

Israel's man in China says he was illegally denied a shot at key Foreign Ministry post

By Gidi Weitz

Israel's ambassador to China has complained to the state comptroller over an alleged illegal appointment to a senior Foreign Ministry position he was shooting for.

The ambassador, Amos Nadai, is ending his posting in China soon and was in the running to become the general supervisor of the foreign service. He says "extraneous

considerations" helped land another candidate the job, Yaacov Keidar, but he gave no details.

"This is an extreme case of deviation from the regulations of the Foreign Ministry, the civil service and the tender laws, as well as court rulings and directives," Nadai wrote via his attorneys, Yaakov Israeli and Nati Agmon.

"It's also damaging to the principle of equality."

Nadai testified on the matter to the State Comptroller's Office during a recent visit to Israel. The general supervisor of the foreign service is responsible for monitoring the Foreign Ministry's operations.

The ministry's appointments committee was to discuss the matter on August 11 last year, after the final date for submitting candidacies, July 31.

But according to Nadai's attorneys, the committee postponed the meeting and reopened the candidates list, which they say contravenes civil service regulations and the laws governing tenders. They say it hurt their client's chances to get the job.

In November, the committee announced its intention to select the suitable candidate, which it did, naming Keidar. According to Nadai, "the

committee did not choose the most suitable candidate for the post, it relied on extraneous considerations; the decision is tainted by extreme unreasonableness and was not made in good faith."

Investigation launched

According to the spokesman for the State Comptroller's Officer, Shlomo Raz, "In

investigating the complaint, we approached the Foreign Ministry director general in early December. The responses we received from the Foreign Ministry director general did not satisfy us, so we demanded additional information." But the ministry has yet to reply, Raz added.

"A week ago we approached the Foreign Ministry director general again and asked for his response



Yaacov Keidar



Amos Nadai

without delay," Raz said. The Foreign Ministry responded: "The matter is un-

der discussion in the Labor Court, so we cannot discuss it in the media."

Five arrested in New Delhi for car bomb attack

By Anshel Pfeffer and Barak Ravid

The New Delhi police yesterday arrested five suspects in connection with the car bomb that injured Tal Yehoshua-Koren, wife of the Israeli defense attaché, on Monday, India Today reported. A police source told the local media that the motorcyclist who carried out the attack was probably an Indian.

Israel's ambassador in New Delhi Alon Ushpiz yesterday asked India's External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna to authorize special security arrangements for Israeli diplomats in a bid to prevent similar attacks in the future.

An Israeli team of investigators and forensic experts have joined the Indian police and security services investigating the attack.

Yesterday the Indian and Israeli investigators examined the remains of the car in which Yehoshua-Koren had been traveling and another car

damaged by the blast. They also examined a motorcycle found abandoned in the south of the city, which the terrorist is believed to have used in the attack.

Krishna agreed to beef up the security around the Israeli diplomats and promised the Israeli investigators full access to the inquiry findings.

The security cabinet convened in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office in Jerusalem yesterday to discuss ways of preventing further terror attempts by Iran and Hezbollah against Israeli diplomatic targets abroad. The cabinet heard evaluations from defense and foreign affairs experts and reviewed indications regarding Iran's involvement in repeated attempts to target Israelis in the world.

Although it was apparently impossible to identify the biker who perpetrated the attack in New Delhi from security camera footage, New Delhi police officers leaked to the local

media that the man is probably an Indian national.

Police believe the terrorist carried out surveillance of Israel's defense attaché in India, who was the initial attack target. A few hours before the attack, the Israeli diplomat lunched with his wife, Tal Yehoshua-Koren in New Delhi's Khan Market.

After examining the camera footage in the market area, investigators identified a few of the five suspects who were arrested later in connection with the attack loitering near Yehoshua-Koren's car while it was parked near the market.

The police are also checking the records of international phone calls from New Delhi to Iran, Lebanon and Pakistan in the hours before and after the attack. Between 2 P.M. and 3:30 P.M. on the day of the attack 115 calls were made to these three states. Four calls were made from a public telephone booth near the Khan Market. Thirteen of the calls lasted 8-10 minutes and the police are trying to locate the callers.

India Today reported the Mossad gave Indian intelligence a list of eight Iranian and Lebanese nationals suspected of being involved in the attack.

Thailand is continuing its investigation into the Iranian terror cell that allegedly carried out Tuesday's botched terror attack in Bangkok, which Israeli officials believe was aimed at Israel's ambassador there. Two of the cell's members have been arrested, Thai police said.

Thai intelligence officials said yesterday the Iranian cell apparently used the same method in targeting the Israeli ambassador as the one used in New Delhi. Israeli ambassador in Bangkok Yitzhak Shoham and Thai police officials said the attack's characteristics and the explosive charges used were similar.

Security analyst Saikat Datta said India was concerned its relations with Iran may hurt its ties with Israel. India imports its oil from Iran, which has always supported India in its conflict with Pakistan over Kashmir. On the other hand, Israel is India's closest and strongest strategic ally, he said.

Unlike Israel, Indian ministers have not blamed Iran or anyone else for the attack in New Delhi earlier this week.



Yara Mashour at the offices of the Nazareth-based magazine she edits.

Israeli-Arab editor accuses El Al of humiliating treatment at Milan airport

Yara Mashour tells Haaretz: 'I felt as though I was raped' by security agents

By Jack Khoury

An Arab journalist says she was so profoundly insulted by El Al security staff at a Milan airport that she changed her itinerary and may sue the Israeli national carrier.

Yara Mashour is the editor of the Nazareth-based women's magazine Lilac and the daughter of the late Lutfi Mashour, the editor and publisher of the Arabic weekly Al-Sinara. Yesterday she related what she said happened to her, her brother-in-law and another relative when they arrived at Milan's Malpensa Airport on Monday for their return flight to Israel, and reached the El Al security checkpoint.

"As soon as they realized we were Arabs they immediately separated us from the other passengers. Three security people started asking us questions. At first we considered it to be routine, but it went on and on," Mashour said.

She said that at some point security agents separated each member of her party "like criminals," adding, "I began arguing and asking them why they were asking so many questions. One of the guards, apparently the one in charge, got mad and began yelling, 'You won't board the plane until I have asked you all the questions and you have passed the strictest security check,'" Mashour said. She was then asked to follow a number of security agents to another part of the airport, for a body search.

"I said I refused to undergo this humiliation and that I had no intention of cooperating. I said I was even willing to give up my flight," Mashour said. "I felt like they were raping me in many senses, and I am not prepared to let this go. The issue has already been

given to a lawyer to handle, to check whether a suit can be filed for damages, for the insult and humiliation we suffered," Mashour said.

According to Mashour, her two traveling companions were also subjected to humiliating security checks, in which they were forced to remove the contents of their bags for examination.

"I looked like they were doing this on purpose, because we asked why we were being humiliated," she said.

On Tuesday the group flew

to Israel, via Istanbul, on a Turkish airline.

"In Turkey we went through the usual check and amazingly, the plane reached Israel safely and did not blow up," Mashour commented.

In a response, El Al said it operates "in accordance with the instructions of Israeli security agencies," adding, "We regret that the passengers were offended and chose not to fly with us."

nothing changes around here, and if something does, it's for the worse. The world goes on as usual, and no one really knows why. We could behave differently, it's just force of bad habit that we don't.

I published my first article in Haaretz 27 years ago. No article since received so many outraged responses. I fear this article will be read and go by without the blinking of an eye.

"Don't touch their hair," was the title of the article. It was about journalist Lutfi Mashour, his wife Vida and their two little daughters, Yara, 12, and Varia, 10. Lutfi is an Arab, a Palestinian, a Christian, and an Israeli citizen. He is also a friend of mine. Lutfi, who was also the owner of a popular Arab-language newspaper published in Nazareth, died six years ago, felled by cancer.

He bequeathed the management and editing of the newspaper to his wife and daughters, and they have done well. The three women also now publish a successful women's magazine, Lilac, which sells well in Israel, Jordan and the territories.

Twenty-seven years ago, the family traveled to the United States to attend a relative's wedding. Coming back to Israel, they went through an El Al "security check," which included invasive questions, ripping their suitcases and turning their possessions upside down.

But the security people were still not satisfied. They explored Lutfi's testicles, as if

our national security rested there. And that was not the worst moment. Before boarding the flight, the security people remembered the little girls - they might pose a danger to us - and they began going through their hair.

The next day, back in Israel, Yara and Varia went to school. That same day, researchers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem visited the school. One of the questions they asked was "what does a Jew look like to you." Yara, who had Jewish neighbors and guests in her home, replied: "A Jew is a man who humiliates other people."

In my article at the time I wrote: "Don't shove your hands into people's hair. One doesn't find anything in girls' hair, except for Jewish memories. And besides, experience teaches that when one searches a child's head, terrible thoughts take root there. They can even grow many years later."

Yara is no longer a girl. Do the math. This week she went to Milan on business, and history repeated itself. But a moment before she entered the cubicle for the body check, she stopped and asked for her passport back. No, she won't fly El Al. She returned to Israel Tuesday on Turkish Airlines.

Yara won't undress any more. Maybe childhood memories flooded back; maybe she remembered her father's words: Don't ever again allow people to touch your hair or anything else.

Israel to open Golan border with Syria

By Jonathan Lis

The Kuneitra crossing on the Golan Heights is to be opened Monday to allow 15 Druze students studying in Syria to return, and let families of Syrian massacre victims pay condolence calls and visit the wounded.

The decision to open the crossing was made by Interior Minister Eli Yishai, pending the approval of the security establishment.

"I found it proper to respond to the request of Druze notables to open the Kuneitra crossing and allow passage of the families and students," said Yishai. "As a public servant it is an honor to help all the communities and sects in Israeli society."

The students relayed their request to return to their homes in the Golan Heights through the Druze spiritual leadership in the Golan, saying they wanted to leave the strife-torn country even though it was the middle of the academic year.


Yishai plans to see whether the students can be placed in higher education institutions in Israel to complete their studies, assuming the situation in Syria doesn't improve soon.

There are 245 Druze students studying in Syria, and the Interior Ministry is preparing for the possibility that more students will ask to come home.

"Anyone who wants to come back from Syria can do so," said a ministry official.

Yishai also agreed to let 35 Druze from the Golan, whose relatives were killed or wounded in the battles and disturbances in Syria, cross over to visit family there.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu briefly referred to the Syrian massacres when addressing the Knesset plenum yesterday, mentioning the "criminal slaughter in Syria. Every day it claims dozens and sometimes hundreds of innocent people. And not far from there, we hear the murderous declarations of Iranian leaders."



TENDERS ISRAEL ELECTRIC

THE ISRAEL ELECTRIC CORPORATION WISHES TO ANNOUNCE THE FOLLOWING:

TENDER NO. 100947750

33 KV MEDIUM VOLTAGE DISTRIBUTION TYPE SURGE ARRESTERS

The IEC hereby announces that the submission date for this tender has been postponed. Bidders who have already submitted a bid for this tender are entitled to submit an updated bid.

Updated Deadline for Submission of Proposals: February 26, 2012; Time: 11:00 a.m.

Tender documents, including preliminary conditions for participation in the above tenders and contract periods, options and quantities, can be viewed on the Israel Electric Corporation website. Participation in the tender is subject to presentation of a receipt showing a payment slip of NIS 300 to the IEC paid at any Postal Bank branch (this payment is non-refundable). Prior to participation in the tender, tender documents may be viewed on the IEC website and at the offices of the IEC Market Research and Tenders Department, Netiv Ha'or St. #1, Haifa, Tel:04-8182421, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Bids must be submitted in closed envelopes and placed in the Tenders Box No. 1 located in the entrance floor, room no. 9, in the IEC Main Office Building, Netiv Ha'or St. #1, Haifa, by the deadline set for the submission of bids for the tender.

See complete and binding conditions in the Tender documents on the IEC website: www.iec.co.il

Israeli acquitted of libel against Mohammed al-Dura's father

By Avi Issacharoff

A French appeals court yesterday overturned the libel conviction of an Israeli physician who was sued by the father of Mohammed al-Dura, the boy whose shooting death in September 2000 became a powerful symbol of the second intifada. Jamal al-Dura had dis-

played to international media outlets scars on his body he claimed were caused by bullets fired by Israel Defense Forces soldiers.

In a 2008 interview with a French Jewish weekly an Israeli orthopedic surgeon, Dr. David Yehuda disputed the elder Dura's claim. Yehuda said the scars were not related to the incident in which

Mohammed al-Dura, who was 12 years old, died.

Rather, Yehuda said, they were the result of an assault on Dura by Hamas militants who accused him of collaborating with Israel, as well as subsequent surgery performed by Yehuda himself in 1994.

Yehuda, together with the reporter and editor of the

French publication, were convicted of libel by a French court in April and ordered to pay thousands of euros in compensation.

Yesterday's ruling was the result of Yehuda's appeal of his conviction.

The photos of the Duras, father and son, taking cover behind a barrel during an exchange of gunfire between

Israeli forces and Palestinian militants, near the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip, remains one of the most enduring images of the second intifada.

Israel initially apologized for the boy's death but issued a retraction when subsequent investigations indicated the boy was most likely killed by Palestinian fire.

anything else.