAC, demonstrating our commitment and investment in this market," he added.

The fixed and mobile telecommunication market in Thailand continues to grow due to increasing demand for residential, enterprise and mobile services.

Analyst firm HeavyReading has predicted total fixed revenues of US\$1,974 million and total mobile revenues of US\$6,107 million for 2009.

With a yearly 27% increase in demand from broadband subscribers, the additional bandwidth and advanced services are evident.

ICL Fertilizers signs largest-ever potash contract in India

ICL Fertilizers has signed an extension agreement to supply one million tons of potash to its primary customer in India.

This is the largest single supply agreement that the company has ever signed, and represents nearly double the quantity specified in its previous contract with this customer.

Also, this is a larger quantity than other potash suppliers active in India have secured in their recently signed contracts.

Under the terms of the agreement, ICL Fertilizers will supply one million tons of potash for a 12-month period beginning in April 2010, compared to 575 thousand tons in the previous contract, at a price of US\$370 per ton.

This agreement emphasizes the importance of India as one of ICL Fertilizers' primary target markets. It also underscores the logistical advantage of the company's location in Israel.

ICL is one of the world's leading fertilizer and specialty chemicals companies. ICL produces approximately a third of the world's bromine and approximately 9% of its potash.

ICL is a leading supplier of fertilizers in Europe and a major player in specialty fertilizer market segments.

One of the world's most integrated manufacturers and suppliers of phosphate products, ICL has become the world's leading provider of pure phosphoric acid and a major specialty phosphate player.



ICL plant in Israel

Business News

Trader numbers up at the Jewellery Fair

Last month's International Jewellery Fair Show, held in Hong Kong, Asia's largest spring show, provided an opportunity for Israeli companies specialising in diamonds and jewellery to maintain this dominance as leading providers in a competitive market.

The number of exhibitors this year represented the largest gathering at a trade event. The show accommodated two separate pavilions one for the Israeli diamond firms and the other for Israeli jewellers.

The Israel Diamond Institute's pavilion featured 60 Israeli companies, 20 of which were first-time participants. An additional 20 diamond companies were featured in the exhibition both under the Israel Export & International Cooperation Institute and as independents.

Exhibitors expressed a positive note towards the number of attendees and customers. The market is improving as the diamond industry recovers globally.



Asia is a major export destination for Israeli diamonds, representing more than 20% of total polished diamond sales. Hong Kong, as the gateway to Asia, is a key market for Israel. In addition, Israeli exporters are also setting their sights on China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, Singapore, South Korea and Japan.

The Israeli Diamond Institute recently held its annual press conference as part of the BaselWorld 2010 Show, under the theme "Responsibility is Good Business".

Deputy Industry, Trade and Labor Minister Orit Noked and Eli Avidar, Managing Director of the Israel Diamond Institute, both spoke at the event, which dozens of industry reporters attended.

In her speech, Deputy Minister Noked reviewed the diamond industry's importance to Israel's economy, and welcomed those present on behalf of Industry, Trade and Labor

Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, as well.

Noked said that, "Israel, like the rest of the world, was not immune to the financial crisis. Nevertheless, our banking system has proven its strength. The diamond industry, which is responsible for 14% of Israeli exports, is showing signs of recovery."

Israel Diamond Institute Managing Director Eli Avidar reviewed IDI's 2009 campaign: "Together Works," was successful despite the tough year the Israeli and global jewellery and diamond industries experienced.

IDI President Moti Gantz, spoke about the need to pursue responsible business policies within the diamond industry, especially regarding the rough market and various credit issues.



Alain Spira, AS Diamonds exhibiting at this years Jewellery Fair

Gantz, also called on the diamond industry's major players to formulate joint policies in order to lay the foundations for a healthier, more stable global diamond industry, which would promise a better future for its members today and in the future.



MaxStar China chooses Silicom's network appliance platform

MaxStar, a leading Chinese manufacturer of network appliances, has chosen Silicom's SETAC server-to-appliance converter as the basis for its new product line for medium-to-high-end customers.

Using SETAC, MaxStar will be able to offer its customers unique network appliances that combine front-loading modular networking capabilities in a specialized chassis with the robust reliability of a standard motherboard. This combination fits the demands of network application providers in China, a vast, sophisticated and rapidly-growing market.

"For us, SETAC is the right product at the right time – a key enabler that will allow us to satisfy the market's demand for robust network appliances with modular connectivity," com-

mented HongQin Pan, CEO of MaxStar. "As such, we believe our SETAC-based product line will provide customers with the exact solutions they are looking for, thus positioning us to benefit from the exciting growth of network application deployment throughout China. It is especially encouraging that several potential customers have already shown significant interest."

"MaxStar's excitement about SETAC – that is, the use of an affordable kit to create modular high-end appliances – confirms that SETAC concept will resonate in China," added Shaikhe Orbach, Silicom's President and CEO. "As such, SETAC positions us to grow in step with this huge market, representing the potential to become a significant new revenue driver for Silicom."

Insist on IGI before you buy

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DIAMOND REPORT

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IGI deal expands Fudan University's gemological programme

World-leading gemological laboratory, International Gemological Institute (IGI), announced in February an education agreement with Fudan University's Shanghai Institute of Visual Art.

The deal calls for IGI and the Shanghai Institute of Visual Art to develop new gemological programmes as part of the school's jewellery design curriculum. The new courses will be offered as early as this autumn.

"This is significant in as much as IGI's expertise and its worldwide position is recognised by a world-class Chinese institution," said Marc Brauner, IGI's Hong Kong-based Co-CEO.

"Last year, after IGI's nationwide education series targeting the private sector, we were invited to host some pilot classes at the Institute for jewellery design students," Mr Brauner explained. "That turned out to be so successful that IGI and the institute decided to explore further cooperation."



Marc Brauner

IGI has been running educational programmes since 1981. Now including an option for career-bound students to pursue the IGI Graduate Gemologist Diploma, the institute's programmes are today offered in over a dozen countries, including India, the UAE, Italy, Turkey and Belgium. In China, IGI courses have been offered

through the Shanghai Vocational Centre which has produced 400 graduates since the centre began hosting the programme in 2000.

As China emerged as the world's No. 2 diamond market by consumption in 2009 consumers increasingly demanded accurate and complete informa-

tion on what they were buying. That process, in turn, obliged jewellers to upgrade their professional skills.

"There is a notable market demand for gemological courses developed by international labs like ours," Mr Brauner said. He explained that IGI had been approached by a number of universities, "so we are naturally honored to have established ties with an institution of the caliber of Shanghai Institute of Visual Art at Fudan University."

The school is renowned for its promoting innovation and creativity, yet offering programmes of intensely practical relevance. "And this is where we can contribute," Mr Brauner said. "We are keen to participate in China's effort to create future talent, armed with internationally recognised qualifications."

Mr Brauner called the agreement a big step for China's market development.

In addition IGI also announced its participation in Shanghai World Expo 2010,

starting in May. With over 180 countries, 230 pavilions, and 70 million visitors expected over its six-month run, the world exposition will be the largest ever.

"We are proud to be playing an important role at the Diamond Exhibition Corner at the Belgian EU Pavilion," said IGI CEO Roland Lorie. According to Lorie, the Belgian Pavilion will see 50,000 visitors daily, giving each the chance to buy diamonds cut and polished in Antwerp, the world diamond centre in Belgium, and set by Belgium's Royal Court-appointed jeweller.

"Jewellery sold at the shop at the Diamond Exhibition Corner will be accompanied by an IGI Identification Certificate providing complete details on the quality of the diamonds - thus giving consumers full confidence in what they are buying," he said.

According to Shanghai Diamond Exchange Joint Management office, China's imports of polished diamonds totalled US\$699 million last year.

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Open invitation to the community

**Cocktail reception: 6:30 pm
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**The event will be held at the
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Tel: (852) 2901 5440**

**An exhibition of Matti Orloff's work will be on
display until 10 May, 2010**

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Sylvain Gilbert telling his story of

Part two - It took a lifetime for me to go back to the village...

I lived in Belgium most of my life and I was living in Brussels, only 30 minutes by car to Mont Saint Guibert where I was hidden as a child, but each time I felt like going back there, something stopped me!

Eight years ago, I went back to Belgium for a friend's wedding. The ceremony was held ten kilometres from Mont Saint Guibert. Suddenly, I felt an impulse to find the place where I was hidden during the war.

Two images remained in my mind. First, was the grotto, a replica of the original in Lourdes famous for the Bernadette Soubirous's visions. We had these replicas of the grottos in the garden and as children we played there. Second, was the memory of a big garden connected with an upper street, a little bit hilly. That is all I had to go on.

I stopped a taxi in the street and asked about this grotto in the village but the taxi driver answered there are many grottos in the village. He suggested going to the main street where there is a café where many people gather on Sunday.

The café owner remembered a place with a grotto that belonged to the Marist Brotherhood. She came with me, leaving her busy café.

When we met the last surviving monk, he recounted the story of the castle which belonged to the Prince d'Arenberg family during the First World War. Later it became a monastery and today it is a school but Father Augustijns still remains.

He was cutting the lawn while sitting on a tractor and was covered in mud. I explained to him that I was a hid-

den Jewish child during the war and Christian people like him saved my life. With that, we fell into each other's arms. He then said something I will remember for the rest of my life, "It's not unusual, Jesus was Jewish!" In the park, he showed me several small grottos representing the Stations of the Cross. But nothing looked like the grotto in my memory.

Returning to the wedding I met a friend who I had last seen when I was 16!

From that friend I learned about an organisation called The Hidden Child in Brussels, which keeps a record of all the Jewish children that were hidden during the war.

Back in Brussels

The next day I went to The Hidden Child. All the related records were there with the address and the name of the villa called "Massabielle" (after the name of the grotto in Lourdes). They also gave me the telephone number of Annie, another child hidden with me, who was the same age as my sister.

Annie was living in Brussels, so I called her immediately. We met the next morning and after decades apart we fell into each others' arms crying. Unfortunately her mother was deported but she still had her father after the war. I asked Annie, "Did you go back to Mont Saint Guibert?" and she answered, "I could not." Today she is a grandmother, has her own company and has had a successful life in Brussels, but she could never face going back! I told her that I had the address and was determined to discover the villa "Massabielle."

I went back to Mont Saint



Sylvain together with the Israeli Ambassador to Belgium Mrs Tamar Shamash

Guibert - nothing could stop me from finding the Villa. Once I reached number 19, I went into the garden, but the grotto was not there. The owner of the villa came over and invited me into the house. They had bought the house only a few years before. However, the previous owner of the villa was born in Mont Saint Guibert and knew everyone in the village. We called her straight away and she asked for my name, I said that I had changed my name, it was now Gilbert

She replied, "I am Jacques-

line Pilloy: you are Sylvain, the brother of Marie-Antoinette..." (my sister was her age and they went to class together). "Yes, of course," she said, "and Annie, the other girl."

She explained that the town authorities had changed the numbers of the villas in the street - but everything else was more or less how it used to be. She told me to go a little further along the street and I will be able to find the villa Massabielle.

I walked for two minutes

and recognised the place immediately!

Again I ran up the stairs into the garden and there it was: I had found the grotto.... there was no doubt. Still in the grotto, in the same place, was the Virgin Mary statue exactly as before, as the memory of a child of 5 years. The lady owner of this villa came out and again I explained that I was hidden in this villa during the war... as a child. She immediately invited me inside.

As soon as I entered I recog-



Stone plaque tribute to Tante Fanny

survival as a Hidden Child

(Part one in previous March 2010 issue)

nised the stone pavement and the beautiful art deco glass doors. Looking into the living room there was a piano. I remembered there was a piano (another one) exactly in the same place.

The lady asked her husband and children to come to hear the history of their villa. They were astonished to discover such a past. I explained to the children that one and a half million Jewish children were murdered for being Jewish.

I asked the name of the little girl: "Fanny!" she said. It was the same name as our foster mother "Tante (aunt) Fanny". I don't think those are just coincidences: I believe it must be my destiny.

I went back to Brussels and asked Annie to join me on my next visit. As she was 3 years older than me she remembered many more details. It was a moment of great emotion to find the bedroom where we slept as four little children together in fear and without our parents. Winters were freezing cold and we didn't have coal to heat the bedroom.

The trauma has remained with us all our lives. Finally, after a lifetime, I succeeded in finding the villa where we were hidden. That was a deliverance, a relief after so many years.

The birth of an idea

I had an idea, a feeling, that I had to pay tribute to this Tante Fanny who saved us four children. She had passed away of course a long time ago, in the 1970s. I contacted Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and they made investigations and tried to find her surviving family. After two years, still no successors were found. Finally, Sabine, my wife, found a descendant. It was not easy because "Tante Fanny" was not married but did have a brother, who had also passed away, but we located his daughter-in-law, now a widow and her two children. Sabine decided to check the telephone book and started to call all the people with Degulne surname and she finally was successful.

On 4 June 2009, I was able to organise, in co-operation with Mont Saint Guibert City Hall and the mayor, and with

Yad Vashem, a ceremony to recognise Tante Fanny as a Righteous Among the Nations (A recognition to a non-Jew who saved the life of a Jew during the Holocaust).

4 June 2009, Mont Saint Guibert

It was a day full of surprises. First of all, upon arrival I saw on the City Hall the flag of Belgium, the flag of Wallonia, and also the flag of Israel.

After so many years, returning to a village which had barely changed and looking at the Israeli flag proudly flying above the city hall was very, very moving.

My sister came from Paris, Annie was present and the Ambassador of Israel Mrs Tamar Shamash also attended.

The mayor had not been aware of this tragic episode that happened during WW2 in his village. For him and for many villagers it was a revelation that during this period the people of Mont Saint Guibert saved 21 Jewish children.

I took the opportunity to speak at City Hall and explained what had happened then. Everyone was crying. We also spoke to teenagers sharing the same message of tolerance and to accept each other, just as we are. This is the same message I am sharing with students in Hong Kong schools.

I learned this the hard way, because, after the war, we children had become Catholic, no longer Jewish. Abandoned, we had to be with strangers, with different names, speaking different languages, practicing different faiths.

When we found our parents again, they were strangers and again it was a shock. We had to leave our foster mother, who had become our mother. The person who we lived with everyday and who gave us love, food, education, in a word everything. We loved her very much because she was a good person and made important decisions for us.

The ceremony was beautiful. The mayor, Mr Breuer, had organised a buffet to celebrate the event. He then came up with another brilliant idea. He

said November 11, Armistice Day, which commemorates the victims of WW1 was to become the tribute day to "Tante Fanny" and we will place a stone plaque on the villa. The new owners of the villa had agreed and were delighted with this suggestion.

11 November 2009, Mont Saint Guibert.

I went back to Belgium for another memorable day. All the veterans with their flags and town dignitaries were present with a military band, and the flag of Israel covering the stone plaque. The Ambassador of Israel came again.

Radio and television networks (RTL and TVI) were present. Later I was on the news in a long interview. The story aired twice that day on prime Belgium TV channels.

On that day I had an enormous surprise. Parking the car in front of a house on the main square, a lady came out, looked at me in a concentrated manner and said, "You are little Sylvain. I recognise you by the sparkle in your eyes." Immediately she invited me inside her house where she explained that in 1943 (we arrived in the villa in 1942) there was an alert and Tante Fanny did not know where to go with us. Very afraid, she brought us during the night to this house which was the only grocery store in the village. It was quite dangerous don't forget there was a curfew, nobody was allowed on the street after 10pm.

This lady Denise, now 83, was 17 years-old at that time. An orphan herself, she was helping the lady who managed a little store and was Tante Fanny's very close friend. She remembered that we were hidden in this house for more than two weeks. She gave many details. She also told me something very moving. I used to say: "Why do we always have to hide?"

What was also quite incredible in the villa Massabielle was that, being a very large villa, the Germans occupied part of it during the entire war. They never even suspected that there were Jewish children hidden there. So during three years every day we were living among them.

Sabine and I decided to



Sylvain addressing Mont Saint Guibert village

come back to the village two days later and make a video of Denise and another older lady, Colette Marchal. Colette already 80 years old told me that her father was the post office chief during the war. There were people who sent letters that would have incriminated certain villagers, but he destroyed those letters. In fact, there were a lot of partisans in the Resistance in the village. This man saved a lot of people. He was killed two days before the end of the war. Since she was his daughter she took over the post office. She was fifteen at the time and kept this position all her life. She told me that I was often playing with two other boys of my age at the back of the garden where they had their home. At this moment I realized why I remembered the garden so well.

The ceremony

The ceremony was very special, particularly to have the veterans there. Many groups of children were present. It was a public holiday but instead of going elsewhere they choose to be part of that special day with us.

After the ceremony, a party was held in City Hall with food and drinks but also a question time for the young people. At least 200 children were present, and I explained our terrible experience during the war. The children asked very good questions. Some other hidden children (our guests) told their own odyssey. All in all it was memorable. As for most of the people in the village this

story was unknown. They realized how courageous and brave Tante Fanny was along with the other families who risked their lives to save 21 Jewish children.

Finally, I had been successful in having Tante Fanny's name commemorated with all the other Righteous in Jerusalem at Yad Vashem. As a Catholic devoted to God, her name is there in Jerusalem, the same city where Jesus was crucified, and I think if she hears me today (I am sure she does) she will see me, the little Sylvain who was 5 years old during the Shoah and grew up as a man of 72 years old today, who is grateful for ever because she saved my life.

I think I cannot give her a better tribute. Merci - thank you - *Toda raba* Tante Fanny.

Sylvain Gilbert (Hong Kong March 2010)

For more talks and life participations related to Holocaust events, Sylvain can be reached by email on sylvain@alwayshkg.com.

Special thanks to:

- Yad Vashem
- Mr Breuer, Mayor of Mont Saint Guibert
- The present owners of Villa Massabielle for allowing the stone plaque to be placed on the villa.
- Denise and Colette for their vibrant memory
- Family Degulne who gave me pictures of Tante Fanny.
- And, to all the people of Mont Saint Guibert who directly or indirectly changed my life.

Remembering the Holocaust and Fallen Soldiers

To commemorate the establishment of the State of Israel two dates have been established: *Yom Hashoah* and *Yom Hazikaron*. These days are historic and have significant meaning inside the State of Israel and in the Diaspora.

Yom Hashoah

The full name of the day commemorating the victims of the Holocaust is *Yom Hashoah Ve-Hagevurah*—literally the Day of (remembrance of) the Holocaust and the Heroism.

It is observed on 27 Nisan—a week after the seventh day of Passover, and a week before *Yom Hazikaron*. It marks the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

The date was selected by the Knesset on 12 April 1951. The full name became formal in a law that was enacted on 19 August 1953. Although the date was established by the Israeli government, it has become a day commemorated by Jewish communities and individuals worldwide.



Since the early 1960s, the sound of a siren on *Yom Hashoah* stops traffic and pedestrians throughout Israel for two minutes of silent devotion.

The siren blows at sundown on the eve of *Yom Hashoah* and once again at 11:00 am. All radio and television programmes during this day are connected in one way or another with Jewish history during WWII, including personal interviews with survivors.

Even the musical programmes are adapted to the atmosphere of the day. There is

no public entertainment, as theatres, cinemas and other public venues are closed throughout the country.

Outside of Israel, *Yom Hashoah* is observed within the synagogue. Commemorations range from synagogue services to communal vigils and educational programmes. Many feature a talk by a Holocaust survivor, recitation of appropriate songs and readings, or viewing of a Holocaust-themed film.

Yom Hazikaron

The Knesset established 4 Iyar, the day preceding *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, as a Memorial Day for soldiers who lost their lives in battle for the creation of the State of Israel and all those soldiers who died subsequently defending the country.

As like *Yom Hashoah*, throughout the entire day beginning at sunset, places of entertainment, shops, restaurants are closed. Broadcasters play programmes about Israel's wars and show programming that convey the sombre mood of the day.



The commemoration, also includes an air raid siren played twice during the day. All activity, including traffic, immediately ceases. People get out of their cars, even in the middle of otherwise busy highways, and stand in respect for the sacrifice of those who died defending Israel. The first siren marks the beginning of Memorial Day and the second is sounded immediately prior to the public recitation of prayers in military cemeteries.

Numerous public ceremonies are held throughout Israel. Special readings and poems are often recited. There is a

national ceremony at the military cemetery on Mount Herzl, where many of Israel's leaders and soldiers are buried. Many schools and public buildings have memorial corners with memorials to those from their community who died in Israel's wars.

There is a special *Yizkor* (remembrance) prayer and memorial prayer for members of the Israeli Defense Forces who died in the line of duty are read at many of the ceremonies.

Outside of Israel, *Yom Hazikaron* is observed with community events with special prayers and readings recited.

**Congratulations to
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on your 4 year anniversary
and providing Jewish news
for the region**

Kol HaKavod!

**Wishing you all the success
for the future**

**From Friends of the
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**Best wishes to the State of Israel
on its 62nd Anniversary**


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Yom Ha'Atzmaut - Israel's Anniversary

This modern holiday celebrated in Israel and throughout the Diaspora, is Israel's Independence Day/ *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*. The anniversary of the day members of the "provisional government" first read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv, ending the British Mandate on 14 May 1948. It is officially held on the fifth of Iyar.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut is always preceded by *Yom Hazikaron*, the message of linking these two days is clear: Israelis owe their independence, the very existence of the state to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for it.

The official "switch" from *Yom Hazikaron* to *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* takes place a few minutes after sundown, with a ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem in which the flag is raised from half staff (due to Memorial Day) to the top of the pole.

The president of Israel delivers a speech of congratulations, and soldiers representing



Israelis waving flags

the army, navy, and air force parade with their flags. In recent decades this small-scale parade has replaced the large-scale daytime parade, which was the main event during the 1950s and 1960s.

The evening parade is followed by a torch lighting (*hadlakat masuot*) ceremony, which marks the country's achievements in all spheres of life.

Other than the official ceremonies, Israel celebrates in a variety of ways. In the cities, the nighttime festivities may be found on the main streets. Crowds will gather to watch public shows offered for free by

the municipalities and the government.

Many spend the night dancing Israeli folk dances or singing Israeli songs. During the daytime thousands of Israeli families go out on hikes and picnics. Army camps are open for civilians to visit and to display the recent technological achievements of the Israeli Defense Forces.

Yom Ha'Atzmaut is concluded with the ceremony of granting the "Israel Prize" recognising individual Israelis for their unique contribution to the country's culture, science, arts, and the humanities.

The religious character of *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* is still in the process of formation, and is still subject to debate. The Chief Rabbinate of Israel has decided that this day should be marked with the recital of *Hallel* (psalms of praise), similar to other joyous holidays, and with the reading of a special *haftarah*.

Most ultra-Orthodox Jews, in Israel and abroad, have not accepted this ruling, and some chant the Hallel psalms without the blessing which precedes it.

Some rabbis argue that *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* should be viewed in conjunction with the festi-

vals of Chanukah and Purim, since all three commemorate a "miraculous" victory of the Jews over an enemy of superior military might. It should be noted that most Israelis do not consider *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* a religious holiday at all.

For those outside Israel, celebrating *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* has been a way to express solidarity with the state of Israel and to strengthen their alliance with it.

There is not yet an accepted "tradition" of how to celebrate this holiday, and only time will tell whether certain customs, foods, prayers and melodies will be linked into this holiday.



Mount Herzl where the official ceremony takes place



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Independence Day**

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A brief sojourn in Asia and the flourishing of Jewish life

As a youngster I aspired to be a lawyer specialising in international law, but after having served in the US army in Germany, after World War II, I was not inclined to return to Europe.

When I started to attend law school, I made a decision to specialise in an area of the world which I thought would become important, and in whose culture I had an interest, namely, China. I was in both law school and Chinese studies at the University of Michigan where I obtained my JD, and eventually went on for an MA and PhD, with a specialty in Chinese law. Naturally, China was the place to go.

Singapore my first port of call

My first posting in Asia, in 1963, was to the Law Faculty at the University of Singapore, from Harvard, which I attended as a fellow for a year. Tommy Koh, who was later to become a Minister in the Singapore's government, went to Harvard as part of the same exchange programme. At the University, in addition to English law subjects, I also taught Chinese law, which at the time was part of the Family Law of Singapore.

The Jewish community in Singapore was the most dynamic community in Asia, with two synagogues, a *shochet*, *mikva*, and a wonderful Jewish school that my four children attended. The titular head of the community, Mrs Nissam, was a wonderful person who had an open house for all members of the community on Shabbat and holidays, and was most generous with her family's money in supporting the financial needs of the community.

Taiwan surprise

I was subsequently posted to Taiwan twice, once as the Senior Fullbright scholar, with residence at Academia Sinica, and on another occasion, to complete my PhD research on law and social change, where I resided in a village in Shilin Township, called Ganyuan. I also did legal work for certain banks in Taiwan.

The community in Taiwan in the 1960s was small and not well organised. On Friday nights and Saturdays, we prayed in a building of the US military, which on Sunday, became a church for Christian believers. There was a Sunday get-together of the Community,



David C. Buxbaum

with bagels and lox, and some of the children were taught Jewish subjects, but there was not much activity beyond that.

Hong Kong

In 1966 and 1967, at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution, I was living in Hong Kong with my family, in part to complete my PhD dissertation research work and part to take on legal work.

Hong Kong was in chaos, and the extreme leftists were fire bombing cars, periodically killing people (I witnessed their murder of a Hong Kong policeman), and in general behaving atrociously.

Hong Kong's Jewish community in the 1970s was a community, without much Jewishness. Having come from Singapore, we were surprised at the lack of a school, a *shochet*, a *kosher mikva*, a rabbi, or a regular minyan service. At that time the Jewish club was poorly maintained.

Members of the community including Karel Weiss Yaakov Zion, Zakki Dwek, Simcha Benshay and Ezeiel Abraham felt a need to enhance the cultural and religious content of Jewish life. We organised study classes and a minyan on Shabbat and maintained a kosher

table at the Jewish club.

We eventually organised a Rabbi's Search Committee, consisting of Mark Ejlenberg, Jack Crystal and myself. After several months the community selected a young yeshiva boy who was Rabbi Mordechai Avtzon who is now the regional director of Chabad in Asia. His appointment ensured the kitchen was koshered, kosher meat was now available at a reasonable price and a daily minyan had been established.

Guangzhou where I spent most of my life

In April 1972 I went to Guangzhou to establish the region's office of the law firm that I was then working for.

China, in the last years of the Cultural Revolution, was still largely a prison, and virtually everyone was in jail. On my first day in China, I was detained in the Dongfang Hotel, because my "guide" was sure I was a spy, since I spoke Chinese.

Guangzhou at the time was the centre for international trade activity in China. The word lawyer, at the time, was one of opprobrium, since Mao Zedong had essentially done away all public legislation, closed the courts, arbitration tribunals

and law departments, and sent the law specialists to the countryside. Though in fact I was acting as a lawyer, I did not use that term while I was in China. Since I spoke Chinese with some fluency and could read and write, the latter not very well. I was exceedingly busy, mostly serving the American corporations.

At the time there were no organised Jewish communities in China, but during the Canton Fairs, twice each year, each for 6 weeks at a time (and people came to Guangzhou before and after the fair), foreign persons, including Jewish, were present in large numbers for more than 5 months of the year. Some Jewish visitors organised prayer gatherings and many brought us kosher food.

Nevertheless, for about the first seven years we were in Guangzhou, we never ate meat. We subsisted on fruits, fish, and vegetables, the former of which were not readily available for many years. Watermelon was the only staple fruit.

Foreigners in China required a visa for each city that was open to travel, and not many cities were so open. In some locations, such as Hainan, travel from one county to the next required a visa.

Travel by plane was not commodious, and most airplanes were Russian, neither comfortable nor modern. Travel to Hong Kong from Guangzhou took a full day. The only means of transportation between Hong Kong and Guangzhou was by train.

Until 1978, when Deng Xiaoping rose to power, almost all business in China was concluded by trade agreements between state-owned enterprises and foreign companies. The largest sales were whole plant sales. Not until 1978, with passage of the Joint Venture Law, was foreign investment permitted.

1980s onwards

When Rabbi Avtzon left Ohel Leah Synagogue in the 1980s to establish Chabad in the Hilton Hotel, two other active Jewish centres in Hong Kong began to prosper.

Later, Shuva Yisrael was established by the Darvish family, where my son Rabbi Benjamin Buxbaum worked for some years, and still later, Rabbi Moded established a Sephardic

community in Kowloon, which made Hong Kong the most active Jewish community in Asia. Chabad sent a *schaliach* to Shanghai, initially based in the Portman Hotel. Subsequently, Rabbi Shalom Greenberg became the established Rabbi in Shanghai.

Initially, the Public Security Bureau was concerned and interested in the activities of the Jewish community. We invited them to participate in our social and religious activities, and they were both studious and friendly, and came to understand Jewish-religious life.

They informed us that we could lawfully continue our activities, and once legislation was in place, we can register as a Jewish community. In fact, because of the problems of the Fa Lung Gong, that legislation was not enacted until a few years ago.

At the same time, I began to negotiate with the government on use of the Ohel Rachel Synagogue on Shaanxi Bei Road. We were first granted permission to use the synagogue on special religious holidays, such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Chanukah, etc.

During this coming Shanghai Expo 2010, the synagogue will be available for us on every Shabbat, and we are negotiating for its full time use in the future.

In Beijing, Rabbi Shimon Freundlich established the largest Jewish school in China and the only kosher Jewish restaurant in China, called Dini's.

Mongolia

Recently, there has been increased activity to develop a Jewish centre in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, where Jews have resided for many years and where I have been active for many years.

Chabad has sent a young man to conduct Pesach services there, this year as they have in the past. There are plans to send a full-time Rabbi to Ulaanbaatar.

We were most fortunate to come to Singapore in 1963, when Jewish life was in its nadir in the region, and to see it flourish throughout Asia as it has until today. My family is most thankful for having the opportunity to play a small role in this development.

Supplied by David C. Buxbaum

Sporting events in Israel to capture overseas participants

The 18th Jerusalem International Half Marathon, was held on 18 March. The route takes runners through the beautiful and unique Jerusalem landscape.

This year's winner of the Half Marathon was Bikale Beyze from Ethiopia. The distance course was 21.1 kilometres. There was also a 10 kilometre marathon course as a fun run. Thousands of runners from both Israel and overseas participated, with offers of 6 cash prizes in 18 different race categories, split by age and gender.

The two races began and ended at the Givat Ram stadium, tracing a challenging and slightly hilly route through the city streets, past the Israel Museum, the Shrine of the Book, the Knesset and the Jerusalem Forest.

Participants in the Half Marathon were invited to attend a pasta dinner the night before the race and all received a T-shirt, certificate and medal, as well as an energy bar and drink at the



Half Marathon

end of the race, with fruits and ice on offer as well.

The Mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat, himself a marathon runner, is planning to host a full marathon during 2011 in the

streets of Jerusalem.

Another event, in the tradition of the renowned Tour de France, Israel hosted its own country-wide cycling event, the first of its kind in the country.



Tour d' Israel

Sponsored by the Israel Ministry of Tourism, the five day event was held from 7-11 March, split into five stages, offering participants unrivalled views and experiences throughout the ever-changing landscape of Israel, as well as the chance to compete in an important sporting event.

Israeli national cycling champion Avihay Grinberg participated in the inaugural Tour d'Israel race, which has already attracted riders from Israel and overseas.

Riders pedal from the snow-capped Mount Hermon in the North to sunny Eilat on the shores of the Red Sea - a 768

km cycling challenge passing through regions, cities and sites that evoke memories of biblical history.

Sites and areas included in the tour are: the Galilee hills and their magnificent vistas, legendary Masada, Negev Desert expanses, the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem and Beersheba, the Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea.

The competition ended in the resort city of Eilat on the Red Sea, giving participants the opportunity to enjoy some well-earned rest and relaxation.



Bikers competing over the landscape

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Update on H1N1 global pandemic



Supplied by
Dr Alvin YS Chan,
Specialist Paediatrician

Up until 31 March, the World Health Organisation had maintained its global pandemic alert and response at level 6—the highest warning level. Hong Kong authorities followed the advice from WHO all along.

While the New H1N1 Human Influenza hit Hong Kong peaking last summer, the expected major second winter wave did not occur. The influenza activity increasing in Hong Kong between February and March 10 was **not** influenza A but influenza B (usually milder with less chances of mutation than influenza A). Another virus, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), also became an epidemic simultaneously.

In Hong Kong, as in East

Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and even North America and Western Europe, the New H1N1 Human Influenza virus had declining pattern of pandemic influenza activity, but many countries of Eastern Europe still reported some increased respiratory disease activity in March, 2010.

The WHO still advises that the vaccination against the new H1N1 Human Influenza is effective and safe, and should be given to the high risk groups, i.e. age groups of younger than 6, and older than 65, health care workers, patients with chronic diseases, respiratory illnesses, immuno-deficiency, and pregnant women. Tamiflu is still an effective treatment in general.

So far, more than 100 million new H1N1 human influenza vaccines were given globally, about half in mainland China, with no more side effects than those expected from seasonal

influenza vaccines or other standard vaccines used to prevent viral diseases.

The most notorious complication is Guillain Barre Syndrome (GBS), occurring in one in a million vaccinees, a risk similar to that for most viral vaccines.

GBS can also occur 10-40 days after viral infections. So far, in Hong Kong, two cases of GBS, an illness with paralysis of limbs, which might spread to muscles of the chest wall and swallowing apparatus, had been reported among vaccinees since 21 December 2009, the start of the new H1N1 Human Influenza vaccination programme.

The number of GBS after vaccination still lies within the baseline incidence which is about five per month or 60 per year. In fact, the Hong Kong government hospitals recorded at least seven cases of GBS

without history of the new H1N1 Human Influenza vaccination, since the start of the HIS vaccination programme on 21 December 2009.

Another concern is the safety of vaccination in pregnant women. While the complaint of a Taiwanese woman with stillbirth after vaccination attracted lots of media attention; and stillbirths and abortions had been reported within months of the vaccination programme in Hong Kong, they were not proven to be sequelae of vaccination.

Locally, hundreds of abortions and dozens of stillbirths occur without history of H1N1 vaccination within the same period, and the incidence of post-vaccination stillbirths and abortions is not higher than normal. The same observation was found globally proving that this vaccine is safe as other seasonal influenza vaccines produced.

This New H1N1 Human Influenza vaccine will be incorporated into the seasonal influenza vaccine for the coming September, in both South and Northern hemispheres.

It could be available in injection form or intranasal preparation. When the new vaccine is available, it will replace the New H1N1 Human Influenza vaccine being used now.

While I disagree with the futile and environmentally unfriendly measure of requiring travellers to fill in a health declaration form when entering Hong Kong, which was practiced since the outbreak in North America, I do advise patients with history of fever and influenza-like illness to mention any contact with influenza patients in order to avoid spreading the deadly disease around.

Even in March, some patients including a 37 year old man without any chronic illness, and not belonging to any high risk groups developed fatal pneumonia due to the New H1N1 Human Influenza.

So we should not loosen our guard against the virus.

For any further advise you can email: yschandr@yahoo.com.hk

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Please provide us with news, photos, events happening and editorial features on your community and we will include in the newspaper

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Jewish Times Asia

Congratulations on Israel's 62nd Anniversary

From

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April Parashas

3 April 2010 / 19 Nisan 5770: SHABBAT CHOL HAMOED PESACH

The Torah reading for Shabbat Chol HaMoed Pesach is taken from Parashat Ki Tissa. It contains the thirteen attributes of Mercy – a prayer which G-d gave to Moses, by which the Children of Israel could seek forgiveness for the sin of the Golden Calf. It is not only a prayer – we should aspire to emulate these attributes of mercy. The portion concluded with the command to keep Pesach as one of the Shalosh Regalim – the three foot festivals, when every Israelite male had to go up to the Temple.

10 April 2010 / 26 Nisan 5770: SHEMINI / SHABBAT MEVARECHIM

The Torah teaches us what animals and fish we can eat, and what birds we cannot eat. Animals have to have cloven hooves and chew the cud. Fish have to have fins and scales. We cannot eat birds of prey. Additionally we cannot eat insects. Although the Torah does not give us a direct reason for keeping the Kashrut laws, they are very closed linked to the command for us to be Holy and distance ourselves from foods and behaviour that impair us from achieving this.

17 April 2010 / 3 Iyar 5770: TAZRIA / METZORAH

Two types of bodily spiritual impurity are described. The first occurs after childbirth. After a period of 33 days in the case of a boy, and after 66 days in the case of a girl, the mother would complete this period by bringing an offering to the Temple.

The second, which is incorrectly termed as leprosy, comes in several forms affecting the body and the home. Our sages deduce the cause of Tzara'as is Lashon HaRah – speaking badly about others, which can have the effect of excluding the target of such talk from the community. The remedy is to exclude the speaker himself while he or she undergoes spiritual purification.

24 April 2010 / 10 Iyar 5770: ACHAREI MOT / KEDOSHIM

The Parasha of Acharei Mot is possibly the best known Parasha in the whole Torah, whereas Kedoshim is one of the most important. Acharei Mot is read on Yom Kippur and contains the key Yom Kippur service that was performed by the Kohel Gadol. It also contains the important principle that we must live by the Torah. Judaism is about living our lives and thereby fulfilling the Mitzvah of being Holy. We do this by keep the important laws of incest – of certain relationships that are forbidden to us; of honouring and fearing our parents; of keeping Shabbat; of keeping the laws of Sha'atness (not wearing clothes with a mixture of flax and wool) and many other key laws that are listed in Kedoshim, and especially the law of laving your neighbour, which according to Rabbi Akiva is a key Torah principle.

1 May 2010 / 17 Iyar 5770: EMOR

Every one has a command to be holy. One way this is achieved is to separate oneself from all matters that may taint oneself and prevent achieving a state of purity. The Kohanim by the very nature of their position and service in the Temple services are commanded to uphold a very high standard of holiness and purity. They therefore are not allowed to come into contact with the dead, with the exception of their seven closest relatives, and they are not allowed to marry a divorcee or a convert. The Kohen who has any physical blemish is also precluded from serving in the Temple. The ordinary Jew is also able to maintain a state of sanctity by keeping Kashrut, Shabbat and the Festivals, and all also be separating himself from profane matters.

HOLIDAYS/ FASTS/ ROSH CHODESH/ SPECIAL DAYS

Yom Hashoah: 12 April 2010 (28 Nisan 5770)	Yom Hazikaron: 19 April 2010 (5 Iyar 5770)
Rosh Chodesh: 14 April 2010 (30 Nisan 5770) 15 April 2010 (1 Iyar 5770)	Yom Ha'Atzmaut: 20 April 2010 (6 Iyar 5770)

Candle Lighting Times for April

	2 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April
Bangkok	6:12	6:12	6:13	6:14	6:15
Beijing	6:20	6:27	6:34	6:41	6:49
Guangzhou	6:24	6:27	6:30	6:33	6:36
Hong Kong	6:21	6:23	6:26	6:28	6:31
Kathmandu	6:03	6:07	6:11	6:15	6:18
Kobe	6:02	6:08	6:13	6:19	6:24
Manila	5:50	5:51	5:52	5:53	5:54
Mumbai	6:35	6:36	6:38	6:40	6:42
Perth	5:55	5:46	5:38	5:30	5:23
Shanghai	5:55	6:00	6:04	6:09	6:14
Singapore	6:54	6:52	6:51	6:50	6:49
Seoul	6:37	6:43	6:49	6:56	7:02
Taipei	5:52	5:55	5:58	6:02	6:05
Tokyo	5:44	5:50	5:56	6:02	6:08

Candlelighting times are taken from Chabad.org.

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121 Soi Sai Nam Thip 2,
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Tel: (662) 629 2770
www.jewishthailand.com

Chabad of Thailand
96 Rambutttri St.
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www.chabadthailand.com

VIETNAM
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