

בקשו רחמים
נא להתפלל בעד הגאון הרב
יוסף שלום בן ח'י מושא
הרב אלישיב שליט"א
בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

בקשו רחמים
נא להתפלל בעד הגאון הרב
חיים ישראל בן חנה צירל
הרב בעלסקי שליט"א
ראש ישיבת תורה ודעת
בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

Another Major Data Dump From WikiLeaks

Over 5 million emails were dumped from Stratfor, which has been likened to a shadow CIA.

More on page 2

Costa Cruises Liner Adrift After Fire on Board

The ship belonged to the same company that owned the Costa Concordia, on which 25 people died last month.

More on page 2

Iraq Militia Hands Over Last Missing U.S. Soldier's Remains

The Iraqi-born soldier, married to a woman from Baghdad, visited her five years ago and vanished.

More on page 3

Obama Urges Governors To Boost Education Funding

The president and first lady hosted a black-tie dinner for the National Governors Association.

More on page 3

Water Bills Skyrocket Due to Meter Reader Inaccuracies

Some customers with the automated meter readers received bills three times higher than before.

More on page 4

“Never Give Up,” Misaskim Director Tells Assemblage

BY HAMODIA STAFF



Rabbi Yanky Meyer, Director of Misaskim, addresses high level representatives of law enforcement and community organizations in a packed meeting held at Misaskim headquarters yesterday.

BROOKLYN, NY – Rabbi Yanky Meyer, director of Misaskim, opened yesterday's packed gathering in an oversized conference room at Misaskim Headquarters. He welcomed top brass representatives of the New York police department, as well as law enforcement officials from counties around the state. Rabbi Meyer noted the presence of numerous heads of Jewish institutions and organizations, including yeshivos, *chessed* organizations, a large contingent of Hatzolah and Shomrim members, representatives of Agudath Israel of America, and several NYC councilmen.

Rabbi Meyer expressed his appreciation to the participants for extending themselves to work together for the greater good. He began his short but succinct address by repeated a compelling story about the legendary Winston Churchill. The man who motivated his countrymen to survive the Nazi onslaught during World War

Continued on page 5

Syria Approves New Constitution Amid Bloodshed

AMMAN (Reuters) – Syrian artillery pounded rebel-held areas of Homs yesterday as President Bashar al-Assad's government announced that voters had overwhelmingly approved a new constitution in a referendum derided as a sham by his critics at home and abroad.

The outside world has proved powerless to halt the killing in Syria, where repression of initially peaceful protests has spawned an armed insurrection by army deserters and others.

However, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent entered the besieged Baba Amro district of Homs and evacuated three people yesterday, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said. Foreign reporters in the area were not evacuated and the bodies of two journalists killed there had not been recovered, it said.

While foreign powers argued over whether to arm the rebels, the Syrian Interior Ministry said the reformed constitution, which

Continued on page 2

Hagaon Harav Steinman: 'We Have No Existence Without Torah'

BY HAMODIA STAFF

YERUSHALAYIM – An emergency meeting was held Sunday night in the home of Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, *shlita*, to receive guidance on how to react following last week's High Court ruling nixing the law that enabled yeshiva students to defer military service. The main theme of the evening was that United Torah Judaism and Shas should present a united front in opposing any attempt to harm the Torah world.

The meeting was attended by Harav Shimon Baadani, a member of the Moetzes Chachmei HaTorah of Shas; Harav Yosef Efrati, a close confidant of Harav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, *shlita*, may he have a *refuah shleimah*; and Harav Tzvi Katz, *Rosh Yeshiva*, Yeshivas Chazon Nachum in Bnei Brak.

Askanim attending were Shas chairman Interior Minister Rabbi Eli Yishai; UTJ MKs Rabbis Yaakov Litzman, Rabbi Moshe Gafni, Rabbi Menachem Eliezer Mozes, Rabbi Uri Maklev and Rabbi Yisrael Eichler and former MK Rabbi Meir Porush.

Rav Steinman opened the meeting with words of inspiration: "We have no doubt that they won't be able to harm Torah because the Torah is eternal. Hashem's salvation will surely come," he said. "... It is clear that *Am Yisrael* has no existence without the study of Torah. The Torah is the foundation and the secret of existence of the Jewish people. The holy Torah is *Toras chaim*; we have no existence without it. It is life not only for those who learn Torah but for all of *Klal Yisrael*."

He stressed the importance of learning Torah in one's youth and added that "in every generation they tried to nullify the Torah and *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* helped. Now, as well, *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will help and we will get through this and continue to learn Torah."

MK Rabbi Yisrael Eichler delivered *divrei brachah* from the Belzer Rebbe, *shlita*, that "the *Shechinah* should be with you in your actions so that you may raise the glory of Torah."

Harav Baadani also spoke of
Continued on page 7

Polls Tight In Pivotal Ariz. And Michigan Primaries Today

ROCKFORD, Michigan (Reuters) – A tough fight for Michigan between Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum tightened yesterday in a primary that may prove pivotal in choosing a 2012 Republican presidential nominee.

With Michigan to vote today, a new poll said Santorum had gained a slide in support that began after a weak debate performance in Arizona last week.

The Mitchell Research/Rosetta Stone poll said the former Pennsylvania senator is in a statistical dead heat with Romney, edging him 37 percent to 35 percent after losing the lead last week. The poll's margin of error is 3 percentage points.

"The volatility we thought had changed has not. The race remains very fluid," said Steve Mitchell, president of Mitchell Research & Communications, a Republican firm that polled 858 Republican primary voters.

Romney has a comfortable lead in Arizona, which also votes today.

Continued on page 3



Hikind, Klein: Sanitation Tickets Must Be Accompanied By a Photo

BY HAMODIA STAFF

Legislation is being introduced that will require DSNY agents to photograph and document the condition of a property at the time a sanitation ticket is issued. The announcement was made by Assemblyman Dov Hikind (D-Brooklyn) and Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) at a press conference yesterday.

The legislation comes in response to three recent instances where New York City Department of Sanitation (DSNY) agents were filmed on surveillance video in Brooklyn issuing tickets where a violation was not apparent – and may not have occurred at all. The Assemblyman is demanding that DOI open an investigation into these and other cases. According to the New York City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, there were 262,426 tickets issued by DSNY in Fiscal Year 2011 for premises violations.

The Hikind-Klein legislation is based on successful models in both Boston and Chicago, where sanitation agents are provided

with a mobile device that allows them to take photographs with a time and date stamp, and upload the photos and summons to the central database.

“I would like to believe that DSNY agents are, for the most part, honest when issuing summonses,” said Hikind. “But these surveillance videos tell a different story, and this legislation will serve as a system of checks and balances on these agents to ensure that they are not filing a false instrument when tickets are issued. If we know about these three false tickets, I can only imagine how many more cases of fraud there must be.”

Sanitation tickets are a minimum of \$100, Hikind noted, calling it a tremendous financial burden. “My office is often inundated with constituents who cannot pay these unjust summonses.” Referring to the incorrect violations as “nothing more than a money-maker for the City,” he expressed his hope that the legislation would not only protect those who are unjustly ticketed, but it will also reduce paperwork and the cost of adjudication proceedings.”

Hikind added, “Anyone who



L-R: Mr. Motti Katz, a Brooklyn resident who received a ticket but had not committed a violation, Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and Assemblyman Dov Hikind.

has ever received a violation knows it always comes down to their word against the agent’s word. With photographic evidence, there can be no dispute as to the guilt or innocence of a property owner. It’s a win-win for the City and for New York City’s residents.”

“A picture is not only worth a thousand words, but also time, money, and faith in the system,”

said Senator Klein. “Boston and Chicago have already taken this commonsense step into the digital age. It’s time for New York to follow suit. I’m proud to partner with Assemblyman Hikind on this important initiative.”

“Transparency is incredibly important to the process of issuing violations on behalf of a City agency,” said Councilmember Letitia James, Chair of the

Council’s Sanitation Committee. “Requiring DSNY agents to provide property owners with photographic evidence of a violation at their premises would assist in proper management of residences, and deter the handful of wayward agents from fraudulent behaviors. I join my colleagues in their commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Department of Sanitation.”

“Never Give Up”

Continued from page 1

It stunned the eager audience at Oxford University in Cambridge, England, with his commencement speech. “Never give up,” was all he said to the audience, whereupon he left the podium. Rabbi Meyer pointed out how, in the course of working with the community, obstacles come up. But to accomplish our goals, we must persevere.

Among the speakers at yesterday’s gathering were Inspector John Sprague, Commander of the 66th Precinct in Boro Park; Thomas Chan, Chief of Brooklyn South; City Councilman David Greenfield (D-Brooklyn); Rabbi David Cohen, Executive Director of Hatzolah; Rabbi Simcha Scholar, Executive Vice President of Chai Lifeline; Rabbi Chaim Dovid Zwiebel, Executive Vice President of Agudath Israel of America; Ms. Janice Fedarcyk, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI New York Field Office; and Rabbi Lipa Brennan, Executive Director of Yeshivas Novominsk Kol Yehuda in Brooklyn.

Rabbi Zwiebel expressed his deep feelings of gratitude to the law enforcement officials who represented the larger network of security organizations for being so responsive to our community’s needs. As a child of

Holocaust survivors, he couldn’t help but contrast the situation in America where we consider these officials our friends and advocates as opposed to the pre-war situation in Europe, where the police were more often part of the persecution that Jews suffered.

Rabbi Zwiebel emphasized how much we owe the entire NYPD for their vigilance in seeking to protect us in our communities, who seek to keep our streets safe from crime and the ever-present threat of terror, and who are ready to help us work out security and logistical requirements when we plan community events.

Ms. Fedarcyk explained the purpose of the meeting: to further the FBI’s agenda of learning about diverse communities, and to open lines of communication that will promote sensitivity.

In her remarks she drew upon a visit that Eli Wiesel had made to the White House, where he bemoaned the effects of indifference to each others’ pain. Ms. Fedarcyk stressed that if we allow ourselves to adopt a similar indifference, we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past. The alternative, she stated, is to strengthen community outreach and partnership, and close the gaps between law enforcement and different ethnic groups.

New York Briefs

Report: Safety Device Was Disabled on NYC Elevator

NEW YORK (AP) – Investigators say an important elevator safety system was turned off when an advertising executive was crushed to death at a Manhattan office building.

The city investigation and buildings departments released the findings yesterday.

Suzanne Hart was killed when an elevator started rising with its doors open Dec. 14. She was dragged between the car and the wall.

Workers had adjusted the elevator that morning. A mechanic told investigators he’d temporarily overridden a system that prevented the elevator from moving with its doors open. He said the mechanism was back online before Hart arrived.

But the report says the mechanism “was apparently bypassed at the time of the fatal incident.”

The mechanic’s lawyer says he’s cooperated completely with the investigation. Transel Elevator Inc. says it cooperated and will contest the findings.

Judge Creates Court Solution For Redistricting

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) – A federal judge is preparing to take over New York’s redistricting process from the state Legislature, where it’s been delayed.

The action in federal court in Brooklyn yesterday establishes

a process that would kick in if the Senate’s Republican majority and the Assembly’s Democratic majority fail to pass new election district lines for legislative races and congressional seats.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo promises to veto the election district lines proposed weeks ago. He says they’re “hyper-political” and drawn to protect and expand the majorities’ power.

The Assembly and Senate were expected to miss their own deadline to propose new lines in a bill. That would mean the new district lines wouldn’t be voted on Thursday as planned.

NYPD Officer Saved From Injury by Gun Belt

NEW YORK (AP) – A police officer escaped serious injury during an early morning shootout yesterday after a bullet aiming for his gut struck his gun belt instead, police said.

Officer Thomas Richards was treated and released from a hospital. He was the fourth NYPD officer shot in two months; one died and the others were wounded.

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said the department has been very lucky, but illegal guns are still a major problem in the city despite New York’s strict laws.

“This underscores sort of the nature of the job,” he said. “Things can be very quiet on the surface and you’ll get out and

confront someone and it can turn for the worst.”

But for Richards, it did not. Kelly said he spoke to the 36-year-old officer, who joined the department in 2005, and said he was upbeat.

“If it had been up an inch up, it would’ve been right into the officer’s body,” the commissioner said of the bullet.

“There are an awful lot of guns on the street,” Kelly said. “We’ve done a lot to lower the violence. ... We think our proactive strategies are working.”

Immigration Mix-Up Leaves NYC Man With No Country

NEW YORK (AP) – A New York man who came from Yemen as a child has lost his U.S. citizenship because of what the State Department says was a bureaucratic error when he got it.

The New York Times reports that the recently discovered blunder has left Abdo Hizam without a country.

Hizam moved to Dearborn, Mich. in 1990 at age 9. He gave up his Yemeni citizenship, graduated from high school and earned a business degree. He now lives in the Bronx and works at a store.

But last year the State Department told Hizam that he had received his citizenship in 1990 “due to department error.”

Hizam has filed a lawsuit demanding that the U.S. government affirm his citizenship and reissue his passport.