

## **Chabad rabbi who aided Chernobyl children dies**

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Matthew Wagner , THE JERUSALEM POST

A Chabad rabbi who helped thousands of children and their parents affected by the Chernobyl, Ukraine nuclear disaster has died.

Chabad announced Sunday night that Rabbi Yossie Raichik died Sunday of a lung infection. He was 55.

Raichik was the director of Chabad's "Children of Chernobyl" (CCOC) project, which airlifted more than 2,531 children and 1,757 parents to Israel from the nuclear-contaminated Chernobyl for treatment after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear reactor explosion sent out a toxic radioactive cloud with four times more fallout than the Hiroshima bombing.

Until his death Sunday, Chabad activists worked around the clock to secure a lung transplant for Raichik. Last Thursday a religious woman hospitalized after suffering a stroke became a candidate to be Raichik's donor.

However, the woman's family insisted on consulting with a leading rabbinic authority in Bnei Brak. By the time the rabbi finished making his own investigations the woman passed away, making the lung transplant impossible to perform.

Rabbi Yosef Aharonov, chairman of Chabad Youth Organization [Tzeirei Agudath Chabad], an umbrella organization that included the CCOC project, said, "Rabbi Raichik devoted himself totally to thousands of Chernobyl's children, so much so that he insisted on continuing to head the project even after receiving recommendations from doctors to take a break from work due to his lung illness.

"In addition to his own six children and wife, Dina, he has left thousands of Chernobyl's children without a father."

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