Hopes Run High in West Bank Village

WASHINGTON POST

Debbie Sussman, West Bank

In the center of this small village, the west view of flash-of-light head rises from clay rocks. Roofters shout about, then scramble under the hooves of donkeys. Schoolchildren race down narrow alleys.

In this perfectly Palestinian village, with its small red dirt earth in the valley, boxy concrete houses clinging to the hillside, women in black shuttling amid the shadows, men crammed into taxis returning from their day’s labor.

But Beita is a village of scars — of lives lost, homes blown up, work suspended.

After a violent clash with Jewish settlers in 1988, Beita was transformed into a hostile place, where the violence was intended to keep the villagers from returning to their land.

Now, it is the wake of the accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Beita is a village waiting for deliveries.

In a series of recent interviews, the villagers seemed to be looking forward to the creation of a Palestinian government, rather than back toward the years of the uprising.

One view remains constant: All said they want Israeli troops to leave, and that they remain suspicious of Jewish settlers and settlers.

Germany Investigates Agency Involved In Blood Scandal

FOR WASHINGTON POST

Facing a growing AIDS scandal, the German government has launched a criminal investigation into a federal agency that admitted it kept quiet for years about suspicions that blood supplies used for transfusions in 1985 and earlier were contaminated with HIV, the blood supplies that infected more than 2,300 people.

Described as the worst medical disaster in Germany’s postwar history, the situation here is being compared to the AIDS scandal in France, which involved the deaths of an estimated 1,200 hemophiiacs and the convictions last year of three top health officials who allowed blood they knew was tainted to be used in transfusions in 1985 and 1986.

German authorities say blood supplies are now safe, but hundreds of deaths are being attributed to transfusions of contaminated blood in past years. And several government officials have resigned.

More than 2,300 people in Germany were infected with HIV through blood transfusions, mostly in 1985 or earlier, the Federal Health Office reported Friday. About 400 have died, and the number is growing at the rate of about one a week, according to one report.

“Today it is too late to determine the exact numbers,” said Dr. Klaus Kirschner, a member of the German Parliament and health expert for the opposition Social Democrats, said in an interview.

“The scandal erupted earlier this month when Health Minister Horst Seehofer disclosed that the semi-autonomous Federal Health Office in Berlin had kept quiet for years about 373 cases, most dating to 1985 or earlier, in which people were suspected to have contracted the AIDS virus through donated blood.”

Did you know you could become a trustee of MIT? You could wield incredible power—be your own advisor would have to call you “Your Grand Exalted Trusteehip” and you’d get your very own secretary...well, probably not. But there’s an informal (FREE!!) supper of pizza, salad and brownies tonight (Tues. Oct. 26) at 6 in Lobby 13 where you can find out all about it, and maybe even become a BOO! The Ashdown House Social Committee and the GSC are having a Halloween Costume Party, Saturday, Oct. 30, 21:00 at Ashdown House, on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Mem. Drive. Dancing! Free refreshments! Things even scarier than your thesis! Prizes ($50, $25 and $25 for Best Costume, so go out all out!

Graduate Student Council

Student Escort & Patrol Service Organizational Meeting Tuesday, Nov. 9 at 18:00 in the GSC office, 50-220

Housing and Community Affairs

GSC General Meeting

17:30 Monday Nov. 8 in GSC office, 50-220. Safety, health care, housing, transportation, and pizza-free dinner.

18:00 Wednesday Nov. 17 in GSC office, 50-220. Various topics, and dinner (probably pizza).

To be placed on a mailing list to receive email updates about upcoming GSC meetings and events, send email to gsc-request@mit.edu.

Experiment Shows Possibility Of Cloning Human Beings

By Robert Cooke

The first clear evidence that human embryos can be split into multiple identical copies — and someday, perhaps, be grown into farm animals or theoretically capable of growing into identical adults — was released recently by a research team in Washington.

The experiments were done on embryos that could not have survived but did live long enough to show that embryo-splitting techniques can work. The eventual goal, researchers say, is to expand the number of embryos that can be implanted in women who produce too few viable eggs.

“This showed the feasibility that somewhere, way down the road, if we are technically able and it’s ethically acceptable to do this, there is the possibility it (cloning) could work,” embryologist Jerry Hall explained Sunday.

Hall’s experiment, while falling far short of actually cloning humans, shows that many of the technologies being used to clone multiple identical copies — and someday, perhaps, be grown into or theoretically capable of growing into identical adults, if normal.

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