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Amos Harel

Two Israeli embassy workers killed outside D.C. Jewish Museum

Gunman shouted 'Free, free Palestine'; authorities see act as targeted antisemitic violence

Ben Samuels and Haaretz

WASHINGTON – Two Israeli embassy staffers were shot and killed Wednesday night outside the Capital Jewish Museum in Washington, D.C., in what authorities are treating as a targeted act of antisemitic violence.

The victims, a couple, were leaving an American Jewish Committee diplomats event when they were shot.

They were identified as Yaron Lischinsky and Sarah Milgrim. Lischinsky worked as a research assistant on Middle East and North Africa affairs in the embassy's political department, while Milgrim worked in the embassy's public diplomacy department.

Police say the gunman, identified as 30-year-old Elias Rodriguez of Chicago, opened fire before entering the museum, where he was detained by security. He later led police to the location where he had discarded his weapon.

According to Washington Police Chief Pamela Smith, Rodriguez shouted "Free, free Palestine" while in custody. A witness told Fox News the attacker also yelled "There's only one solution, intifada revolution," as police arrived and pulled a red kaffiyeh from his pocket.

The incident took place near 3rd and F Streets NW, close to the museum, the FBI field office and the U.S. Attorney's office. IsraAID, one of the event organizers, said in a statement that the event had been focused on aid in Gaza. "All the attendees gathered in the interest of finding practi-



A police cordon at the scene of the shooting in D.C. on Wednesday night.

Alex Wroblewski / AFP

cal solutions to the humanitarian crisis in Gaza," the statement read.

"We had over 30 embassies represented," said JoJo Drake Kalin, one of the organizers. "This was our an-

nual Young Diplomats event." The keynote speakers included representatives from NGOs who had "successfully [gotten] over 300 trucks of aid into Gaza" before the current blockade.

Authorities said Rodriguez had no known prior interactions with D.C. police. FBI Deputy Director Dan Bongino said the suspect is being interviewed by both local law enforcement and the FBI's

Joint Terrorism Task Force. "Early indicators are that this is an act of targeted violence," he said.

"We're at a very Jewish event in a Jewish space, but our first thought wasn't this

is a Jewish hate crime," Kalin recounted, adding that people in the building had run downstairs after hearing shots outside. Guards, oblivious to the

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A diplomatic disaster looms

At the top of its front page on Tuesday, the Wall Street Journal carried a photo of desperate people in the Gaza Strip, standing with empty pots in a food line, on the backdrop of destroyed houses. The Journal is not The Guardian or The New York Times. But even in the heart of the Republican establishment they're having a hard time coming to grips with scenes of starving children. When two phenomena intersect – many dozens of people killed every day, sometimes more than 100, in Israeli bombing, and a serious exacerbation in the humanitarian conditions in Gaza – even the indifferent West wakes up. In the Gaza Strip, a densely populated region with a very high birthrate, a large portion of the casualties are children.

U.S. President Donald Trump, too, is not pleased with these images. That's the background to the heavy pressure he has exerted on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the past few

days, to allow the entry of humanitarian aid convoys into the Strip again. The government, and indeed the entire political arena, was in an uproar this week after the stinging comment by the Democrats leader Yair Golan, who spoke about "killing babies as a hobby."

Golan should have made it clear that he wasn't referring to Israel Defense Forces soldiers, but to the politicians who sent them to the Strip (as he did, afterward). But the assault on him is a diversion. It allows Israelis to ignore the terrible results of the actions being done in our name in Gaza, in a war whose goals the government has long lost sight of. The story is not "killing as a hobby": That is certainly not the driving motive of the absolute majority of the bombing runs. The issue is their result: In its attempts to strike at terrorists, Israel is killing more civilians in Gaza than it ever did before.

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PM names David Zini as new Shin Bet head

Haaretz

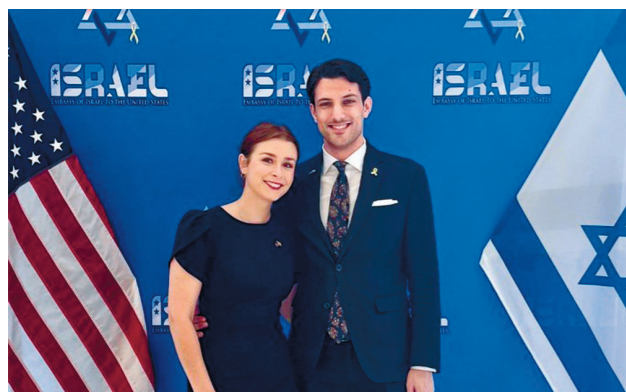
The Prime Minister's Office announced that Maj. Gen. David Zini has been appointed Shin Bet security service director. He will replace Ronen Bar, who announced his resignation last month and will step down on June 15.

The appointment goes against Attorney General Gali Baharav-Miara's legal instruction that Netanyahu must refrain from being involved in "any activity re-

garding the appointment of a permanent or temporary Shin Bet chief," adding he must wait for guidance following the High Court of Justice's ruling on Wednesday that Bar's dismissal in March was "unlawful."

The ruling said the ousting was illegitimate partly because Netanyahu had a conflict of interest due to probes into his ex-aid and spokesperson's Qatar connections.

Zini is head of Training Command and commander of the General Staff Corps.



Shooting victims Milgrim, left, and Lischinsky.

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After 20 months, war reaches streets of Washington

Amir Tibon

In the hours after the terror attack in Washington, I called and texted friends in the city to make sure they were okay. In our brief conversations, everyone seemed to offer the same reply. Shock, sadness, rage – but no surprise. The murder of a young

couple working for the Israeli embassy, outside a community event at the Capital Jewish Museum, was tragically in line with what many American Jews had feared might eventually happen amid the surge in antisemitic hate since October 7.

The lack of surprise stems from two main factors. First, over the past 20 months, since the outbreak of the war in the Middle East, there have been numerous attempted terror attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets around the world. Just last month, there was an attempted attack on the Israeli embassy in London. Separately, authorities in the U.K. arrested members of

an Iranian terror cell plotting a broader assault on Jewish targets. Before that, Israel's embassies in Stockholm and Belgrade were targeted, and a teenager was arrested in Germany for planning an attack on the embassy in Berlin. These are only the publicly-known incidents.

The main difference between these attempts and the devastating attack in Wash-

ington is chillingly simple: this time, the terrorist succeeded. Much like Israel's air defense systems have managed to intercept most missiles launched by Houthi terrorists in Yemen – with one slipping and hitting Ben-Gurion Airport – this attack marks the one that slipped through the layers of preventive security. After so many other plots around the world were foiled,

one eventually went through, with horrific consequences.

Another key detail separates this attack from the others: While the terrorist, 30-year-old Elias Rodriguez from Chicago, murdered two Israeli embassy staffers, it remains unclear whether he knew they worked for the embassy.

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Protesting delay in draft legislation

Haredi parties' voting boycott causing legislative logjam

Noa Shpigel

Ultra-Orthodox parties in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition entered their third week of boycotting Knesset votes, protesting delays in legislation to exempt Haredi men from military service.

As a result, the coalition was forced on Wednesday morning to withdraw its members' private bills for fear it would not win a majority. Among the proposals shelved were bills to split the role of the attorney general and a bill by judicial overhaul architect MK Simcha Rothman to determine the composition of Supreme Court panels by computer.

Coalition lawmakers expressed frustration over the delays. One said that the boy-

cott was particularly infuriating because it stems from a demand for military service exemptions.

A source in the Haredi parties said that for now, a kind of status quo has emerged in relations with other coalition parties, with the voting boycott remaining in place but not being increased. He said that even though some rabbis, including the Gur Rebbe, want to intensify the measures, there is no consensus for that. He added that the situation will continue next week until the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, the ultra-Orthodox deadline to advance the conscription exemption law. If the situation has not changed by then, they will discuss further measures.

Another source in the ultra-Orthodox parties said that if

they see there are agreements on the law by then, they will ease the sanctions. But other sources said they will continue until the law is passed, and it may be expanded and intensified, for example, by boycotting government bills. The boycott has created a legislative logjam, halting the progress of private bills. Likud, for instance, has pulled legislation that was set to go before the Ministerial Committee for Legislation on Sunday, citing little point in advancing new proposals while others remain stalled by the boycott. With the Knesset's summer recess just 10 weeks away, the ongoing protest could significantly limit the number of bills the coalition can pass this session.

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'They don't look like humanitarians': Who are U.S. firms involved in Gaza aid project?

Ben Samuels

WASHINGTON – Amid all the scrutiny and skepticism surrounding the Trump administration's plan to address Gaza's humanitarian crisis, one element has seemed particularly perplexing: the use of private foreign contractors to secure the planned aid.

Two little-known firms, the Safe Reach Solutions (SRS) logistics company and the UG Solutions private security company, will publicly assist the newly established Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF) and deliver aid amid increasing global outrage surrounding Israel's failures to alleviate the crisis.

Their presence, however, provokes more questions than answers about the short-term plan and Israel's bigger picture aspirations.



Armed men at a checkpoint in the Netzarim corridor in January.

Omar Al-Qattaa / AFP

Many details surrounding SRS and UG Solutions remain vague, likely by design. During their previous stint in

Gaza from January through the cease-fire's collapse in March, contractors were reportedly armed with M4 ri-

fls, which are used by the Israeli and U.S. militaries, and Glock pistols. Assuming they will be authorized by Israel to

carry weapons in a war zone, the question remains whether Israel is setting the rules or if they are operating on their own terms. This primarily includes their rules of engagement and whether they will be armed.

The use of mercenaries and soldiers of fortune dates back thousands of years, though their presence in conflict zones became particularly concerning over the past several decades amid the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We know from countless examples that contractors do not see themselves as bound by the same already-way-too-loose rules of engagement that the militaries operate under," Matt Duss, executive vice president at the Center for International Policy think tank, told Haaretz.

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