

(PRLEAP.COM) Jerusalem, Israel – Mayor Rabbi Moshe Abutbul, who as a child lived at the Zion Orphanage, has been re-elected mayor of Beit Shemesh, Israel for a second term. Abutbul defeated Zionist-bloc-based Eli Cohen by a margin of 51 to 43 percent.

The election is being contested. This week the Jerusalem District Court will convene a three-judge panel, including Jerusalem District Court President David Heshin, Moshe Sobel and Yigal Marzal, to review the election proceedings and results and render a decision. According to local sources, chareidim and non-chareidi voters alike believe that the winner will have a significant impact on the future of Beit Shemesh.

For his part, Mayor Abutbul remains confident of the outcome. Following the election, he addressed criticism of his administration by national and local media.

"Today we see that all of the de-legitimization did not stand the test," said Mayor Abutbul. "I think that the media needs to search their souls," he added. "The residents of the city noted clearly that they had enough of outside interference. Let us live in harmony."

The mayor stated that he hoped to bring all parties into his coalition and to bring peace to Beit Shemesh. The city of about 100,000 is located near the Judean Hills, about 20 miles west of Jerusalem. Established in 1950 as a development town primarily for new immigrants, Beit Shemesh is a thriving city today. It takes its name from the Biblical Beth-shemesh, referenced in the book of Joshua (21,6) and the book of Samuel (6,12).

The Mayor has come a long way since his days as a child in the southern Israeli town of Beer Sheva. At age nine, Moshe drew inspiration from the stories of his ancestors in the Torah and Prophets, but his life in Beer Sheva offered few opportunities to further his studies and develop as a future leader. That same year, he entered the Zion Orphanage, Blumenthals. Four years later, the young Moshe was assisting in the care of younger students. As an adult, Moshe married and moved to Beit Shemesh, and served the local government as deputy mayor. He was elected Mayor of Beit Shemesh in January, 2009. Moshe relates, "Many of the lessons learned while growing up in the Zion Orphanage in terms of how to care for and nurture others have been useful in caring for and building up the Beit Shemesh community."

If the current election results are ratified, he will serve a second five-year term as mayor.

About Zion Orphanage: The Zion Orphanage is the oldest and longest running orphanage in Israel. As a place of caring refuge, the orphanage welcomes boys of all backgrounds, instills them with confidence, and provides them with the education and skills to re-enter the world from a position of strength. The orphanage is located in the heart of the compact Mea Shearim and Geula area of Jerusalem in a self-contained compound. To donate to Zion Orphanage and make a difference in the lives of the children, please call 1-718-380-2420. Also, be sure to visit www.zionorphanage.com

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