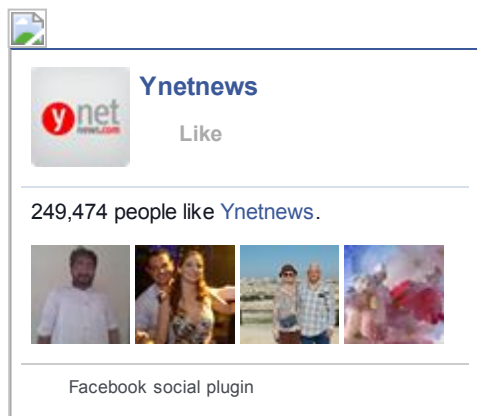




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Crime Beat



In the courts Photo: Index Open

Rare complaint leads to sexual predator's conviction

Ultra-Orthodox man from Meah Shearim neighborhood in capital convicted of sodomy, indecent assault after community members take rare action, seek police interference

Aviad Glickman

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The Jerusalem District Court found Avraham Katz (40) an ultra-Orthodox man from the Meah Shearim neighborhood in the capital guilty of three counts of sodomy and indecent assault against minors.

Monday's somewhat unusual conviction was secured after members of the ultra-Orthodox community filed a police complaint against the man – a rare move by itself in a community which usually deals with such acts within itself.

The indictment against Katz details three cases, which took place in mid 2006, December of 2007 and May of 2008. According to all three accounts, he would approach teenaged boys, lure them to accompany him and once they were alone he would touch them in various ways for his own sexual gratification, sodomizing at least one of his victims as well.

Katz pleaded not guilty on all counts, telling the court that the allegations were libelous and no more than rumors spread by his estranged wife, who he refused to give a divorce.

The court, however, found him guilty on all counts: "The defendant failed to substantiate his claim of libelous allegations. The court finds his explanation of the events implausible." Katz is scheduled to be sentenced in June.

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