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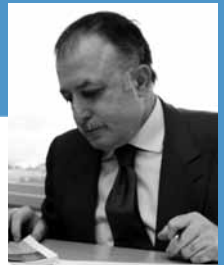
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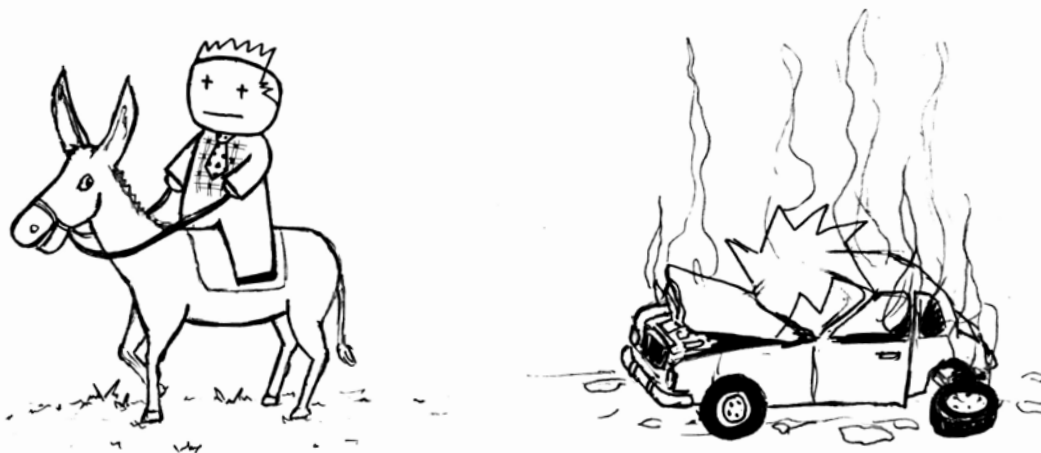
1982 was the year of car bombings *par excellence*. Hardly did a month go by without an explosion ripping through Lebanon. As a matter of fact, a total of 34 car bombs exploded that year, thus translating into 2.8 explosions per month. 1985 on the other hand was the peak year for killings with approximately 317 Lebanese dead and 1198 injured in car bomb attacks.

Putting aside the operations against the Israelis, the Americans and the French, which claimed a number of Lebanese lives along the way, the list of yearly car bombings by the highest death toll would be as follows: 1985, 1981, 1983 and 1982. Which year ranks fifth?

Here is the gist. It is 2013. At least 74 people were killed and 678 injured in four car bombings that hit Lebanon until mid-September. These numbers put the year 2013 fifth in the list since the 1975 Civil War, and first since 1985. This year alone has seen the death rate of 54% of the total deaths in car bombings since 1990. In other words, the death toll in 2013 exceeds half that registered in 23 years.

No wonder the Lebanese are packing up and leaving the country and the PTSD levels are high.

—Jawad N. Adra



HISTORY OF CAR BOMBS IN LEBANON (1975-2013)

**241 VEHICLES, 16 TONS OF EXPLOSIVES,
1820 DEAD AND 7196 INJURED**

After a break of a few years, a new wave of deadly car bombings returned to rip through Lebanon and rob the Lebanese of their sleep and tranquility, awakening their memories to those dismal years when car bombs used to take their toll on the people's life, psyche, property and economy. Whether planted by this side or the other, the bombs have always been part of a regional/international power game that has often played itself out on Lebanon's territory.

From Beer el-Abed's explosion in the Southern Suburb to the car bomb that rocked the Ruwais neighborhood on August 15 leaving 27 dead and around 50 injured, to the twin explosions that hit the Taqwa and Salam Mosques in Tripoli on August 24 and caused the death of 47 people and injuring hundreds, we cannot but fear the possibility of a new series of bombs and wonder where the next blast is going to be and whom it might target.

Since 1975, Lebanon has witnessed the explosion of 230 vehicles rigged with over 16 tons of explosives. According to estimates, 1820 lives were lost and 7196 people were injured, let alone the substantial physical damage to property and infrastructure. Although some of these bombings had specific targets and goals, the majority were aimed at intimidating and killing civilians, particularly during the hostilities between the Lebanese Forces (Phalanges and pro-Phalanges parties) and the Palestinians, when each party resorted to terrorizing its rivals by planting car bombs in their areas of control. It has also been reported that Sheikh Bashir Gemayel used this method of attack against the National Liberal Party in July 1978 and the latter retaliated giving Gemayel a taste of his own medicine.

At a later period, fingers were pointed at Syria for being behind car bombs targeting the Lebanese Forces. And not only were similar attacks exchanged between Syrians and their Palestinian rivals, but the car bomb saga continued even during the Amal-Hezbollah conflict in the 1980s. The adversaries of the Progressive Socialist Party were not spared either from car bomb explosions, nor were those of Israel.

Despite the brutality of these atrocious attacks and the far-reaching repercussions they had on the political and security outlook, the attack on Rafik Hariri's convoy, which occurred on February 14, 2005, dwarfed all its predecessors and left Lebanon marred in a prolonged state of turmoil that continues to date. Probing into Rafik Hariri's assassination has been going for eight years. Investigation into the majority of crimes was often prevented from reaching conclusive results but the available evidence was at times sufficient to point accusations at certain suspects—usually alternating between Israel and Syria.

The following Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 detail a list of the car bomb attacks recorded in Lebanon between 1975 and 2013:



List and details of the car bomb attacks recorded in Lebanon between 1975 and 2013

Table 1

Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
30-12-1975	Near Deir El-Naameh, Naameh	Not specified	Not specified	Timer	3	1	Civilians
4-12-1976	Msaytbeh, Beirut	Not specified	Opel sports car	Timer	2	24	Kamal Jumblat, as the explosion was 50m from his residence
30-1-1977	Akkawi, Ashrafieh	50 kg	-	Timer	30	100	Civilians
29-4-1978	Khaldeh Street, Damour	15 kg	Peugeot pickup	Timer	2	-	Driver and co-driver
2-5-1978	Zgharta	4 kg	-	Timer	-	40	Civilians
8-5-1978	Baalbeck	Not specified	Subaru	Timer	1	-	Car owner
26-8-1978	Ain Bourday-Baalbeck	400 g	-	Timer	1	-	Judicial Police surgeon
22-1-1979	Bristol, Beirut	40 kg	Volkswagen Passat	Activated by remote control	9 including Ali Salama	16	Palestinian official Ali Hassan Salama
16-4-1979	Saida	Not specified	Fiat 125	Not specified	2	-	Car owner and his relative
4-6-1979	Nahr el-Kalb	20 kg	Renault TL	Activated by remote control	1	15	Attempted assassination of Pierre Gemayel
19-7-1979	Ashrafieh	5 kg	-	Timer	1 (driver of the targeted lawyer)	-	Lawyer
20-8-1979	Ashrafieh	30 kg	-	Timer	2	-	Car passengers
17-10-1979	Basta	35 kg	-	Timer	10	28	Civilians
28-10-1979	Basta	30 kg	Fiat 125	Activated by remote control	8	32	Lebanese Arab Army headquarters. Fingers were pointed at the Lebanese Army.
23- 2- 1980	Ashrafieh	25 kg	-	Activated by remote control	8 including Maya Bachir Gemayel	20	Attempted assassination of Bashir Gemayel
28-2-1980	Ashrafieh	10 kg	BMW	Timer	-	2	Phalanges Party office
6-3-1980	Zahle	50 kg	-	Not specified	4	28	Civilians
10-3-1980	Barbara, Byblos	25 kg	Mercedes 190	Activated by remote control	3 including car driver and his 2 companions	3 Phalanges members	Phalanges checkpoint in Barbara
12-3-1980	Dawra	20 kg	Volkswagen Station	Activated by remote control	3	3 including President Chamoun	Attempted assassination of former President Camille Chamoun

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Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
18-4-1980	Qeb Elias, Beqa'a	50 kg	Mercedes 190	Timer	9	18	Civilians
22-4-1980	Near the Phalanges' office, Jdeideh, Matn	35 kg	BMW	Activated by remote control	-	5	Attempted assassination of MP Amine Gemayel
6-6-1980	Entrance of the Shatila Refugee Camp	20 kg	Mercedes	Timer	-	12	Civilians
17-6-1980	Raouche, Beirut	Not specified	Renault	Timer	1	23	Civilians
18-6-1980	Al-Jalil Camp, Baalbeck	50 kg	-	Not specified	-	12	Civilians
30-7-1980	Ashrafieh	40 kg	Mercedes 200	Activated by remote control	5	15	Residence of the Lebanese Forces chief, Sheikh Bachir Gemayel
7-8-1980	Sassine-Ashrafieh	35 kg	Plymouth	Timer	1	30	Civilians
24-8-1980	Rayfoun-Kessrouan	60 kg	Chevrolet	Activated by remote control	6	35	Civilians
25-8-1980	Ajaltoun	35 kg	-	Timer	6	35	Civilians
18-9-1980	Hay el-Lija, Msaytbeh	500 g	Monica sports car	Timer	-	3	Car owner
27-9-1980	Dawra	10 kg	Autobus	Timer	2	22	Autobus passengers
28-10-1980	Berghouz, Marjeyoun	Not specified	Toyota pickup	Activated by remote control	4	3	Military post for Lebanese and Palestinians
10-11-1980	Ashrafieh	80 kg	Mercedes	Burning fuse	2	20	Civilians
10-11-1980	Ashrafieh	60 kg	Toyota	Timer	6	40	Civilians
31-11-1980	Dawra	-	Fiat 124	-	-	-	-
8-1-1981	Jdita	4 kg	Buick	Timer	2	2	Car owner and his family
6-3-1981	Zahle	15 kg	Not specified	Not specified	4	29	Civilians
16-3-1981	Nabatieh	400 kg	Toyota pickup	Not specified	1	3	Joint Forces headquarters
2-4-1981	Aley	Not specified	-	-	2	18	Civilians
13-4-1981	Piscine Street, Aley	40 kg	Oldsmobile	Burning fuse	2	16	Civilians
9-5-1981	Hazmieh	20 kg	Fiat 125	Timer	-	4	Civilians

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13-5-1981	Mouawad Street, Chiyyah	15 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	4	31	Syrian Social Nationalist Party offices
22-5-1981	Saida	5 kg	Car of the targeted lawyer	Timer	1	-	Lawyer
28-5-1981	Bourj el-Barajneh	25 kg	Mercedes	Timer	2	5	Amal Movement headquarters
11-6-1981	Tyre	100 kg	Not specified	Not specified	5	42	Civilians
21-7-1981	Corniche el-Mazraa, Beirut	15 kg	Toyota pickup	Timer	-	-	PLO's headquarters
21-8-1981	Nabatieh	-	BMW	-	-	1	Amal Movement member
17-9-1981	Saida	100 kg	Mercedes 200	Activated by remote control	20	150	Joint Operations Room, Fath Movement office
17-9-1981	Chekka	50 kg	-	-	10	10	Civilians
18-9-1981	Hay el-Selloum	5 kg	Peugeot 404	Timer	3 children	3	Civilians
28-9-1981	Zrariah, Tyre	90 kg	Mercedes 190	Timer	15	20	Civilians
1-10-1981	Afif Tibeh Street, Beirut	100 kg	Mercedes 190	Activated by remote control	83	225	Palestinian authorities and leftist parties' offices
26-10-1981	Sin el-Fil	50 kg	BMW	Timer	-	15	Civilians
10-12-1981	Bab el-Tebbaneh	90 kg	-	Timer	12	80	Civilians
19-12-1981	UNESCO	20 kg	Nissan	Timer	8 including 5 ISF members	15	ISF patrol
20-12-1981	Cola	-	-	-	2	-	Car passengers
30-1-1982	Saida	5 kg	Volkswagen	Timer	3	-	Car passengers
13-2-1982	Ain el-Helwe Refugee Camp	40 kg	Mercedes 190	Timer	4	24	Explosion occurred when the bomb was dismantled
23-2-1982	Raouche	40 kg	Peugeot	Timer	6	59	Civilians
23-2-1982	Raouche, 200 m from the 1st explosion	50 kg	Peugeot	Timer	1	3	Civilians
27-2-1982	Ouzai	50 kg	Volkswagen Station	Timer	4	28	Civilians

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10-3-1982	Zouk Mikael	10 kg	Renault Station	Timer	-	12	Civilians
10-3-1982	Maameltein	10 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	-	1	Civilians
16-3-1982	Ramli Bayda	35 kg	Peugeot 504	Timer	2	11	Near Yemeni and Moroccan Embassies
31-3-1982	Tahwita, Beirut	50 kg	-	Timer	2	4	Civilians
28-4-1982	Tripoli	-	-	-	2	1	Car driver and his sister
5-5-1982	Aramoun	40 kg	-	Timer	-	4	Near the residence of Grand Mufti Sheikh Hassan Khaled
28-5-1982	Tripoli	30 kg	Mercedes 230	Timer	2	1	Car passengers
13-6-1982	Cinema Salwa, Barbir	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	7	25	Civilians
15-6-1982	Tripoli	25 kg	-	-	1	45	Joint Palestinian and Lebanese Forces
22-6-1982	Verdun, Beirut	50 kg	Buick	Timer	2	5	UNRWA headquarters
24-6-1982	Chiyyah	40 kg	Peugeot 404	Timer	6	20	Civilians
27-6-1982	Sanayeh, Beirut	40 kg	Renault 12	Timer	3	22	Civilians
13-7-1982	Ras Beirut	50 kg	Mercedes	Timer	-	43	Palestinian research center
21-7-1982	Beddawi refugee camp	15 kg	-	-	1	5	Civilians
28-7-1982	Zgharta	40 kg	Renault 12	Timer	3	15	Civilians
10-8-1982	Tripoli	60 kg	-	-	9	39	Civilians
10-8-1982	Beirut	60 kg	-	-	12	50	Civilians
14-8-1982	Bhamdoun	Not specified	Peugeot 504	Timer	9 including 3 Israelis	35	Phalanges Party office
18-8-1982	Hamra, Beirut	27 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	-	3	Palestinian research center
11-9-1982	Tripoli	70 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	3	19	Civilians
13-10-1982	Choueifat	35 kg	-	-	5	15	Civilians
14-10-1982	Aramoun	-	-	-	2	1	Civilians

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12-11-1982	Choueifat	60 kg	Not specified	Timer	5	16	Civilians
14-11-1982	Aramoun	80 kg	Not specified	Timer	1 child	4	Civilians
15-11-1982	Safra, Kessrouan	-	-	-	2	3	Civilians
1-12-1982	Sanayeh	40 kg	Lancia	Activated by remote control	6	38	Attempted assassination of Walid Jumblat
7-12-1982	Bar Elias	Not specified	Peugeot	Activated by remote control	2	3	Transit truck
16-12-1982	Nabatieh	-	-	-	1	-	Car owner
26-12-1982	Tyre	2 kg	Toyota Corolla	Timer	2	-	Car passengers
13-1-1983	Saadiyat, Chouf	10 kg	BMW	-	2	6	Civilians
15-1-1983	Deir Qanoun Nahr, Tyre	-	-	-	1	-	Car owner
5-2-1983	Karakas, Beirut	240 kg	Not specified	Activated by remote control	19	136	PLO's headquarters, Libya News Agency and Libyan Brotherhood Office
16-2-1983	Antelias	25 kg	Peugeot	-	3	5	Phalanges Party office
8-4-1983	Baalbeck	Not specified	BMW	Activated by remote control	2 including the driver	15	Iranian Revolutionary Guards
8-4-1983	Baalbeck	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified	2	15	Civilians
10-5-1983	Bourj Shamali, Tyre	6 kg	Not specified	Explosives attached to detonator	-	2	Palestinian national Sobhi Ismail
13-6-1983	Choueifat	25 kg	Datsun 160	Activated by remote control	2	-	Car passengers
17-6-1983	Baalbeck	-	-	-	1	1	Civilians
7-7-1983	Sanayeh, Beirut	75 kg	Honda	Bomb did not go off	-	-	Attempted assassination of PM Chafik Wazzan
21-7-1983	Summerland Hotel, Jnah	100 kg	Mercedes	Explosion by collision	6	15	Civilians
5-8-1983	Baqqar's Mosque, Tripoli	100 kg	Not specified	Timer	20	40	Worshippers leaving the Mosque after Friday prayers

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7-8-1983	Vegetable market, Baalbeck	100 kg	Peugeot 404	Timer	39	133	Civilians
8-1983	Outside An-Nour Mosque, Tripoli	-	Renault 30	-	-	-	-
14-8-1983	Zefta, South Lebanon	-	BMW	-	2	-	Car passengers
19-8-1983	In front of Elissar's Hospital, Tripoli	60 kg	Mercedes	-	1	23	24 October Movement headquarters and Secretary General Farouk Moukaddem
4-9-1983	Haret Hreik	50 kg	-	Timer	11	45	Haret Hreik Coop
7-9-1983	Near Abdul Nasser Mosque, Corniche Mazraa, Beirut	50 kg	Mercedes	Timer	8	30	Mourabitoun's headquarters
6-12-1983	Tariq Jdideh	150 kg	Fiat 132	Timer	15	100	Civilians
28-2-1984	Bachir Qassar Street, Tallet el-Khayyat	40 kg	BMW 525	Timer	1	60	Civilians
28-2-1984	Dar el-Fatwa	40 kg	BMW	Timer	2	60	Civilians
9-6-1984	Jounieh	60 kg	Mercedes 190	Activated by remote control	2	15	Civilians
6-7-1984	Byblos	25 kg	Renault 12	Timer	2	3	Civilians
7-8-1984	Dana Station, Sabra	10 kg	Plymouth	Timer	-	1	Civilians
5-9-1984	Near Mufti Sheikh Hassan Khaled's residence, Raouche	75 kg	Mercedes	Activated by remote control	4 including 3 ISF members	27	Attempted assassination of then Minister of Education and Labor, Salim el-Hoss
29-10-1984	Outside Aley's call center, Aley	50 kg	Fiat 124	Timer	4	16	Civilians
12-12-1984	Near the Druze Community House, Verdun	50 kg	Fiat 125	Activated by remote control	-	11	Druze Community House
18-1-1985	Msharrafieh	35 kg	Dodge	Timer	1 (Amal movement expert who was trying to dismantle the bomb)	14	Civilians

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21-1-1985	Saida	30 kg	Mercedes	Activated by remote control	3	40	Attempted assassination of Mostafa Saad who lost his eyesight and his daughter in the attack
1-2-1985	Tripoli	60 kg	Mercedes	Timer	6	80	Civilians
6-2-1985	Baaklin	60 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	-	6	Civilians
10-2-1985	Tripoli	35 kg	Renault 16	Timer	7	25	Islamic Unification Movement office
10-2-1985	Verdun	5 kg	-	Timer	2	1	Civilians
25-2-1985	Hay Madi-Chiyyah	Not specified	GMC truck	Timer	2	22	Civilians
8-3-1985	Beer el-Abed	150 kg	Pick up	Activated by remote control	62	198	Attempted assassination of Sayyed Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah
1-4-1985	Dawra	15 kg	-	-	-	4	Civilians
9-4-1985	Sarafand, South Lebanon	-	-	-	1	-	Civilians
19-4-1985	Nabatieh	1 kg	Renault 12	Timer	1	-	A State Cooperative employee
22-5-1985	Sin el-Fil	200 kg	Datsun, Nissan	Timer	45	177	Civilians
14-6-1985	Summerland Hotel, Jnah	200 kg	-	-	2 (Car driver and his companion)	13	Lebanese Army checkpoint
20-6-1985	Mina, Tripoli	100 kg	-	Timer	50	110	Civilians
14-8-1985	Baouchriye	200 kg	Mercedes 280	Timer	12	117	Civilians
17-8-1985	Antelias	250 kg	GMC	Activated by remote control	25	85	Civilians
19-8-1985	Karakol el-Druze	35 kg	Peugeot 404	Timer	22	98	Civilians
19-8-1985	Ghoubeiry	10 kg	-	Timer	2	6	Civilians
20-8-1985	Abi Samra, Tripoli	100 kg	Volvo	Activated by remote control	56	120	Residences of Islamic authorities
4-9-1985	Zahle	150 kg	Renault 18	Timer	14	42	Civilians

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Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
12-11-1985	Awkar	400 kg	Chevrolet Custom	Timer	4	40 including President Camille Chamoun	Lebanese Front headquarters
1986	Barbir	-	-	-	-	-	-
1986	Ain Roummaneh	-	-	-	-	-	-
24-2-1986	Saloumi's Roundabout	20 kg	Honda Accord	Timer	4	17	Civilians
5-3-1986	Saida	50 kg	Renault 30	Not specified	2 (Car passengers)	1	Civilians
26-3-1986	Fassouh, Ashrafieh	150 kg	Renault 5	Timer	6	73	Phalanges Party offices
8-4-1986	Jounieh	75 kg	BMW	Timer	11	114	Civilians
9-4-1986	Saida	100 kg	-	-	-	-	-
23-5-1986	Sin el-Fil	75 kg	Renault	Activated by remote control	6	78	Civilians
16-12-1986	Nabatieh	-	-	-	1	-	Car owner
7-1-1987	Tariq Nahr	75 kg	Peugeot 504	Activated by remote control	7	50	Attempted assassination of President Camille Chamoun
8-1-1987	Zahle	Not specified	Renault	Timer	1	14	Near Hobeika's headquarters
30-1-1987	Zalqa	15 kg	BMW 320	Timer	6	49	Phalanges party member Sami Abou Jaoudeh
9-2-1987	Ruwais, Southern Suburb	50 kg	Mercedes 230	Activated by remote control	15	80	Civilians
25-2-1987	Raml Ali, Ouzai	75 kg	Peugeot 504	Timer	-	17	Residence of the Amal Movement military officer, Akl Hamiyeh
19-3-1987	Jal el-Dib	3 kg	Mercedes	Timer	2	4	Civilians
28-3-1987	Ramli Bayda	50 kg	BMW 520	Activated by remote control	7	51	Civilians
15-4-1987	Jal el-Dib	2 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	1	1	Car driver
22-4-1987	Touline, south Lebanon	Not specified	Volvo	Not specified	-	3	Civilians
9-5-1987	Zgharta	75 kg	Not specified	Timer	1	38	Civilians

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Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
27-5-1987	Ghazieh	1 kg	Mercedes	Timer	-	1	Pro-Hezbollah physician
5-6-1987	Adloun	10 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	2	-	Car passengers
5-6-1987	Cola, Beirut	5 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	1	1	Car passengers
7-1987	Baalbeck	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-7-1987	Tripoli	-	-	-	5	-	-
30-7-1987	Ain Mreisseh	5 kg	Peugeot 504	Timer	4	-	Car passengers
29-8-1987 (2 blasts)	Tripoli	Not specified	Bus	Timer	3	42	Civilians
9-9-1987	Tripoli	5 kg	Chevrolet	Timer	-	18	Civilians
17-12-1987	Haret Hreik	20 kg	Toyota pickup	Timer	2	5	Car passengers
23-4-1988	Bab Tebbaneh, Tripoli	150 kg	-	-	66	90	Civilians
22-5-1988	Beddawi, Ashrafieh	20 kg	Mercedes 220	Timer	-	20	Haya'a Shaabiya
30-5-1988	Ashrafieh	60 kg	Volvo 244	Timer	16	81	Civilians
25-10-1988	Majdal Anjar	-	Mercedes 280	Timer	-	12	Syrian Forces' autobus
2-12-1988	Cola	15 kg	Toyota Corona	Timer	-	6	Civilians
1988	Beer Hassan	-	-	-	4	15	Civilians
1988	Dawra	-	-	-	2	38	Civilians
1988	Chtoura	-	-	-	1	7	Civilians
13-1-1989	Ruways	-	-	-	1	20	Civilians
31-1-1989	Tahwita, Furn el-Chebbak	-	-	-	2	18	Head of Phalanges Party George Saadeh
7-3-1989	Hamra	-	-	Timer	2	21	Civilians
17-3-1989	Jal el-Dib	-	-	-	13	119	Civilians
16-5-1989	Aisha Bakkar	100 kg	Not specified	Activated by remote control	10	76	Assassination of Mufti Sheikh Hassan Khaled

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Table 1

Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
9-9-1989	Raouche	-	-	-	4	6	Civilians
22-11-1989	Sanayeh	250 kg	Not specified	Activated by remote control	11	39	Assassination of Rene Mouawad
28-1-1990	Tallet el-Khayyat	25 kg	Renault 12	Explosion by collision	-	3	Attempted assassination of Sheikh Mohammad Mahdi Chamseddine
18-3-1990	Zahle	10 kg	Renault	Timer	-	4	Civilians
3-4-1990	Msayleh, South Lebanon	Not specified	Chevrolet	Not specified	-	2	Lebanese Army base (Two Lebanese Army officers)
28-6-1990	Tallet el-Khayyat	30 kg	Peugeot 504	Timer	-	6	Civilians
2-8-1990	Nabatieh	30 kg	Mercedes 230	Timer	4	1	Amal Movement office
8-1990	Tyre	-	-	-	9	75	-
2-9-1990	Abbassiyeh, Tyre	Not specified	Toyota	Timer	4	6	Amal Movement checkpoint. Fingers were pointed at Hezbollah.
2-10-1990	Ain el-Helwe refugee camp	10 kg	BMW 320	Timer	1	-	Civilians
11-10-1990	Nabatieh	50 kg	Mercedes 230	Timer	-	2	Civilians
8-11-1991	American University of Beirut	80 kg	Volkswagen	Timer	1	7	AUB's West Hall building
20-3-1991	Antelias	60 kg	Mercedes 230	Activated by remote control	8	37	Attempted assassination of National Defense Minister Michel Murr
29-3-1991	Antelias	70 kg	Buick	Timer	4	29	Civilians
30-12-1991	Maamoun Street, Basta, Beirut	150 kg	Mercedes 200	Timer	17	100	Hezbollah offices
4-7-1992	Malaab Baladi, Jounieh	15 kg	Mercedes 230	Timer	1	3	Civilians
28-4-1993	Saida	2 kg	-	Timer	1	1	Car owner and his daughter
20-12-1993	Saifi	-	-	Timer	3	100	Phalanges Party headquarters

List and details of the car bomb attacks recorded in Lebanon between 1975 and 2013

Table 1

Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
21-12-1994	Sfeir, Southern Suburb	70 kg	Volkswagen	Activated by remote control	3	17	Assassination of Hezbollah member Fouad Meghniyeh
20-5-2002	Tallet el-Khayyat	2 kg	Peugeot 505	Upon starting the engine	1	-	Jihad Jibril, son of Ahmed Jibril, founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine- General Command
24-1-2002	Hazmieh	20 kg	Mercedes 280	Activated by remote control	4	6	Elie Hobeika's assassination
19-7-2004	Southern Suburb	350 g	Ghaleb Awali's car	Activated by remote control	1	-	Assassination of Hezbollah's official Ghaleb Awali
1-10-2004	Ain Mreisseh	10 kg	Mercedes Ghost	Activated by remote control	1	-	Attempted assassination of Minister Marwan Hamadeh
14-2-2005	Ain Mreisseh	1000 kg	Mitsubishi Canter	Suicide bomb	22	231	Assassination of PM Rafik Hariri
2-6-2005	Ashrafieh	500 g	Samir Qassir's Alfa Romeo	Activated by remote control	1	-	Assassination of Journalist Samir Qassir
21-6-2005	Wata Msaytbeh	400 g	George Hawi's Mercedes	Activated by remote control	1	1	Assassination of George Hawi
12-7-2005	Antelias	50 kg	Pagero Jeep	Activated by remote control	1	12	Attempted assassination of National Defense Minister Elias el-Murr
25-9-2005	Ghadir, Jounieh	400 g	May Chidiac's Range Rover	Upon starting the engine	-	1	Attempted assassination of May Chidiac
12-12-2005	Mkalles	100 kg	Renault Rapid	Activated by remote control	4	10	Assassination of MP Gebran Tuani
26-5-2006	Saida	400 g	Mercedes 180	Activated by remote control	2	-	Assassination of the two brothers Mahmoud and Nidal Majdoub
13-2-2007	Ain Alaq, Bekfaya	3 kg	Bus	Timer	3	20	Civilians
13-6-2007	Manara	80 kg	Pagero Jeep	Activated by remote control	8	10	Assassination of MP Walid Eido
19-9-2007	Sin el-Fil	25 kg	Mercedes	Activated by remote control	7	56	Assassination of MP Antoine Ghanem
12-12-2007	Outside the Baabda municipality headquarters	35 kg	BMW 320	Activated by remote control	2	6	Assassination of Lebanese Major General Francois el-Hajj

List and details of the car bomb attacks recorded in Lebanon between 1975 and 2013

Table 1

Date of explosion	Place of explosion	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
25-1-2008	Chevrolet bridge, Hazmieh	60 kg	BMW	Activated by remote control	5	37	Assassination of Intelligence Officer, Captain Wissam Eid
13-8-2008	Tripoli	1500 kg	-	-	14 including 4 Lebanese Army members	40	Lebanese Army
10-9-2008	Baysour, Aley	2 kg	Saleh Aridi's Mercedes	Timer	1	6	Assassination of the Lebanese Democratic Party member, Saleh Aridi
19-10-2012	Ashrafieh	30 kg	Honda CRV	Activated by remote control	3	110	Assassination of Lebanese Intelligence Chief Wissam al-Hassan
9-7-213	Beer el-Abed, Southern Suburb	35 kg	Kia	Timer	-	58	Civilians
15-8-2013	Ruwais, Southern Suburb	60 kg	BMW	Timer	27	120	Civilians
23-8-2013	Abou Ali's roundabout, Tripoli	100 kg	BMW	Timer	47	500	Taqwa and Salam Mosques
	Mina Road, Tripoli	175 kg	Ford				

Source: Compiled by Information International based on An-Nahar and Ad-Diyar Archives

Car bombs targeting Israeli forces

Table 2

Date	Place	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
5-8-1982	Hotel Alexandre, Ashrafieh	-	-	-	-	9	Foreign journalists and Israeli soldiers
3-9-1982	Deir El-Kamar	40 kg	-	-	1	12 including 3 Israelis	Israeli patrol
14-10-1982	Marjeyoun	100 kg	Not specified	Timer	3	40	Head of the South Lebanon Army, Saad Haddad
4-11-1983	Tyre	200 kg	-	Suicide bomb	63 including 30 Israelis	50	Israeli Army headquarters

Source: Compiled by Information International based on An-Nahar and Ad-Diyar Archives

Car bombs targeting foreign forces and embassies

Table 3

Date	Place	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
15-12-1981	Iraqi Embassy's building, Ramli Bayda, Beirut	100 kg	Mazda	Activated by remote control	32	110	Iraqi Embassy
1-10-1982	Ouzai	-	-	-	-	3	Marines patrol
1-11-1982	Ouzai	10 kg	Volkswagen Station	Timer	-	3	Marines headquarters
24-5-1982	Clemenceau, Beirut	35 kg	Renault 12	Activated by remote control	11	25	French Embassy
18-4-1983	US Embassy, Ain Mreisseh	200 kg	Truck	Suicide bomb	69	120	US Embassy
19-10-1983	Kuwaiti Embassy, Beer Hassan	15 kg	Mercedes 200	Activated by remote control	-	5 including 4 soldiers	US Marines patrol
23-10-1983	Near Beirut International Airport	1200 kg	Truck	Suicide bomb	241	60	US Marines' barracks in Beirut
23-10-1983	Beer Hassan	800 kg	Truck	Suicide bomb	58	15	French forces' headquarters in Beirut
21-12-1983	Damascus Road near USJ	1500 kg	Truck	Activated by remote control	16	85	French forces' headquarters
20-9-1984	US Embassy, Awkar	150 kg	Station Wagon Van	Suicide bomb	11	60	US Embassy
16-1-2008	Karantina	20 kg	Honda	Activated by remote control	3	-	US Embassy convoy

Source: Compiled by Information International based on An-Nahar and Ad-Diyar Archives

Car bombs targeting Syrian armed forces

Table 4

Date	Place	Estimated weight of explosives	Vehicle	Blasting method	Dead	Injured	Purpose/Target
21-11-1978	Aley's Intersection, Bhamdoun	50 kg	Not specified	Activated by remote control	5	25	Van carrying members of the Arab Deterrent Force
2-3-1982	Tripoli	50 kg	Renault 12	-	-	20 including 5 members of the Syrian Forces	Syrian Forces
6-3-1982	Jnah	40 kg	Peugeot 504	Timer	5	16	400 m from a Syrian troops post
28-1-1983	Chtoura	Not specified	Datsun	-	39	41	Building housing Palestinian factions and the Syrian Deterrent Force

Source: Compiled by Information International based on An-Nahar and Ad-Diyar Archives

Notes:

The above table excludes:

- Over 400 small-scale car bombings that targeted individuals, but caused no injuries or casualties.
- The attacks carried out by resistance suicide bombers against Israeli patrols along the border fence prior to Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000.

The Monthly encourages input from interested readers to optimize the documentation of Lebanon's car bombs and complete all missing data.

WILL RENE MOUAWAD'S AIRPORT REPLACE RAFIK HARIRI'S?

As the dawn of the Eid Fitr was breaking on August 8, 2008, a number of gunmen ambushed a van carrying a Turkish Airlines crew, abducting the pilot and the co-pilot. Later, a group called Zuwar al-Imam Rida claimed responsibility for the kidnapping and demanded the release of the Lebanese hostages of Azaz in exchange for the abducted pilots. Against the backdrop of this incident, Lebanese officials began to demand the re-opening of Rene Mouawad's airport in Qoleiaat to charter flights, especially that the Rafik Hariri International Airport in Beirut lacks security and is controlled by Hezbollah. Having started initially in 2006, these demands are not new to the public and earn media attention each time a political or security problem arises at the Rafik Hariri International Airport. In July 2011, the Najib Mikati government legitimized these demands in its ministerial statement which read: “..the Lebanese government will work on reactivating Rene Mouawad's Airport in Qoleiaat.”

So what is the story behind Rene Mouawad's airport? And why has Lebanon not seen a second civil airport in operation yet?

Establishment of the Facility

The Rene Mouawad Airport is situated on Lebanon's northern shoreline, around 7 km from the border with Syria and 25 km from Tripoli. The Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) established it in 1934 to facilitate the operations of the company's small aircraft and carry employees across the Arab world (between Lebanon and Iraq). In 1966, the Lebanese Army took charge of the airport and turned it into a military base accommodating the Mirage fighters that Lebanon had bought from France.

Previous Use

During the Lebanese civil strife, the Lebanese Forces set up the Barbara checkpoint, which blocked the linking road between Beirut and Tripoli. This urged Premier Rashid Karami to push for using the airport as an internal transport hub, and the Middle East Airlines started operating flights from Beirut to the airport between 1988 and 1990. The airport signifies an important event in the history of Lebanon: Parliament convened on November 5, 1989 in one of its halls to re-elect Hussein Al-Husseini as Speaker, approve the Taef Agreement and elect Rene Mouawad as President of the Republic. The airport was named after President Mouawad following his assassination on November 22, 1989.

Profile and Present Condition of the Airport

Upon the request of the Minister of Public Works and Transport, in the beginning of 2012 a committee was sent to the airport, and returned with the following highlights:

- The road leading to the airport, starting from Tripoli, is too small and congested and needs comprehensive rebuilding.
- The airport has a sole runway of 3000 meters long, with extra 250 meters from each end, and 45 meters wide with extra 2 meters from each side. The runway is in a relatively satisfactory condition despite the presence of cracks and grass.
- The airport houses a rest room of 200 m² for officers. The room is unsuitable for use and needs refurbishing.
- Bureaus for military officers.
- Lodges for the military.
- Air traffic control tower.
- Small weather station, unsuitable for fulfilling the airport's civil purposes.
- Call center
- Parking areas capable of accommodating 100 cars. The parking lots are in a poor condition.
- 5 fuel containers with a capacity of 100 000 liters each.
- Aircraft hangar
- The route from the entrance to the facilities is 1800 m long and is in a deplorable condition.
- The runway and the passages lack signs and lights.

- Fire Control Center equipped with 2 rescue vehicles
- Terrible drainage infrastructure.
- Protection wall, 13.5 km in length and 220m in height.
- Two 400 KVA transformers.
- Apron capable of accommodating two aircrafts only.

Cost and Duration of Rebuilding

The committee's report underlined that the airport, in its current condition, is unsuitable for civil aviation, stressing that its rebuilding would require around USD 200 million, let alone the cost of acquiring the land necessary for the execution of the project (around 2 million m²). The estimate for completing the project was put at four years.

The committee cited the establishment of a duty free zone and the operation of air freight services as the most practical investment in the airport and viewed that currently, it might be feasible to use it as an air taxi base to transfer passengers (mainly pilgrims) from the north to Rafik Hariri's International Airport and vice versa.

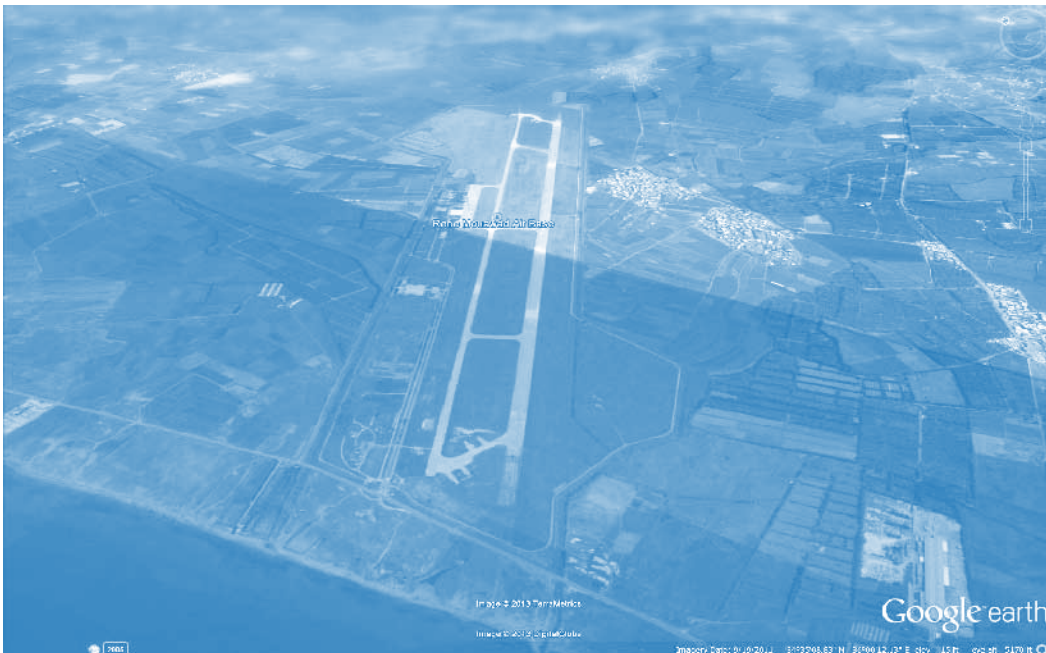
Obstacles

With unanimous political agreement, which is not the case presently, securing the funds to operate the airport could be realized easily. However, there remain two obstacles hindering the materialization of the project:

The airport's geographical location and wind patterns would force bigger airplanes to fly over Syrian territory before landing. This cannot happen without Syria's approval, which has never been given and is unlikely to be given now, especially against the backdrop of the current Syrian events.

Despite its hostile attitude against Hezbollah and the negative comments it voiced recently regarding Rafik Hariri's International Airport, it is rumored that the US refuses the operation of the Qoleiaat airport for yet to be known reasons.

In spite of the controversy, the people of the north and March 14 Forces continue to press ahead with their demands, which begs the question: Will Rene Mouawad's Airport replace Rafik Hariri's? ●



Source: Google Earth

2013 OFFICIAL EXAMS

33 010 STUDENTS PASS THE BAC AND 44 692 PASS THE BREVET

Despite the strike staged by teachers for almost a month and the security tensions that shook a number of Lebanese areas on the eve of the official exams, the education sector survived the turbulent events that disturbed the academic year 2012-2013 and students sat for the exams as scheduled, except in Saida where the raging crisis forced postponement. The results of the official exams, in their first and second rounds, were as follows:

1. Lebanese Baccalaureate

The number of candidates for the Lebanese Baccalaureate in its four sections amounted to 42,234 students, of which 39,796 (94.3%) took the exams and 30,953 passed, i.e. 72.8% of the students. There were supposed to be 11,281 candidates sitting for the exam in the second round, but the attendance rate was as low as 6,635 students (58.9%), of whom 2,057 passed. Thus, the total number of passing students amounted to 33,010 students or 78.1% of the candidates, compared to 30,351 passing students from a total of 40,270 candidates last year, i.e. 75.36%.

Like every year, the Socioeconomics branch recorded the largest number of candidates (18,556 students) while the Letters and Human Sciences branch recorded the lowest (2,512 students).

The highest pass rates were registered in the General Sciences section (83.12%) while the lowest were in the Socioeconomics program at 75.18%.

By Mohafaza, the South came in first in all 4 programs with the pass rate standing at 84.72%, followed by Nabatieh at 83.47%. The pass rate was the lowest in Beirut at 71.94%.

The following Table 1 illustrates the results by section and Mohafaza:



Official exam results by section and Mohafaza												Table 1
Section	Nabatieh			South			Mount Lebanon			Beirut		
	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %
General Sciences	438	376	85.84	384	364	94.8	2572	2186	85	640	444	69.37
Life Sciences	1140	976	85.61	1876	1661	88.53	5773	4622	80	1498	1102	73.56
Socioeconomics	1094	862	78.79	2478	1996	80.55	7627	5892	77.25	2460	1806	73.41
Letters and Humanities	226	205	90.7	224	183	81.7	722	549	76.03	235	125	53.2
Total	2898	2419	83.47	4962	4204	84.72	16694	13249	79.36	4833	3477	71.94

Official exam results by section and Mohafaza										Table 1
Section	North			North			Total			
	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	
General Sciences	1459	1193	82.11	463	392	84.7	5956	4955	83.12	
Life Sciences	2687	2109	78.48	2206	1701	77.10	15180	12171	80.17	
Socioeconomics	3072	2250	73.24	1855	1168	62.96	18586	13974	75.18	
Letters and Humanities	692	527	76.15	413	321	77.72	2512	1910	76.03	
Total	7910	6079	76.91	4937	3582	72.55	42234	33010	78.16	

Source: Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development

General Sciences

5956 candidates sat for the General Sciences examination in Lebanon this year, of which 4955 or 83.2% passed. Last year's pass rate stood at 79.34% with 4403 students passing from a total of 5549 candidates.

Mount Lebanon registered the highest participation rate, while the South registered the lowest with only 377 attendees. However, the highest pass rate was evident in the latter and stood at 95% in the two rounds. The following Table 1 details the results of the General Sciences examinations by Mohafaza.

Exam results for the General Sciences section by Mohafaza						Table 2
Mohafaza	Candidates	Absentees	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	
Beirut	640	125	515	405	78.64	
North	1459	32	1427	1032	72.32	
South	384	7	377	349	92.57	
Mount Lebanon	2572	165	2407	2063	85.71	
Nabatieh	438	10	428	353	82.48	
Beqa'a	463	11	452	360	79.64	
Total	5956	350	5606	4562	81.38	
Second round/ All Mohafazas	1394	510	884	393	44.45	
Total	5956	-	-	4955	83.19	

Source: Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development

Life Sciences

The number of candidates sitting for the Letters and Humanities examination this year stood at 15,180 of whom 12,171 or 80.17% passed. Last year's pass rate stood at 75.9% with 10,537 students passing from a total of 13,884 candidates. Mount Lebanon registered the highest participation rate, while the South registered the lowest. However, the pass rate was the highest in the latter at 88.53% and the lowest was registered in Beirut at 73.56%. The following Table 3 details the results of the Life Sciences examinations by Mohafaza.

Exam results for the General Sciences section by Mohafaza						Table 3
Mohafaza	Candidates	Absentees	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	
Beirut	1498	224	1274	1038	81.48	
North	2687	97	2589	1998	77.17	
South	1876	35	1841	1634	88.76	
Mount Lebanon	5773	323	5448	4429	81.30	
Nabatieh	1140	28	1112	949	85.34	
Beqa'a	2206	88	2118	1589	75.02	
Total	15180	795	14382	11637	80.91	
Second round/ All Mohafazas	3543	1420	2123	534	25.15	
Total	15180	-	-	12,171	80.17	

Source: Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development

Socioeconomics

This section included the largest batch of students with 18,586 eligible candidates of whom 13,974 or 75.18% passed the examination against 18,276 last year, i.e. down by 310. Last year's pass rate stood at 74.7%.

By Mohafaza, the South recorded the highest pass rate at 80.55% while Beqa'a recorded the lowest at 62.96%. The following Table 4 illustrates the results of the Socioeconomics examinations by Mohafaza.

Exam results for the Socioeconomics section by Mohafaza						Table 4
Mohafaza	Candidates	Absentees	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	
Beirut	2460	295	2165	1671	77.18	
North	3072	101	2971	2034	68.46	
South	2478	88	2390	1888	79	
Mount Lebanon	7627	449	7178	5463	76.11	
Nabatieh	1094	49	1045	847	81.05	
Beqa'a	1855	95	1760	1049	59.60	
Total	18586	1077	17509	12952	73.97	
Second round/ All Mohafazas	5634	2331	3303	1022	30.94	
Total	18586	-	-	13,974	75.18	

Source: Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development

Letters and Humanities

The lowest student turn out is often seen in this section. This year, 1910 students out of 2512 passed the Letters and Humanities examinations bringing the pass rate up to 76.3% against 68.4% last year when 1751 students passed from a total of 2561 candidates.

By Mohafaza, Nabatieh featured the highest pass rate at 90.7% while Beirut recorded the lowest at 53.2%. The following Table 5 illustrates the results of the Letters and Humanities examinations by Mohafaza.

Exam results for the Socioeconomics section by Mohafaza						Table 5
Mohafaza	Candidates	Absentees	Attendees	Passing students	Pass rate %	
Beirut	235	73	162	108	66.67	
North	692	32	660	180	72.73	
South	224	17	207	179	86.47	
Mount Lebanon	722	66	656	524	79.88	
Nabatieh	226	7	219	205	93.61	
Beqa'a	413	18	395	306	77.47	
Total	2512	213	2299	1802	78.38	
Second round/ All Mohafazas	710	385	325	108	33.2	
Total	2512			1,910	76.03	

Source: Educational Information Unit at the Educational Center for Research and Development

2. Brevet Exams

Of all 63 400 candidates who sat for the official Brevet exams, 44 692 passed- 43 432 in the first round and 1 260 in the second. The success rate stood at 70.5% compared to 66.8% in 2012 when 40 095 students out of 60 020 candidates passed the exams.

By Mohafaza, the highest success rate was recorded in Beirut at 75.64% followed by Nabatieh at 75.18%, while the lowest was in Beqa'a at 68.2%. The results of the Brevet exams by Mohafaza are highlighted in the following Table 6.

Results of the Brevet exams by Mohafaza					Table 6
Mohafaza	# of candidates	# of attendees	# of passing students	Success rate %	
Beirut	5396	5165	3907	75.64	
North	13338	12954	8956	69.14	
South	-	7731	5661	73.22	
Mount Lebanon	23011	21068	15742	74.72	
Nabatieh	4858	4679	3518	75.18	
Beqa'a	-	8281	5648	68.2	
Total	63.400	59878	43.432	72.53	
2 nd round/ All Mohafazas	14.642	11291	1260	11.1	
Total	6.3400	-	44.692	70.5	

Source: Al-Liwaa Newspaper

MIXED MARRIAGES IN LEBANON (4)

BEQA'A MOHAFAZA: 25 124 MARRIAGES

According to the following Table 1, there were 25 124 mixed marriages in the Beqa'a Mohafaza.

The highest mixed marriage rates were registered in the Qada'a of Zahle and the lowest in Hermel. By sect, 4505 marriages occurred between two different Muslim sects, 17 996 between two different Christian sects and 1212 between Muslims and Christians.

- Zahle: 13 982 marriages
- Baalbeck: 6088
- Western Beqa'a: 3883
- Rashaya: 892
- Hermel: 279

These marriages were distributed by sect as follows:

- **Zahle:** 995 unions between people of two different Muslim sects, 12 141 between people of two different Christian sects and 451 between Muslims and Christians (Table 2)

- **Baalbeck:** 2453 unions between people of two different Muslim sects, 2487 between people of two different Christian sects and 451 between Muslims and Christians (Table 3)
- **Western Beqa'a:** 731 unions between people of two different Muslim sects, 2698 between people of two different Christian sects and 202 between Muslims and Christians (Table 4)
- **Rashaya:** 146 unions between people of two different Muslim sects, 659 between people of two different Christian sects and 66 between Muslims and Christians (Table 5)
- **Hermel:** 180 unions between people of two different Muslim sects, 11 between people of two different Christian sects and 38 between Muslims and Christians (Table 6)

Mixed marriages registered in Beqa'a																Table 1
Sect of the husband \ Sect of the wife	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Evangelical	Syrian Orthodox	Syrian Catholic	Latin	Christian diversity	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze	Alawi	Others	Total
Maronite		1715	4678	60	47	84	289	81	25	36	87	163	16	1		7282
Greek Orthodox	1674		1790	57	22	69	133	58	6	19	68	85	4			3985
Greek Catholic	2769	1126		55	97	54	186	51	10	19	102	135	9			4613
Armenian Orthodox	124	53	113		141	75	13	5	6	2	12	15	1			560
Armenian Catholic	41	15	63	89		6	7	8	8		2	3				242
Evangelical	65	53	97	15	3		10	5	6		12	16	1			283
Syrian Orthodox	189	112	199	19	4	11		24	1	7	5	7				578
Syrian Catholic	105	42	94	9	3	3	46			2	3	5	1			313
Latin	66	29	79	10	2	7	4	6		4	41	10	3			261
Christian diversity	110	48	110	68	16	246	31	7	1	36	10	22	3			708
Sunni	79	40	80	4	3	2	3	2	2	1		2692	20			2928
Shia'a	49	19	58	1	1	1	3	1			1713		9			1855
Druze	5	4	11				3				31	26				80
Alawi	2		5								3	15				25
Not specified	152	79	326	15	4	3	19	5	1	3	233	531	10		2	1383
Others	3		2								6	17				28
Total	5433	3335	7705	402	343	561	747	253	66	129	2328	3742	77	1	2	25124

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

Mixed marriages registered in Zahle

Table 2

Sect of the husband \ Sect of the wife	Sect of the husband															Total
	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Evangelical	Syrian Orthodox	Syrian Catholic	Latin	Christian diversity	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze	Alawi	Others	
Maronite		1096	2869	60	41	34	287	75	25	36	46	28	3	1		4601
Greek Orthodox	1034		1149	57	22	38	133	49	6	19	25	20	2			2554
Greek Catholic	1742	818		54	96	30	185	46	10	19	43	24	1			3068
Armenian Orthodox	56	29	75		140	75	13	5	6	2	8	3				412
Armenian Catholic	24	9	37	88		6	7	7	8		1	1				188
Evangelical	37	30	48	15	3		9	3	6		5	3				159
Syrian Orthodox	136	86	145	19	4	11		24	1	7	2	2				437
Syrian Catholic	66	32	62	9	3	1	46			2	2	1	1			225
Latin	34	21	55	9	2	4	4	5		4	8	2	1			149
Christian diversity	64	32	78	68	16	244	31	7	1	36	4	3				584
Sunni	45	26	43	4	3	1	2	1	2	1		421	4			553
Shia'a	13	11	34	1	1	1	3	1			564		1			630
Druze	3	3	5				3				3	2				19
Alawi	1		3								2	2				8
Not specified	82	59	87	15	3	2	19	5	1	3	64	43	1		2	386
Others	3										4	2				9
Total	3340	2252	4690	399	334	447	742	228	66	129	781	557	14	1	2	13982

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

Mixed marriages registered in Baalbeck

Table 3

Sect of the husband \ Sect of the wife	Sect of the husband									Total
	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Evangelical	Syrian Orthodox	Sunni	Shia'a	Others	
Maronite		209	798		4	1	18	111		1141
Greek Orthodox	359		261				11	57		688
Greek Catholic	469	66			3		15	92		645
Armenian Orthodox	45	6	15				1	8		75
Armenian Catholic	15	3	15					2		35
Evangelical	12	4	9			1	1	9		36
Syrian Orthodox	35	4	35					3		77
Syrian Catholic	25	3	14					3		45
Latin	17	2	7	1	1			4		32
Christian diversity	29	4	15				3	16		67
Sunni	19	6	18			1		1776		1820
Shia'a	31	4	15				647			697
Druze			4				1	19		24
Alawi	1		2				1	9		13
Not specified	46	4	201				55	376		682
Others							1	10		11
Total	1103	315	1409	1	8	3	754	2495		6088

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

Mixed marriages registered in Western Beqa'a

Table 4

Sect of the wife \ Sect of the husband	Sect of the husband											Total
	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Armenian Orthodox	Armenian Catholic	Evangelical	Syrian Orthodox	Syrian Catholic	Sunni	Shia'a	Druze	
Maronite		143	992		1	38	1		18	7	3	1203
Greek Orthodox	220		364			12			23	3		622
Greek Catholic	507	131		1	1	20	1	1	35	12	1	710
Armenian Orthodox	18	4	23						2	2		49
Armenian Catholic	2		11	1					1			15
Evangelical	15	9	38						3	4		69
Syrian Orthodox	13	4	19							1		37
Syrian Catholic	13	2	14			2			1			32
Latin	12	3	16			1		1	32	2		67
Christian diversity	15	4	17			1			3	2		42
Sunni	9	5	19			1		1		339	2	376
Shia'a	4	2	9						387			402
Druze	2		2						2	1		7
Not specified	24	10	38			1			107	65	1	246
Others			2						1	3		6
Total	854	317	1564	2	2	76	2	3	615	441	7	3883

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

Mixed marriages registered in Rashaya

Table 5

Sect of the wife \ Sect of the husband	Sect of the husband								Total
	Maronite	Greek Orthodox	Greek Catholic	Armenian Catholic	Evangelical	Syrian Catholic	Sunni	Druze	
Maronite		267	19	5	8	6	4	10	319
Greek Orthodox	56		16		19	9	9	2	111
Greek Catholic	46	111			1	4	9	7	178
Armenian Orthodox	5	14		1			1	1	22
Armenian Catholic		3				1			4
Evangelical	1	10	2			2	3	1	19
Syrian Orthodox	5	18					3		26
Syrian Catholic		5	4						9
Latin	3	3	1		1		1	2	11
Christian diversity	2	8			1			3	14
Sunni	5	3						14	22
Shia'a	1	2					99	8	110
Druze		1					25		26
Not specified		6		1			6	8	21
Total	124	451	42	7	30	22	160	56	892

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

Mixed marriages in Hermel

Table 6

Sect of the wife \ Sect of the husband	Sect of the husband			Total
	Maronite	Sunni	Shia'a	
Maronite		1	17	18
Greek Orthodox	5		5	10
Greek Catholic	5		7	12
Armenian Orthodox			2	2
Syrian Orthodox			1	1
Syrian Catholic	1		1	2
Latin			2	2
Christian diversity			1	1
Sunni	1		156	157
Shia'a		16		16
Druze			4	4
Alawi			4	4
Not specified		1	47	48
Others			2	2
Total	12	18	249	279

Source: Lebanon's Civil Registration Records

LUNG CANCER & TOBACCO

Dr. Hanna Saadah



World War I killed over 37 million people. World War II, the deadliest military conflict in history, killed over 60 million people. All the wars of the twentieth century killed (or allowed to die by human decision) about 231 million people. During that same century, lung cancer alone killed 100 million people. All cancers (lung, mouth, throat, esophagus, stomach, kidney, pancreas and bladder) and all diseases (chronic bronchitis, emphysema, heart attacks, strokes and pneumonias), which are caused by tobacco consumption or by second hand exposure to tobacco smoke, have killed more people than all the 20th century wars combined. Wars are no longer humanities' greatest self-induced killers. Tobacco is.

Currently, lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer deaths in the world. Lung cancer, once diagnosed, is a death sentence because, even under the best available treatments, only 10% of the patients in the UK and 16% in the USA survive five years. Knowing that tobacco causes 70% of all lung cancers, and seeing the high expense and poor prognosis of cancer treatments, makes it evident that prevention is the strategy best suited to combat our global tobacco epidemic.

In developed countries, early detection of lung cancer is a viable target because it has been shown to improve prognosis. Among smokers, lung cancer deaths in those screened with Cat Scans versus those screened with chest x-rays showed a 20% relative reduction. Consequently, the United States Preventive Service Task Force has issued new guidelines, which state that screening with Cat Scans all smokers aged 55-79 years who have smoked for at least thirty years, even if they had not smoked for the past 15 years, is cost effective because it does save enough lives.

However, the World Health Organization estimates that 50% of the world's countries are unprepared to manage or prevent the cancers and other diseases caused by tobacco consumption. This renders the early detection of tobacco related cancers and diseases inconsequential in half the world's countries because early screening and proper treatments are either unavailable or unaffordable.

As the campaigns against tobacco have escalated in the developed countries, leading to decreased tobacco consumption and shrinking market shares, the campaigns promoting tobacco in the less developed countries have proportionally escalated. In order to re-boost their market shares, tobacco companies are now targeting the youth of less developed countries. In certain African countries, smoking among boys between 13 and 15 years of age is actually higher than among their corresponding adults.

To better monitor tobacco deaths, South Africa was the first country in the world to add smoking history to the questions on its death certificate. Based on this data, calculations revealed that smoking-related mortality was twice as high in those who had smoked five years before death, and that the higher the rate of smoking, the higher was the relative risk of death from any cause. They also found that ex-smokers have lower lung cancer risks than smokers, but higher than never-

smokers. Adding this simple question to death certificates would help all other countries monitor this global epidemic of deaths from tobacco.

In the 2010 Global-Burden-of-Disease report, smoking ranked as the second most important risk factor for death in the entire world, above all other diseases and all other external causes. Hypertension, the most silent of killers, still came in first, whereas obesity (the other global epidemic) came in sixth. Decreasing smoking reduces not only lung and other tobacco cancer deaths, it also reduces deaths from cardiovascular and respiratory diseases as well. The World Health Organization, which estimated that about 100 million people were killed by tobacco in the 20th century, estimates that if the current global epidemic were to continue, one billion would be tobacco's death toll in this century.

The tobacco industry has staunchly rejected all incriminating scientific evidence against its products, proclaiming the accumulating data as inconclusive or invalid. Nevertheless, beginning in 1952, anti-tobacco campaigns started to influence smoking habits, and beginning in 1970, laws restricting tobacco use started to appear. In 1967, Senator Robert Kennedy preempted these laws with his poignantly brave statement, "The cigarette industry is peddling a deadly weapon. It is dealing in people's lives for financial gain. Cigarettes would have been banned years ago were it not for the tremendous economic power of their producers."

Tobacco came to the world after the discovery of the Americas and became increasingly popular in Europe, especially after the industrial revolution when cigarettes became widely available. However, introducing tobacco into the Islamic World (Ottoman Empire at the time) was met with rejection by the rulers, religious leaders, scholars and citizens, who equated it with the forbidden alcohol. Nevertheless, using bribes and other sundry incentives, the tobacco companies broke through the Ottoman borders in the late sixteenth century. In retaliation, Sultan Murad IV banned tobacco in 1633, and decreed that smoking would be punishable by death. Expectedly, the ban was lifted after his death by his successor, Ibrahim the Mad, who taxed tobacco instead. It took only a few more decades before tobacco conquered the rest of the world. In spite of some recent battles won in our war against tobacco, it may take centuries of collective war before the world is ultimately liberated from the deadly tyranny of its tobacco conquerors. ●



Dr. Michel Nawfal
MD Mental Health Professional

“CHOKING UNDER PRESSURE”- MANAGING EXAM ANXIETY

As September approaches, university students are reminded of the responsibilities that a novel academic year brings. Attending classes, completing assignments, and preparing for exams are all part of the work that every student has to go through. While keeping up with the demands of deadlines and pressures of performance, students can find themselves anxious and stressed. Probably, the most familiar worrying thoughts that most students have to face are those related to exam anxiety.

Butterflies in the stomach and tormenting questions such as “Will I be able to answer the questions and do well” or “Have I studied enough” are common indications of exam nerves. Feeling nervous before an exam is very natural and common to most individuals. In fact, these normal levels of stress can actually help improve an individual’s performance. The rush of adrenaline that stress releases helps boost focus and concentration which aids individuals to think faster and respond more effectively in demanding conditions.

In some situations, however, excessive exam anxiety may become overwhelming and uncomfortable. High levels of anxiety block one’s ability to think and concentrate, leading to panic and fear. Research shows that pressure-filled situations, such as taking an exam, can diminish a part of the brain’s processing power identified as working memory. Working memory is critical to many daily activities because it allows individuals to retrieve and use information relevant to tasks at hand. It is important to note that working memory is a limited resource. As a result, excessive worry overburdens the working memory that individuals normally use to succeed, thus crippling performance.

Despite the motivation that people have to perform their best, stressful situations may cause people to perform below their capability. Challenging experiences that cause individuals to perform below their skill level is a phenomenon known as “choking under pressure”. It is mainly healthy to keep exam anxiety at the level that allows the best performance. Too little anxiety may also sabotage performance due to the lack of motivation. Therefore, the goal is for individuals to learn how to manage their anxiety levels in ways that promote their abilities and performance.

A critical aspect that helps reduce exam anxiety is to take some time to think of the possible causes of such anxiety and then building upon them solutions. Anxiety could be linked to poor preparation, bad experience in previous examinations, worrying about performance, not feeling well, or simply a tendency to be anxious. Knowing what is causing the worry puts an individual in a better position to tackle it.

The key to minimizing exam anxiety is to be well prepared. Individuals that are well prepared have more

automatic responses which weaken the effect of anxiety on performance. Students can start their preparation early by attending classes regularly and completing assignments. Moreover, studying earlier can help students gain more time which they can spend on revision. Extended revisions can give students a chance to practice what they studied and ask questions about what they did not comprehend. Working until the last minute on the night or morning before the exam will only leave one feeling tired, muddled and anxious.

Students should take time to organize their revision in order to fit in some breaks. Studying everyday for long hours will probably burn out the person long before the actual exam. Taking proper breaks within the revision period helps keep a balance between leisure and study. Finding activities that one enjoys can help relax the mind and body in times when one is on a break. Moreover, maintaining a healthy lifestyle of eating and sleeping is vital for the brain’s energy. Staying away from poisonous habits such as smoking and excessive caffeine intake can also help promote a healthy lifestyle.

In addition to tackling stress before the exam, there are helpful remedies that students can use while taking the actual exam. Instead of worrying about the “I can’t answer anything” feeling, it is a good idea to take long and deep breaths while focusing on positive thoughts such as “I can do it”. It is important for students to take time to read the exam paper carefully in order to plan their time and to decide in what order they will start answering the questioning. It is best to start off with the questions one feels most confident about. If a student panics and feels that their concentration is wandering, they should take time to try to relax and focus. The little time spared for an individual to regain their focus and calmness can save them from spending the rest of the exam in panic mode.

Exams are well known to be mentally, physically and emotionally demanding. Taking time to try to manage exam anxiety can definitely help optimize exam performance. It is important to note that different techniques work for different people, thus it may take students some time to find the perfect technique suitable for them. However, attaining the end goal of taming exam anxiety is worth the time spent experimenting and developing different relaxation techniques. ●

THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS

HAMAD HASSAN

HEAD OF BAALBECK'S MUNICIPALITY



Hamad Hassan

After three years since your election as head of Baalbeck's Municipality, what are the major milestones achieved at the level of infrastructure, environment, health and economic progress?

The sectarian diversity featured in Baalbeck has made the city an example for coexistence. In the past four years, four neighborhoods were introduced to the city, thus translating into larger urban expansion and population growth. New polling stations were also initiated and the number of Mukhtars increased.

The municipality has introduced a number of horizontal roads to the city and we are currently in the first phase of building a ring road. Several drains and cesspits were connected to the public sewer network in the past three years and the process of forming a sanitary drainage team is now under way, in order to dispense with the need for outsourcing.

Our municipal vision pays heed to both strategic and operational plans. Our strategic plan includes the following projects:

- A waste sorting factory established and equipped thanks to support from the World Bank and the European Union. However, the agreement stipulated that the Baalbeck municipality fund the sanitary landfill and it turned out that the cost of digging up the landfill stands somewhere between USD 5 million and USD 6 million, that is three times the European grant provided for the establishment of the factory.
- Renovation of the city's commercial center at around USD 5 million.

- Establishment of an industrial zone at around USD 10 million.
- Cultural heritage project.
- Linking the sewage pits to the public network at around USD 4 million to USD 5 million.

However, these expenses are beyond the financial capacity of the municipality, for the revenues generated from the Independent Municipal Fund and tax collection combined do not exceed LBP 5 billion. On the other hand, our ongoing projects tackle waste management, sewage problems and all day- to-day needs arising in the city.

Currently, the municipality is focused on developing the city's human resources. The two most important projects we have introduced in order to provide employment opportunities to the locals are the following:

- A co-op for the city's daily cleaning workers through which they can subscribe to the Lebanon's National Social Security Fund.
- A Parking meter scheme capable of providing 30 to 40 jobs in a period of 2 to 3 months.

Carrying out the prospective strategic plans expands employment horizons for the people of Baalbeck, not to mention that the municipality is promoting and facilitating investment in the city through its assistance in expediting the related transactions.

Iaaf is home to a sewage refinery linked to all the parts of the city except for the four new neighborhoods, and the municipality is working on connecting the

latter to the station. Furthermore, we were awarded a grant by the Italian Development Cooperation Office to separate sewage from the water irrigating orchards and crops in Ras El-Nabee. It is my hope that we will be able to link all sewage pits in the city to the public sewage network in the coming three years. The Italian Cooperation Office and the Iranian Committee for the Reconstruction of Lebanon are among our biggest donors. The latter's activity was not limited to the massive efforts it exerted to reconstruct Lebanon after the July War, but has also permitted the building of the Baalbeck-Hermel highway, which is nearing completion.

What were the major problems you faced during your term?

Unfortunately, the state and the relevant authorities still fail to give Baalbeck its due care and attention. In terms of administrative decentralization for instance, the people of Baalbeck are obliged to endure a strenuous and costly trip to Zahle in order to obtain a copy of their criminal record. Furthermore, the city, which is widely recognized as being an unparalleled tourist attraction suffers from an abject absence of the public utility services necessary for the maintenance of its motels, restaurants and tourist facilities which lack access to power, water and telephone services.

Ministries responsible for infrastructure and public utilities should take serious action to fill this niche and the ministers of tourism, public works and transport, and energy and water are all invited to join efforts in order to come up with an immediate development plan that would save Baalbeck from further neglect. My urgent appeal goes to the Minister of Finance, for our share of the Independent Municipal Fund can hardly cover the salaries of staff. Last year, Baalbeck's share stood at roughly LBP 3.5 billion, a number that dropped down to LBP 2.4 billion this year. The Minister of Finance should release the municipalities' share of revenues generated from telecommunications in order to assign us a fair budget that would facilitate the execution of crucial development projects. As a matter of fact, we have warned mobile companies that the municipality might resort to demounting the transmission antennas they have in the regions falling under its authority in an attempt to press towards the timely delivery of our share.

Baalbeck will grow incapable of accommodating visitors as long as nothing is done to improve the deplorable conditions of its utility services. The city was teeming with momentum during the Holy month of Ramadan and the Eid Fitr this year and the current surrounding circumstances have prompted visitors from inside and outside the city to flock into its markets instead of visiting other destinations.

Was Baalbeck affected by the influx of Syrian refugees?

Baalbeck is home to over 125 000 people, not to mention that around 30 000 to 40 000 Syrians have sought shelter in the city, thus amounting to approximately one third of the city's population. Adding to an already populated area, the new arrivals have drained the human and physical resources of the municipality, straining water and power networks and imposing waste management burdens. Unfortunately, no serious assistance was offered to Baalbeck to address the refugee crisis and tackle its repercussions on the local community.

Many international organizations have come to Baalbeck to assist in appeasing the crisis of Syrian refugees, but their in-kind assistance was often mismanaged and resulted in inequitable distribution of aid. In response, meetings were held with the entities and NGOs in question in order to coordinate aid provision through the local authority.

How large is your staff at the municipality?

The municipality has 186 employees of whom 80 are full-timers and the rest are daily workers helping mostly in waste management and sewage treatment. We are currently in the process of updating our by-laws and we are planning to perform a civil service examination after an objective study of the needs and wants of the city.

Any last words?

The city is abuzz with restaurants, coffee shops, artisan shops and tourist and religious landmarks. However, despite its capacities and facilities which fall in line with the requirements set by the ministries of tourism, environment and culture, we urge greater support from the state and the pertinent ministries to help Baalbeck live up to its full potential. Security is another pressing demand in Baalbeck, and I, hereby, call for assistance in securing a safe and tranquil climate that would attract investment and foster tourism. ●

OUM EL NOUR

AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST ADDICTION



Overview

Oum El Nour is a Lebanese non-governmental social organization, committed to helping individuals overcome their addiction in order to reach a healthy society characterized by sustainable growth. It is based on Christian values, has a deep faith in divine providence as well as in the capacity of individuals to change for a better life.

It was started in 1989 by a group of young men following the death of their friend from a drug overdose, with the help of the Father Guy Njeim who is the current president. The first rehabilitation center was opened in Feytroun with 12 residents. Today, there are two centers, one in Sheile for boys and another one in Fatka for girls.

Objectives and Services

Oum El Nour team is composed of counselors, ex-drug addicts, psychologists, social workers, socio-cultural workers, psychotherapists, recreation therapists, doctors and lawyers. It offers multiple and continuous training internships in different countries such as Italy, USA, Canada and France. It also participates in international conferences for the fight against drugs such as those held by the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions/ *conseil international sur les problèmes de l'alcoolisme et des toxicomanies* and the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities.

Oum El Nour works on:

- Raising awareness on the psychological, health and economic risks of drugs on individuals, particularly amongst the young.
- Welcoming drug addicts and assisting them in defining priorities to overcome their addiction.
- Supporting parents and accompanying them in helping their children undergo treatment and prevention.

It offers five services: reception, rehabilitation, outpatient follow up, parental guidance program and prevention.

- **Reception** aimed for both family and individual counseling and orientation, psychological and socio medical assessment and admission into treatment after detoxification. This is achieved by hospital detention or prison follow up or by private and confidential interviews.
- **Rehabilitation** improves the patient's ability to function, minimize the medical and social complications of drug abuse and re-enter mainstream society. This is achieved through an inpatient program lasting from 12 to 18 months in 4 stages, group therapy and individual follow up and medical, psychological and spiritual support.
- **Outpatient follow up** ensures social reintegration and prevents relapses. Both individual follow up and group therapy are encouraged.
- **Parent's guidance program** offers support for family members; exchanges experiences between families; clarifies the problems and the means to solve them and establishes clear relationships between parents and children. This is achieved through group support and home visits.
- **Prevention** enhances social awareness, involvement and participation, spreads appropriate information on substance abuse and design prevention programs. This is achieved through conferences, meetings, seminars, anti-drug campaigns and specialized libraries.

Oum El Nour endeavors to set up programs to welcome, guide, accompany and follow drug addicts. It also works on building a skilled staff able to comprehend and apply the latest scientific tools and methods, as well as to adapt them to the Lebanese society. This is achieved through a genuine spirit of interaction, communication and sharing with all the parties concerned: international and governmental entities, local communities, NGOs, etc

Statistics

From 1993 until 2012, Oum El Nour has welcomed 4,879 cases, 89.1% of whom are male compared to only 10.9% females. The evolution of the number of welcomed patients at Oum El Nour throughout the years is detailed in the following table:

Year	of males #	of females #	Total
1993	26	1	27
1994	56	2	58
1995	52	1	53
1996	92	7	99
1997	99	8	107
1998	118	16	134
1999	133	16	149
2000	158	19	177
2001	236	33	269
2002	221	25	246
2003	276	30	306
2004	265	40	305
2005	318	30	348
2006	262	33	295
2007	304	39	343
2008	357	31	388
2009	308	39	347
2010	363	51	414
2011	379	61	440
2012	323	51	374
Total	4,346	533	4,879

Source: Om El-Nour

In 2012, 374 cases were welcomed by Om El Nour for treatment and rehabilitation. These were mainly addicted to the use of cocaine powder (78.2%), marijuana (herbal) (73.3%) and heroin (72.8%). Patients aged 23 years constituted 14% of the total number of patients for that year, followed by those aged 19 years (9%).

It is noteworthy that the highest number of drug addicts admitted to Oum El Nour was in 2011 and reached 440 patients.

Funds

Oum El Nour funds essentially come from national and international donations offered either as cash or in kind by individuals, private and public institutions as well as from the agreements signed with the ministries of public health and the social affairs. ●

GANDHI'S PACIFISM AND INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

Myth:

The independence of India is most commonly attributed to the non-violent forms of resistance to the British rule advocated by Mahatma Gandhi who was successful at mobilizing masses and negotiating a peaceful settlement.

Fact:

The actual achievement of Indian independence was composed of many factors, and the number of civil movements that turned violent contests the success of Gandhi's pacifist discourse. The struggle for independence from British rule started in the late 19th century-way before Gandhi returned to India from South Africa- with the initiation of associations across the country and the development of civic life. The Indian national movement gained better organization and a more unified leadership with the arrival of Gandhi, however, the years leading up to independence cannot be labeled non-violent.

Several popular movements or strikes guided by him turned violent, and people did show readiness to resort to violence as a more practical manner of confronting colonization. In April 1919, Gandhi launched an open and non-violent strike in which the people of the city of Amritsar also mobilized themselves and demanded the release of leaders who were arrested by the British. In retaliation, the British army attacked a public gathering in the city and brought 20,000 Indians to their death. Gandhi himself later confessed that calling for such a movement without alternative plans was a mistake. Movements that spiraled out of his control became a trend, many ending with arrests and clashes with officials.

In 1942, Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement which he later abandoned after the end of World War II and negotiated terms for British departure while strikes continued without him. Eventually, he reluctantly approved of partition after it became clear that this would be the only solution the British would accept before granting independence. The partition that created a state for Muslims-Pakistan- cost India a third of its land and one million lives.

Apart from the bloody aftermath of the 1947 independence and partition, historians argue that external factors, not relating to Gandhi's pacifism, were also imperative to Britain's decision to end its rule. The financial indebtedness of Great Britain after World War II made the maintenance of the empire economically challenging. In addition, insistent pressure to end colonization was exerted by the US government. These factors undermined the impact that Gandhi's nonviolence had on British rule. ●

OTHER LANDS HAVE DREAMS: FROM BAGHDAD TO PEKIN PRISON

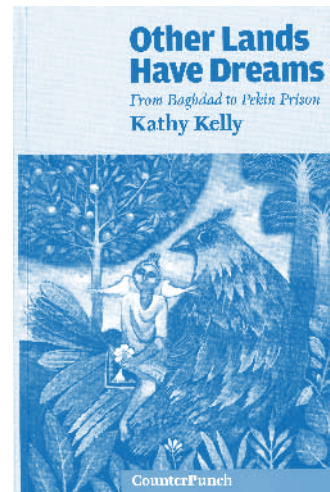
KATHY KELLY

Kathy Kelly, a renowned American peace activist twice nominated for a Nobel Peace prize, exposes the human suffering behind the inhumane wars waged by US governments. Kelly, who co-founded Voices in the Wilderness, had travelled extensively in Iraq during the years of economic sanctions and the US invasion. Her personal account of the wretched conditions that Iraqi families and children had to live with resonates louder than any call to war. After the invasion of Iraq, her activism took her back to the United States where she was imprisoned for protesting at a US army base in Georgia. Through her incarceration, she discovers the cruelty of another war that the US government is waging; the war on drugs that is keeping young mothers away from their families.

Her account of the Iraqi invasion highlights the aspect of war that policy makers, as well as the media and the public, tend to overlook. Her work with Voices of the Wilderness in Iraq aimed to alleviate the distress, through medical and humanitarian aid, imposed by the economic sanctions on the country. The careful attention she puts into depicting the emotional strain inflicted on every individual she has encountered, young and old, exposes the common face of humanity across civilizations. Kelly highlights this in the end of part one where she describes her stories with the Iraqi people as 'interactions between very ordinary people, from Iraq and the US, who caught courage from one another during a time of war'.

The precision of Kelly's description offers disturbing detail of the physical and mental conditions trapping the children and their families, and carefully communicates their wretchedness to an English-speaking audience. Apart from the poverty imposed by the economic sanctions, bombardments from Operation Desert Storm destroyed power grids, which in turn damaged the country's medical facilities. Doctors she spoke to complained of not being able to maintain their equipment and store vaccinations in refrigerators because of constant power cuts. Even incubators for babies could not be maintained. To cope with this shortage, doctors often had to rotate whatever available equipment they had between their most severe cases.

In her view, the US government was practicing child sacrifice, something that Bush, in his war propaganda, accused Saddam of tolerating. As an American in Iraq, she speaks about feeling ashamed of her health and well-being, 'ashamed to be so comfortably adjusted to the privileged life of a culture that, however blindly, practices child sacrifice'. As an organization with close ties to the conflict,



they distanced themselves from 'both President Bush and President Hussein, believing that neither side is blameless'. The main accomplishment of her reporting is distancing warfare from politics and bringing it down to the daily endeavors of the targeted population. 'Month after month, the bullying went on, unchecked. The abuser hid in the muddle of hypocritical policies that no one involved really believed in'.

Back in the US, the Voices in the Wilderness organization received threats of incarceration for travelling to Iraq, and were accused of being supportive of the Saddam Hussein regime for staging anti-war demonstrations. A fine of \$20,000 was issued to them for merely delivering medicine and toys to Iraq.

The third part of her book is an in-depth look into life in America's female correctional facilities. Kelly was incarcerated for protesting against the School of the America's army center. Apart from being in over-crowded cells with poor hygiene- she cites the absence of toilet paper in one instance- many of the women are victims of the war on drugs waged by the government. A number of her essays are dedicated to her inmates, in which they are each portrayed for their individuality and not as a collective group of criminals. Many of the ladies are mothers in anguish caused by the guilt of being away from their children. Some are even imprisoned unjustly, targeted by a drug war that victimizes the poor and vulnerable.

Two important conclusions can be drawn from her themes. The primary one is that the US driven UN sanctions caused a large number of unjustifiable deaths based only on a false allegation. While Iraq was never proven to be in possession of weapons of mass destruction, the US surely is. Kelly claims that if Americans had paid better attention to the images of Iraqi children, the sanctions would not have lasted as long as they did. Finally, her assessment of the prison system, with specific attention to the fragility of the inmates, demonstrates the importance of having facilities that reform and not de-humanize prisoners. After all, they will be released back into the world to have a second attempt at a normal life. ●

TAMER'S OWN WORLD

There, in the vast courtyard, children play for hours. They run, shriek and shout, giggle and enjoy Hide and Seek, hopscotch and other games.

There is this one kid though, Tamer, who always keeps a distance. "Tamer does not speak to any of us. When we try to converse with him, he gets scared and goes away. His head is always down and he rarely looks at anyone. Even when his sister tries to hold his hand or pat his shoulder, Tamer screams and pulls away."

One day, as the kids were enjoying their play, a boy kicked the ball, hitting Tamer in his arm. Tamer flung himself to the ground and started crying and kicking his legs in all directions. As his sister approached to calm him down, his screams grew louder. He then sat on the floor and started swinging back and forth.

Tamer suffers from autism. It is difficult for him to communicate with people.

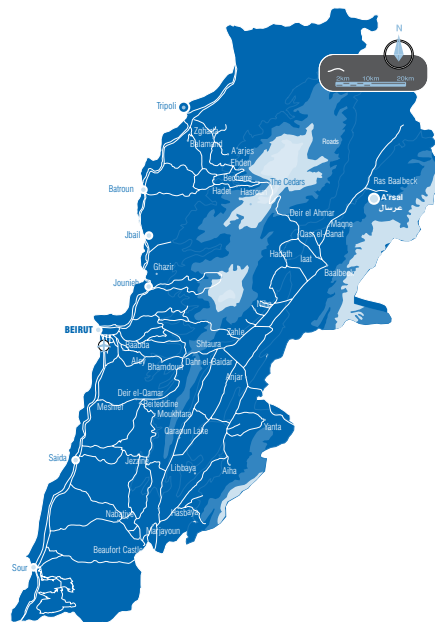
"One day, I saw Tamer trying to play hopscotch, while I was solving a complicated math question nearby. He seemed unable to roll his fingers. I took a few steps closer to him. He did not flinch. He followed me and sat by my side, watching me copy the numbers on my workbook. He grasped the pencil with all five fingers, scribbling the answer in a hardly comprehensible handwriting. Yet, he jotted down all answers correctly, without using the eraser at all. What a genius!"

Tamer's Own World, by Fatima Sharafeddine, was published in its first edition in 2012 by Yuki Press in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The book is aimed at 7 to 9 year olds and is dedicated to the author's childhood friend, Chirine, whose son suffers from Autism. Lavishly illustrated by Mariane Mousalli and Farah Merhi, *Tamer's Own World* highlights the characteristics of autistic children, stressing that communication with them is possible after understanding their special needs. Sharfeddine provides at the end of her book a number of tips aimed at enlightening parents about the symptoms of autism in children under three years of age, in cooperation with SESOBEL's Education Program Director. ●



A'RSAL

Since the eruption of the conflict in Syria more than two years ago, rarely does a day go by without an article in the press mentioning the town of A'rsal or a statement by political and religious leaders discussing it. A'rsal's geographic location and its sectarian and political make-up have helped place this town at the heart of the Syrian crisis. At times, it comes under Syrian air shelling or missile fire under the pretense that it hosts members affiliated with the Free Syrian Army or the Al-Nusra Front; at others, it enters into a tit-for-tat kidnapping saga or into confrontation with the Lebanese Army, launching attacks on its members. For all these reasons and more, the profile of this controversial town will be highlighted below.



Etymology

In his book entitled *Names of Lebanese Towns and Villages*, Lebanese author Anis Freiha suggests that the word A'rsal has Aramaic origins meaning the tent set up on rooftops or in the fields. Other speculations assume that the word signifies the elevated throne of God or the throne of Jupiter who, according to a legend, used to hunt in this town in the ancient past.

Location

A'rsal is located towards the farthest eastern north of the Beqa'a Mohafaza in the Qada'a of Baalbeck, 125 km from Beirut and 60 km from Zahle. It is situated at 1100 m above the sea level and parts of its terrain are as high as 2610 m. It stretches across an area of 31 500 hectares, which makes it one of Lebanon's largest municipalities, accounting for 3% of the country's total area. A'rsal may be reached through Beirut- Zahle- Baalbeck – Labwi- A'rsal. It is bordered by Syria to the east, Hadath and Labwi to the west, Fakiha, Ras Baalbeck and el-Qa'a to the north and Nahli and Younine to the south.

Population and Houses

The registered population at A'rsal is estimated at 28 000 people, the majority of whom reside in the town. People in A'rsal belong to the Sunni community and are distributed over 5500 houses in three major neighborhoods, the northern- largest one- the southern and the eastern, which is a small quarter introduced in 2005.

Voters

The number of A'rsal's initial registered voters stood in 2013, before the voter list updates, at 14 590 compared to 12 964 in 2009, 11 232 in 2005 and 9819 in 2000. The voter population will have thus grown by 4 777 people in 13 years, i.e. by 48.6%, which is a relatively high percentage, given the national percentage which was estimated at 25.6%.

A'rsal's voters are distributed over the following families, of which El-Houjeiry and El-Flaiti dominate the largest share:

- El-Houjeiry:4880 voters
- El-Flaiti:1860
- Ezzeddine:1255
- Braidi:950
- Rayed:950
- Karnabi: 555
- Atrash:540
- Aoude: 461
- Zaarour: 345
- Amoun:322
- Hmayd:191
- Smayli: 182
- Ghdadi: 273
- Behluk: 145
- Sultan: 140
- Jebbawi: 137
- Nouh: 135
- Deddeh: 121
- Khalaf: 111

Local Authorities

A'rsal's municipality was established in 1952 but it was not until 1998 that the first municipal elections were held, resulting in the formation of a council consisting of 18 members, a number that has risen to 21. The town's share of the Independent Municipal Fund stood at LBP 1.571 billion in 2011 down from LBP 1.712 billion in 2010 and up from LBP 1.440 billion in 2009. The town is home to 12 Mukhtars, 6 in the northern neighborhood, 5 in the southern and 1 in the eastern. There is also a Sunni religious court in A'rsal.

NGOs

NGOs and agricultural cooperatives amount to 17 in A'rsal and most of them were established in the past few years. They are listed below, from most recent to the oldest:

- Green Prairie Association established in 2010
- Coop for the Production and Marketing of A'rsal's Cherries and Fruits: 2009
- Utopia Charitable Association: 2008
- Zaidan El-Houjeiry's Association: 2008
- Association for Philanthropy and Altruism: 2008
- Tomorrow's A'rsal: 2007
- Charity and Social Renaissance Association: 2007
- Social and Human Development Association: 2007
- Women's Cooperation Association: 2006
- Livestock Farmers Coop: 1999
- Rural Pantry Coop: 1999
- Social Guidance Association: 1994
- People of A'rsal Association: 1993
- Rural Development Association: 1990
- A'rsal's Charity Association: 1988
- Public Agricultural Coop: 1984

Economic Life

A'rsal's residents earn their living through one of the following:

- Enrollment in the Lebanese Army and the Internal security Forces
- Working in mining quarries. A'rsal is home to 60 quarries, 100 crushers and 126 rock cutting operations, providing around 300 jobs to the town's people.
- Smuggling operations between Lebanon and Syria, which gain momentum at specific times of the year.
- Agriculture, mainly growing wheat and fruit trees (peach, cherry, apricot, apple...)

Educational Institutions

A'rsal hosts 14 schools, of which 5 are public, 4 are private and 5 are free private schools. All schools combined have 3768 students and 265 teachers (academic year 2009-2010).

School	# of students	# of teachers and staff
A'rsal's Official Elementary School 1 (town's first school established in 1960)	292	33
A'rsal's Official Elementary School 2	86	16
A'rsal's Official Elementary School 3	339	32
A'rsal's Official Elementary School 4	320	28
A'rsal's Official Secondary School	310	33
Maqased Islamic Philanthropic School (free private school)	203	19
Al-Malath Night Elementary School (free private school established in 2004)	527	17
Al-Mukhtar School (free private school established in 1991)	682	26
Al-Madina Al-Fadila School (free private school established in 1994)	497	22
Zahrat al-Adab School (free private school established in 1995)	169	10
Al-Mukhar High School- 1995	141	12
Zahrat al-Adab Middle School- 1995	42	6
Al-Malath Middle School- 2004	160	11
Jawaher el-Adab Middle School- 2011	-	-

Source: Schools' Guide issued by the the Educational

Problems

The town faces a number of problems highlighted below:

- Inflow problems in its sewage system, which results in water pollution. This plight is likely to escalate amid the urban sprawl and the absence of immediate solutions.
- Lack of access to health care as the town has only one public dispensary and 5 private ones lacking proper equipment. The health situation has deteriorated recently due to dramatic increase in the number of Syrian refugees.
- Most quarry workers suffer from physical disabilities caused by the accidents they encounter at workplace.
- Social and economic strains imposed by the Syrian arrivals. ●

FAMILY NAMES DENOTING LEBANESE TOWNS (7)

The following is the seventh part of *The Monthly's* series on the family names denoting Lebanese towns.

Baaklini: 1700 members

This family is named after Baakline, a Lebanese town located in the Qada'a of Chouf, 50 km from Beirut, at an altitude of 850 m above the sea level with a Druze population estimated at 12 000 registered people.

The Baaklinis belong to the Maronite community and are distributed over the following towns:

- Choueir, Qada'a of Matn: 375 members
- Bzebdine, Qada'a of Baabda: 316
- Aintoura, Qada'a of Matn: 268\
- Hadath, Qada'a of Baabda: 137
- Chbanieh, Qada'a of Baabda: 95
- Beit el-Chaar, Qada'a of Matn: 57
- Rmeil, Beirut: 45
- Hosh Hala, Qada'a of Zahle: 34
- Chiyyah, Qada'a of Baabda: 30
- Jdita, Qada'a of Zahle: 30
- Zahle, Qada'a of Zahle: 30
- Antelias, Qada'a of Matn: 26
- Deir el-Qamar, Qada'a of Chouf: 26
- Ashrafieh, Beirut: 20
- Choueifat, Qada'a of Aley: 20
- Mteyn, Qada'a of Matn: 14
- Ain Saadeh, Qada'a of Matn: 12
- Harat el-Botm, Qada'a of Baabda: 10
- Sin el-Fil, Qada'a of Matn: 10

Harissi: 270 members

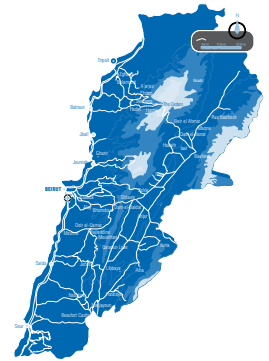
This family name is inspired from the Hariss town of Bint Jbeil, which is situated 100 km from Beirut, at an altitude of 700 m above the sea level, with a Shia'a population estimated at 700 people.

The Harissis belong to the Shia'a community and are distributed over the following towns:

- Tallouse, Qada'a of Marjeyoun: 103
- Deir Kifa, Qada'a of Tyre: 70
- Ansar, Qada'a of Nabatieh: 30
- Edeissy, Qada'a of Marjeyoun: 25
- Zqaq el-Blat, Beiry: 22

Arzouni: 750 members

This family name is derived from the town of Arzoun, which is situated in the Qada'a of Tyre, 100 km from Beirut, at an altitude of 800 m above the sea level, with a Shia'a population.



The majority of the Arzounis are present in the Qada'a of Tyre, in the town of Chehour particularly.

Chehour, Qada'a of Tyre: 420

- Bachoura, Beirut: 110
- Zqaq el-Blat, Beirut: 45
- Kfarsir, Qada'a of Nabatieh: 40
- Srafa, Qada'a of Tyre: 35
- Tayr Felsay, Qada'a of Tyre: 30
- Tyre, Qada'a of Tyre: 25

Amiouni: 250 members

This family is named after the town of Amioun located in the Qada'a of Koura, 70 km from Beirut, at an altitude of 300 m above the sea level. Amioun hosts around 11 000 registered people who are predominantly Greek Orthodox (95%). A small portion of Amioun's population belongs to the Maronite community and other Christian minorities.

The Amiounis are also Greek Orthodox in their majority with a few members belonging to the Sunni and Protestant communities.

Greek Orthodox

- Mina, Qada'a of Tripoli: 45
- Tripoli (Nouri, El-Tall and Zahriye neighborhoods): 50
- Ashrafieh, Beirut: 10
- Mina Hosn, Beirut: 12
- Kfarhabou, Qada'a of Mennieh: 80
- Qaryat Bash, Qada'a of Zgharta: 50
- Kfarhalda, Qada'a of Batroun: 10
- Hasbaya, Qada'a of Hasbaya: 10

Sunni

- Saida, el-Keshk: 15
- Burj Shamali, Qada'a of Tyre: 12

Protestant

- Rmeil, Beirut: 20

AUGUST 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

AUGUST SEALED IN RED: EXPLOSIONS AND BLOODSHED

August 2

- Three Grad rockets launched from an area called Al-Mwanse in Dhour Aramoun fall in the Baabda area with one landing near the Lebanese Army Command and Staff College in Rayhaniyi, one in the garden of the Fraihas' villa located near the Presidential Palace and one in the vicinity of the Saudi ambassador's residence in Yarze.

- President Michel Suleiman reiterates during his speech on the Lebanese Army's 68th anniversary celebrated in Fayyadiyi that it is too difficult for legitimate and illegitimate weapons to coexist, especially when the latter is used beyond the Lebanese borders. He adds that he supports the establishment of a neutral government if the attempt to form a national unity government does not avail.

- Celebratory fireworks in Downtown, Beirut, in support of the Lebanese Army leave 6 wounded.

- Minister of National Defense Fayez Ghosn issues his decision extending the term of the Lebanese Army Commander by two years.

- Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammad Qabbani receives a Hezbollah delegation.

- A delegation of the Lebanese Army Command visits President Suleiman headed by General Jean Qahwaji who stresses his continuous commitment to protecting the country.

- Minister of Energy and Water reports the Qahwaji's term extension was decided in 2011, urging authorities to cease welcoming Syrian refugees.

- Pro-March 14 Forces students launch an anti-Hezbollah petition entitled "If You Love the Army, Hand In Your Weapons!"

August 3

- Former PM Saad Hariri delivers a televised speech from KSA to the masses attending the Future

Movement Iftar banquets across Lebanon stressing that he will not participate in a government of which Hezbollah makes part and that the main problem in Lebanon lies in the party's weapons which diverted from resisting the enemy to slaughtering the Syrian people.

- Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah makes a rare public appearance on Al-Quds Day reiterating the importance of dialogue and the fidelity of the Shia'a of Ali Bin Abi Taleb to Jerusalem and Palestine.

- The rockets aimed at the vicinity of the Presidential Palace prompt public denunciation and MP Walid Jumblat underlines a link between the rockets and the President's latest statement against the resistance.

- Special Tribunal for Lebanon Pre-Trial Judge Daniel Franseen sets January 13, 2014 as a provisional date for the trial of Rafik Hariri's killers.

- The Lebanese judiciary orders seizure of Pierre Daher's personal properties in the frame of lawsuit filed by the Lebanese Forces against him.

August 5

- Egyptian national dies while preparing explosive devices in the town of Daraya. The explosion leaves another Egyptian and a Syrian injured and investigation reveals that up to 18 devices were ready to be set up in the same house where the incident occurred.

- President Michel Suleiman returns from his one-day trip to Iran where he attended the inauguration of the new Iranian President Sheikh Hassan Rouhani.

- Clashes break out between the Lebanese Army and gunmen from the Zeiter clan in the town of Sherwani in Baalbeck, ending with the death of two people who happened to be passing by.

- A wave of tit-for tat kidnappings flares up in the northern Beqa'a between the towns of Maqneh and Aarsal and clashes erupt in the latter between Syrians and a number of residents.

- Residents of the town of Arida storm into a General Security center over the alleged killing of a defected member of the Syrian Army who was trying to cross into Lebanon.

- MP Bahiya Hariri holds an Iftar in BIEL in honor of the Lebanese Army stressing in her speech that "General Jean Qahwaji is now entrusted with what has been left of the Lebanese state."

- The Liwaa Asifat al-Shamal issues a statement asserting that the Lebanese pilgrims held in Azaz shall not be freed before the release of all female prisoners detained in Damascus.

- Lebanese man arrested for sexual abuse charges after confessing to have raped over 10 minors.

August 6

- In his weekly statement to Al-Anbaa, MP Walid Jumblat stresses that the current political void and impasse may no longer continue, noting that the Palestinians should be given the freedom to decide their fate in response to Nasrallah's speech.

- New video shows Salafist Sheikh Ahmad El-Assir urging his supporters to protest in demand of the release of Abra's detainees and holding the Future Movement accountable for what happened to him.

- UK ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher, tells As-Safir that blacklisting Hezbollah as a terrorist organization is not aimed against the Shia'a, stressing that he deplores the vindictive threats targeting the party.

- Sonia Frangieh, aunt of MP Suleiman Frangieh, slams Minister of Energy and Water, Joubran Bassil,

revealing that while he is wallowing in riches today, his uncle was penniless with not even a car to drive. MP Suleiman Frangieh responds to his aunt's controversial statements noting that she only speaks for herself and her views do not represent the opinion of the Marada Movement.

August 7

- Supporters of Sheikh Tarek Merhi hold protests in Tripoli against the court ruling which sentenced the Muslim scholar to 15 years in prison for his involvement in the 2008 attack that targeted the military in the Al-Tall neighborhood of Tripoli.
- Muslim scholars convene in Dar El-Ifta in Tripoli and issue a strongly worded statement urging the security forces to live up to their responsibility in order to save Tripoli from armed gangs.
- Lebanese Army Commander, General Jean Qahwaji, urges politicians to lift their hands off the army, stressing that the Command will practice stern control over the relationship of military officers with political leaderships.

August 8

- Thursday announced first day of Eid Al-Fitr for the Sunni and Friday for the Shia'a.
- MP Walid Jumblat tells the Middle East News Agency that he supports the formation of a neutral technocrat government, advising Nasrallah to withdraw from Syria "because the countdown of the Syrian regime has begun."
- The monthly statement issued by the Maronite bishops encourages the formation of a strong government capable of backing up the Lebanese Army.

August 12

- Grand Mufti Mohammad Rashid Qabbani holds Eid Al-Fitr prayers at the Mohamad Amin mosque. Contrary to the usual tradition, no official figures attend the sermon.
- The convoy of Aarsal's Mayor, Ali Houjeiry, comes under fire in the Beqa'a town of Labwi shortly after a hostage swap in Ras Baalbeck. Houjeiry sustains minor injuries while his companion dies in the ambush.

- General Michel Aoun pays a visit to the city of Zahle without meeting former MP Elie Skaff and brands the neutral government as a political venture that would wreak havoc on the country.

- Turkish diplomatic sources assert that the decision to withdraw Turkish troops from the UNIFIL next September had been taken since August 6 and is not linked to the abduction of Turkish pilots.
- The Lebanese Army Intelligence arrests Mohammad Saleh in the southern town of Ramiyeh on charges of involvement in the kidnapping of the two Turkish pilots. Families of the pilgrims held in Azaz threaten to escalate their measures if Saleh is not released.
- Former PM Saad Hariri attends Eid al-Fitr prayers along with Saudi King Abdullah in Mecca.
- Famer dies in the southern town of Halta due to the explosion of a cluster bomb left over from the July War of 2006.

August 13

- President Michel Suleiman moves to Beiteddine summer residence and delivers a speech upon arrival urging speedy cabinet formation and noting that the army-people-resistance formula is valid as long as it's administered by the state.
- March 14 Forces call for the liberation of Rafik Hariri's International Airport from the grip of weapons and the opening of other airports like the Rene Mouawad airport in Quleiat.
- The Amhaz and Jaafar clans issue a joint statement holding Aarsal's Mayor, Ali Houjeiry, responsible for the ambush he suffered in the town of Labwi following the death of four members of the two families in Wadi Rafeq in Aarsal.

August 14

- Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmad Daoud Oglo, calls his Lebanese counterpart Adnan Mansour and voices his concern over the repercussions of the kidnapping operation on the Lebanese-Turkish relations.
- General Michel Aoun tells OTV that although the relations with

Hezbollah are no longer the same, the understanding still exists on the strategic level.

- Meeting believed to be the first of its kind between MP Elie Skaff and Lebanese Forces MP Joseph Saab Maalouf and LF coordinator in Zahle Michel Tannouri.
- STL spokesperson Martin Youssef stresses that the "thunderous truth" awaited by the Lebanese will be revealed in the findings of the investigation and that Lebanon will be subject to sanctions should it fail to pay its STL dues. Youssef denies this statement later stating that the STL is confident that Lebanon will adhere to its obligations.
- Parliament's Public Works Committee holds a meeting at the airport in the presence of the Minister of Interior and Municipalities to discuss the security situation at the airport and its vicinity and demand the opening of the Quleiat airport.
- The Change and Reform Bloc insists that Lebanon should stop receiving Syrian refugees and coordinate with Syria to send them back home.
- Lebanese Security Forces foils a smuggling operation of 5 million Ketogan pills worth USD 50 million to USD 100 million from Syria into an Arab country through the Port of Beirut.
- Turkish power-generating vessel Orhan Bey docks in Jiyeh.

August 15

- Following his meeting with President Suleiman, PM-designate Tamam Salam rules out speedy formation of government.
- Turkish Deputy Chief of Intelligence Abdul Rahman Baljak arrives in Lebanon to discuss the kidnapping of the two Turkish pilots and meets the Minister of Interior and Municipalities and the Internal Security Forces Director General.
- Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah reveals to Al-Mayadeen television that his party was responsible for detonating the bombs that targeted the Israeli troops who crossed into the town of Laboubneh. Nasrallah accuses the Seniora government of conspiring against the resistance during the July

War and renews his denunciation of the kidnapping of civilians, including the two Turkish pilots.

- The Intelligence Branch summons members of the families of the Lebanese held in Azaz for investigation over their links to the kidnapping of the Turkish pilots.

- The Jamaa Islamiya protesters rally in front of the Egyptian embassy in support of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood.

- March 14 General Secretariat is concerned over the potential declaration of Rafik Hariri International Airport as unsafe.

- Regional Head of the Baath Party and former minister Fayez Shokr denies having said that "Mecca will be razed to the ground", arguing that his interview on the OTV television channel was misinterpreted.

- MP Mohammad Raad announces that the Baabda declaration was nipped in the bud.

August 17

- 25 killed and 250 injured in the explosion that rocked the Ruwais area of the Southern Suburb.

During a ceremony held in Aita Shaab to commemorate the victory of the July War, Hezbollah's Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah delivers a televised speech stressing that Hezbollah will wage an all-out war on takfiris targeting Lebanon and will go as far as engaging in the fighting in Syria to ward off their threats.

- The Higher Defense council convenes in Baabda and takes decisions to fight terrorist crimes.

- An unknown group called "Aisha, Mother of the Believers Brigade" claims responsibility for the Ruwais explosion.

August 19

- The General Security Forces seize a car loaded with explosives in Haret Neemeh and arrests the suspects.

- The Progressive Socialist Party cancels its scheduled ceremony in commemoration of the Mountain martyrs, replacing it with a speech delivered by PSP Secretary General, Sharif Fayyad on behalf of Walid Jumblat, whereby he slams some of the local newspapers, in covert

reference to Al-Akhbar, which cited earlier that Chouf and Aley are no match to Al-Qusayr.

- General Security publishes photos of suspected terrorists, Mohammad Qassem al-Ahmad and Saad Mohammad Bahri.

- Speaker Nabih Berri returns from his vacation in Italy and renews calls for a parliamentary session amid news suggesting that the March 14 Forces will continue their boycott.

- Minister Wael Bou Faour and Taymour Jumblat return from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia after having met Prince Bandar Bin sultan.

- Salafist Sheikh Ahmad El-Assir lashes out at Hezbollah in an audio recording, accusing Nasrallah of waging war against the Sunni under the pretense of fighting takfiris. El-Assir adds that the Ruwais explosion is the outcome of Hezbollah's intervention in Syria.

- General Michel Aoun receives a Hezbollah delegation in Rabiye.

- Ruwais' final death toll rises to 25, of whom 4 are Syrians. Investigations determine the explosion was not a suicide attack.

- Second round of secondary official exams kicks off, with the absence rates reaching as high as 50% in some centers. 11250 students sit for the exams across all four branches.

August 21

- Prosecutor Judge Claude Karam files a lawsuit against 13 people in the case of abduction of the Turkish pilots.

- Parliament fails to convene due to lack of quorum and Speaker Nabih Berri adjourns the session until September 23.

- Sheikh Assem Arifi, a staunch supporter of El-Assir, arrested for fighting against the Lebanese Army during Abra's incidents.

- The Future Parliamentary Bloc raps the militia-like measures taken by Hezbollah in the Southern Suburb, noting that Hezbollah's withdrawal from Syria is a real introduction to dialogue.

August 22

- In an honorary ceremony held for army officers, the Lebanese Army Commander reiterates that the army

will wage a war against terrorism across all Lebanon, stressing that no sect is favored over the other and that the army has been pursuing the networks planting car bombs for months now.

- MPs convey Speaker Nabih Berri's fear from turning Lebanon into a new Iraq.

- An Amal Movement delegation visits General Michel Aoun in Rabiye and hands him an invitation to attend the annual rally held to commemorate the disappearance of Imam Mussa Sadr and MP Ali Bezzi reiterates the mutual respect exchanged between Berri and Aoun.

- President Michel Suleiman heads for Nice on vacation.

- Minister of Telecommunications Nicolas Sehnaoui asserts that he has not concealed the telecoms data and that he signs 320 applications monthly to receive such data.

- PM-designate Tamam Salam leaves for Greece on vacation.

August 23

- Lebanon fires 4 Katyusha rockets from the Hosh-Rashidiyi area near Tyre into Israel. Israeli authorities say the rockets landed in unpopulated areas and initial assessments suggest that global Jihad elements in Lebanon, not Hezbollah, are behind the attack. Israeli air force retaliates by targeting a terror site in Wadi Naameh.

- Masked man opens fire in Tripoli killing 3 people, one of which is a Hezbollah supporter while the other two happened to be passing by at the time of shooting.

- The Lebanese Army dismantles a bomb in the town of Maaraki near Tyre.

- The Loyalty to Resistance Bloc announces following its meeting that a regional intelligence apparatus is responsible for the Ruwais explosion.

- Lebanese Army Intelligence seizes truck loaded with gas protective masks in Hasbaya on its way to Syria.

August 24

- Two car bombs explode outside Salafist mosques of Taqwa and Salam in Tripoli following Friday prayers killing 45 people and wounding 500, most of the victims were rushed to

hospital with 150 having serious injuries. Former ISF Chief Ashraf Rifi, whose residence is near the Salam Mosque sustains minor injuries.

- Gunmen take to the streets of Tripoli at night and set up checkpoints to search drivers and their cars.

- Hezbollah deplores the anarchy raging in Tripoli and urges the use of reason rather than violence.

- Acting PM Najib Mikati announces Saturday as an official mourning day.

- Muslim Scholars' Committee hold the Baath regime responsible for Tripoli's explosions and Sunni Sheikh Dai Al-Islam Al-Shahhal asks Nasrallah "Did the takfiris blow themselves up in Tripoli?"

- Security forces prohibit Sheikh Ahmad El-Assir's supporters from staging a protest in Saïda.

August 26

- President Michel Suleiman addresses the Lebanese urging solidarity, speedy formation of a unanimous government and return to unconditional dialogue, far from regional and foreign interests.

- Acting PM Najib Mikati chairs a security meeting at his residence in Tripoli to discuss the latest incidents and goes later to visit the explosion scene.

- Maronite Patriarch Mar Bechara Al-Rai arrives at the Rashid Karami International Fair to extend condolences over the death of the victims in the explosions, stressing that the Lebanese should be heedful of the looming risks.

- Sunni Sheikh Dai Al-Islam Al-Shahhal urges people to start taking their own security measures in Tripoli.

- MP Bahiya Hariri arrives in Tripoli in solidarity with its residents.

- The Amal Movement postpones the celebration it has scheduled to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the disappearance of Imam Moussa Sadr and substitutes it with a televised speech by Speaker Nabih Berri.

August 27

- President Michel Suleiman chairs a meeting for the Higher Defense Council in Baabda which concludes with agreement to provide Lebanon's security bodies with equipment

needed to better preserve stability after a series of bomb attacks.

- Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Qabbani arrives in Tripoli to check the scenes of explosions, then moves to the Southern Suburb to do the same.

- The Higher Shia'a Council receives condolences over the martyrs who fell in Tripoli and the Southern Suburb. Patriarch Al-Rai attends and urges politicians to take patriotic initiatives.

- Sheikh Salem Rafei receives acting PM Najib Mikati at his residence in Koura.

- A Future Movement delegation arrives in Tripoli to extend condolences over the death of victims and former PM Fouad Seniora and urges Hezbollah to withdraw from Syria.

- Minister of Information Walid Daouk requests Lebanon's Senior Media Authority to issue a warning against Marcel Ghanem for igniting provocation and tensions and prompting sedition and destabilization in the country following the obnoxious photos of charred bodies displayed during Kalam el-Nass talk show.

- Second round of Brevet examinations kicks off, with the absence rates reaching as high as 44%.

August 28

- A Muslim-Christian meeting in Dar el-Fatwa urges measures to protect religious shrines from offenders.

- Lebanese Army arrests terrorist organization suspected of launching the rockets into Baabda a few weeks earlier. The arrested include Syrians who allegedly bought the rockets from Bourj el-Barajneh.

- Sheikh Ahmad el-Assir blames Tripoli's twin explosions on Hezbollah in an audio recording and warns that the next car bomb would target Christian areas.

- The ISF circulates photographs of a suspect in Tripoli's attack in front of Al-Taqwa Mosque.

- General Michel Aoun criticizes the security forces for being out of sync.

August 29

- Speaker Nabih Berri highlights the urgent need for an immediate national unity government following Wednesday's parliamentary meeting.

- Lebanon's Senior Media Authority calls on TV channels to stop hosting clairvoyants on their talk shows.

- President Michel Suleiman urges the return to the dissociation policy stipulated by the Baabda declaration during the ministerial meeting held to discuss the repercussions of potential military action against Syria.

August 30

- Government Commissioner to Military Court, Judge Sakr Sakr, arrests Sheikh Hashem Minkara on charges of concealing critical information regarding Tripoli's twin explosions.

- Newly-appointed US Ambassador David Hale arrives in Lebanon and issues a statement expressing his delight to be back in a country where he served for 25 years.

- LBC broadcasts a video of the abducted Turkish pilots wherein they urge rapid solution for the issue of the Azaz abductees.

- MP Walid Jumblat receives the Free Patriotic Movement coordinator at his residence in Clemenceau.

- Cypriot and French airlines cancel their night flights to Lebanon for two months.

- The Beirut Municipality decides to install surveillance cameras on the streets in order to prevent murders and car bombs. It also grants each of the municipalities of Haret Hreik, Tripoli and Mina a monetary assistance of LBP 150 million.

September 1

- In his televised speech from Ain El-Tine, Speaker Nabih Berri calls for a 5-day dialogue aimed at resolving the Lebanese crisis and forming a new government. ●

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY- LEBANON

SYRIA COMPLETES ITS HEGEMONY OVER LEBANON- OCTOBER 13, 1990

Preceding Facts

Before the end of the presidential term of President Amin Gemayel on September 23, 1988, Syria and the US were conducting negotiations to decide on a new successor to the Lebanese presidency. The choice fell on Akkar's MP, Mikhael Daher, but Christian leaders (Head of the Lebanese Forces Samir Geagea, Head of the Phalanges Party Amine Gemayel, Maronite Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir and the then Lebanese Army commander General Michel Aoun) who were divided over all internal matters, convened and announced their opposition to this choice, a stand that was greeted with the infamous warning of the US special envoy Richard Murphy on September 18: "Mikhael Daher or the chaos."

Meantime, President Amine Gemayel, supported by France, was pleading with both the Syrians and Americans to extend his term by one year or more until agreement over another candidate was reached, but to no avail. On the night of September 22/23, 1988, a few hours before the expiry of his term and in accordance with Article 53 of the Lebanese Constitution, President Gemayel nominated the Lebanese Army Commander, General Michel Aoun, for the office of Prime Minister and appointed members of the Military Council as ministers in the government until the election of a new President. However, all three Sunni officers/ministers resigned from their posts, thus dividing Lebanon into a Christian government led by Aoun and a Muslim one led by the then acting PM Salim El-Hoss.

Wars of Liberation and Elimination

Later, on March 14, 1989, General Michel Aoun declared the War of Liberation against the Syrian occupation. The fight was ignited on all fronts in Beirut and Mount Lebanon between the pro-Aoun Lebanese Army and the Syrian forces and the militias supporting them. In the beginning of 1990, war broke out between the Lebanese Forces and the Lebanese Army on grounds of the former's support of the Taef Accord. Aoun displayed staunch opposition to the war, which wreaked untold havoc in Christian areas and resulted in the death of hundreds of victims. These confrontations weakened Aoun's army units, but the international red lines set at the time impeded the entry of Syrian forces into the areas he controlled.

Iraq's Invasion of Kuwait

Later, Lebanese deputies approved the Taef Accord and MP Elias Hrawi was elected President of the Republic while Aoun remained in the Baabda Palace and proclaimed himself as legitimate Prime Minister. Meantime, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion of Kuwait on August 1, 1990. In response, the US secured the backing of the UN Security Council to form a coalition of both Arab and foreign forces in order to kick Saddam out of Kuwait. Syria joined the coalition under the command of Hafez Assad, thus granting itself a pretense and an opportunity to advance towards regions controlled by Aoun's forces, although the move was justified by other reasons and compromises that remained under the table. At that point, Aoun realized that his stay in Baabda was nearing its end and made his popular statement: "The world can crush me but can never force me to sign." Indeed, all local, regional and international

attempts failed at brokering a solution with Aoun and only drove him to assume a more intransigent and rigid position.

Although heedful of the military potential of his adversaries and their capacity to break into his zone of power, mainly the Baabda Palace, Aoun was equally aware that a military action was out of question since France would not allow Lebanon to fall under the Syrian occupation, a reward that the US has promised to President Assad for his participation in the liberation of Kuwait.

Therefore, all field reports on the positioning of forces and mobilization of masses failed to intimidate Aoun or soften his position, especially amid French guarantees ruling out the possibility of a military option.

Invasion according to President Elias Hrawi

In his book *Restoration of the Republic: From Sub-states to State*, former President Elias Hrawi describes the preparations setting path for the elimination of the “Aoun phenomenon” as follows:

“The Cabinet convened on August 1990 in the absence of Minister Walid Jumblat who was outside the country and decided to put an end to the armed mutiny. To this end, a military plan was devised jointly with the Syrians in order to submit it to the Cabinet on its next session.

On October 9, 1990, the Cabinet held a session aimed at taking action to stamp down the Christian leader’s rebellion. Syrian President Hafez Assad endorsed the move and requested that Lebanon authenticates his call for the Syrian support in this mission in an official letter. The session lasted four and a half hours, at the end of which PM Salim Hoss refrained from bearing responsibility for potential bloodshed and refused to follow through.

However, the Cabinet adhered to its intention to intervene militarily to curb the Aoun-led rebellion and urged the Syrian forces present in Lebanon to

assist the Lebanese Army in the execution of this mission in order to restore the state sovereignty over its territory. The President of the Republic was assigned to relay the content of the Cabinet decision to the Higher Syrian command.”

President Hrawi was notified through Ghazi Kana’an that the Syrian Command had scheduled an attack against Baabda Palace and the areas that Aoun controlled on Saturday, 13th of October, at 6:00 am. Meantime, covert negotiations were brewing between pro-Aoun officers and Syrian officers, which mistakenly reassured the Christian leader that there was no attack planned.

As no action was made by 6 am, President Hrawi called Army Commander Emile Lahoud, and learned from him that everything was moving as promised and the attack would be launched in an hour as per Syria’s timing.

Military Operation

At 7:00 am, Beirut time, the Syrian Forces began their air raids on the Baabda Palace, while land units were advancing in the same direction, reaching their target destination by noon. Meantime, General Michel fled with a number of his assistants seeking refuge at the French Embassy in Hazmieh. Although he called on his forces to abide by the commands of General Emile Lahoud, many units refused to quit fighting and heinous battles and massacres occurred in several areas like Dahr Wahsh, Souk el-Gharb, Bsous and Deir el-Qalaa claiming the lives of dozens of Lebanese officers. The attack ended with the Syrian Forces detaining hundreds of Lebanese military members and tightening their grip on areas controlled by Aoun in particular, and Lebanon at large. The sight of Syrian troops sweeping over the Presidential Palace in Baabda was perhaps the most symbolic depiction of Syria’s absolute occupation of Lebanon at the time.

And so, after 57 days at the Baabda Palace, Aoun spent another 320 days at the French Embassy before he was sent to exile in France until May 7, 2005. ●●

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY – ARAB WORLD

THE SUICIDE OF GHAZI KANA'AN (1942-2005)

October 12, 2005. The Voice of Lebanon broadcasting station receives a phone call from Gen Ghazi Kana'an asking "Wardeh" the hostess to spread what were soon to become his last words: "Unfortunately some tendentious media has pumped lies in order to mislead the public opinion, including those stated in the news bulletin of the New TV (Al-Jadeed TV) on the evening of October 11 about what they speculated about a meeting with the members of the commission of inquiry regarding the Syrian assistance to get to the truth about the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, where we, Syria, have a major interest". Kana'an added, "To summarize I want to make clear that what is stated in the New TV report is far from the truth and tucked altogether. And we, as well as the Commission, have a copy of the report where we can refute and expose these lies, when we see that, in response to this fabrication that is meant to harm us and Prime Minister Hariri, where we do not deal with such matters nor does he." (CNN)

About an hour from this phone call, Gen Ghazi Kana'an, age 63, was reported to have shot himself in the mouth at his office in the interior ministry building in Damascus. (BBC News)

Ghazi Kana'an, or "Abu Yo'roub", the long-time head of Syria's security apparatus in Lebanon and then Syria's Interior Minister from 2004 to 2005 met his death during an investigation into the assassination of former PM Rafik Hariri. The incident drew international attention given the series of events taking place in the Levant at the time. Born in 1942 to an Alawi family in Bhamra, Syria, Ghazi Kana'an was known to be a respectable and patriotic military man. (Aawsat)

Recall the fact that the U.N investigators' unprecedented report was assigned to be released a few days from his death. In addition, Gen Kana'an was questioned by Detlev Mehlis – former Head United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission-- regarding the assassination of Rafik Hariri (the notorious assassination which resulted in the death of nine other people and left a crater 30 feet deep). (Al Jazeera). Given these two main factors, Kana'an's suicide shook the Levant and led to speculations and theories on the "real" causes behind his death.

One accusation made by Farouk Al Share' was directed at the Lebanese media whom Share' believed "pushed" Gen Kana'an into committing suicide. There was also a widespread speculation regarding whether his death was due to murder or forced suicide by the Syrian state. (Biedermann, F). Ghazi Kana'an's brother, Ali Kana'an, accused Syrian President Bashar Al Assad along with Bashar's brother and brother-in-law for the death of Gen Ghazi. According to some sources, a Gulf diplomat revealed that Kana'an was actually killed as he was being confronted by members of the leading Baath party about Kana'an's secret plans of turning against the regime with assistance from the US (Mideast Wire). Ali Kana'an committed suicide himself about a year later. Other opponents of the suicide theory from Kana'an's close circle of family and friends argue that Gen Kana'an was too strong of a man to commit suicide over some false media allegations. (Al-Ahram)

Before his violent death, Gen Kana'an spoke his last words to Voice of Lebanon radio: "My testimony ... was to shed the light on an era during which we have served Lebanon. Sadly some media outlets have reported lies to mislead public opinion. I want to make clear that our relation with our brothers in Lebanon was based on love and mutual respect ... We have served Lebanon's interest with honour and honesty." (Landis, J)

The late Gebran Tueni who at the time was in Paris because of attacks on critics of Syria in Beirut, said he doubted Gen Kana'an had taken his own life and that he had information that Gen Kana'an had not died in his office, as the Syrian government had claimed. "I don't think Ghazi Kana'an committed suicide. We know there have been many cases like this in the past in Damascus". "He was somebody who knew a lot about who was involved in that totalitarian regime." He added, "Maybe they were afraid that Ghazi Kana'an would give up information about the way the Syrian regime was dealing with the Lebanese." (Ibrahim, A)

Hours before he died, when Gen Kana'an contacted the radio station, he acknowledged that he had been questioned by UN investigators, but asserted that he had given no information against the Syrian state. He ended his on-air suicide note by saying: "I believe this is the last statement that I can make." (CNN) ●

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PALESTINIAN REFUGEES AND THE SYRIAN CRISIS

Up until the onset of the internal conflict in Syria, Palestinian refugees in the country's camps were living in peaceful conditions. They were granted equal rights to state resources and were allowed access to medical care and education. They were also given the right to work, meaning that many were able to sustain themselves and their families within Syria. This is contrasted with the situation in Lebanon where none of these conditions apply to Palestinian refugees and the Lebanese government subjects them to a lot of discrimination. The violence in Syria has not spared the country's Palestinian refugee camps, with both the regime and rebel groups using heavy weaponry inside the camps.

Palestinian refugees in Syria have been subject to injuries and fatalities due to the proximity of the fighting to their areas of residence. The camps that have been affected are Ein al Tal, Dera'a, Yarmouk, Husseineh, Khan Eshieh, Sbeineh, and Sayida Zeinab. Armed conflict has been taking place within these camps by both government and rebel forces alike, and the extensive fighting and shelling have made it impossible for Palestinians to continue inhabiting the camps. According to UNRWA, 235,000 refugees are estimated to have left Syria since the beginning of the conflict. For those who stayed, moving around freely is no longer a safe option. This has obstructed their access to work and has drastically affected their livelihoods. Because they can no longer maintain jobs, the majority of them now rely on UNRWA as their sole source of income. UNRWA found that 400,000 Palestinians in Syria who were previously providing for themselves and their families are now in need of livelihood support.

UNRWA is having trouble securing the funding needed for assisting Palestinian refugees. With many of the refugee camps in Syria affected by the fighting, Palestinians have fled to other Arab countries such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt. In Lebanon, UNHCR and Lebanese NGOs cannot fill in the gap in UNRWA's performance because they are mostly occupied with providing assistance to Syrian refugees. It is estimated that 32,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria have moved into Lebanon, though this number is likely to be higher as not all of them are registered. The most pressing needs for these refugees are emergency shelters being that the most of them are moving into Lebanon's already overcrowded refugee camps.

Palestinian refugees from Syria who have come to Lebanon have left a dangerous war zone only to find no shelters, no jobs, and no schooling for their

children. They are mostly living inside or around the country's refugee camps. Though there have been demonstrations demanding assistance and jobs in camps both in the north and south of the country, both the Lebanese government and international aid agencies are struggling to accommodate for the Syrian refugees overwhelming the country. To make matters worse, upon entry into Lebanon, Palestinians are forced to pay for a permit of USD17, which requires renewal every three months. This seems unacceptable provided that Lebanon prohibits Palestinians from working and extends no services whatsoever to Palestinians.

Many of the refugees are also moving to Jordan and Egypt. In the former, their number has reached 4,569 but they are only allowed to inhabit Cyber City (a refugee holding center) and to leave only if they are going back to Syria. In Egypt, the number is not as high, but conditions are equally severe. The embassy of the Palestinian Authorities in Egypt along with the UNRWA office has been providing additional aid to Palestinians fleeing Syria. The Egyptian government however, feels that any expansion of UNRWA's work would affect the Palestinian's 'right of return'. Thus the agency has not been granted permission to expand its work across the country.

The influx of refugees flooding into regional countries is without doubt straining governments and local and international NGOs alike. But refugees of both Syrian and Palestinian nationalities need to be treated as individuals escaping violence. Humanitarian assistance that is designated to Syrians also needs to be extended to Palestinians in Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt. International aid agencies can look to distribute their funding more evenly in order to fill the gap felt by Palestinian refugees, and prevent yet another humanitarian crisis in the region. ●

ASHURBANIPAL'S LIBRARY

OLDEST SURVIVING ROYAL LIBRARY

Ashurbanipal was the last of the kings of Assyria, thought to have ruled between 668 and 627 BC. The best-kept remnant of his reign has made what is likely to be the best contribution to the study of the ancient cultures of Iraq. In the early 1850s, his palace was excavated in the ancient city of Nineveh, in today's Iraq, where archeologists discovered the best-organized library of the time. It was also a very extensive one with over 30,000 cuneiform tablets. These contained historical texts, as well as literary, religious, legal, scientific and medical texts. The king was a famous collector of clay tablets from across the region, and was boastful of his ability to read the cuneiform script. The famous "Epic of Gilgamesh" was discovered on tablets from this library.

According to the British Museum, Ashurbanipal was himself in charge of this collection, possibly one of few kings who actually did so at the time. The king claimed being able to read both Akkadian and Sumerian script. Though his military campaigns and territorial expansion were considerable, they did not outlive him like his library did. Despite the fact that it was later buried by invaders, when discovered the library was still mostly intact. The library was one of the largest among its contemporary counterparts, and one of the few to survive until today.

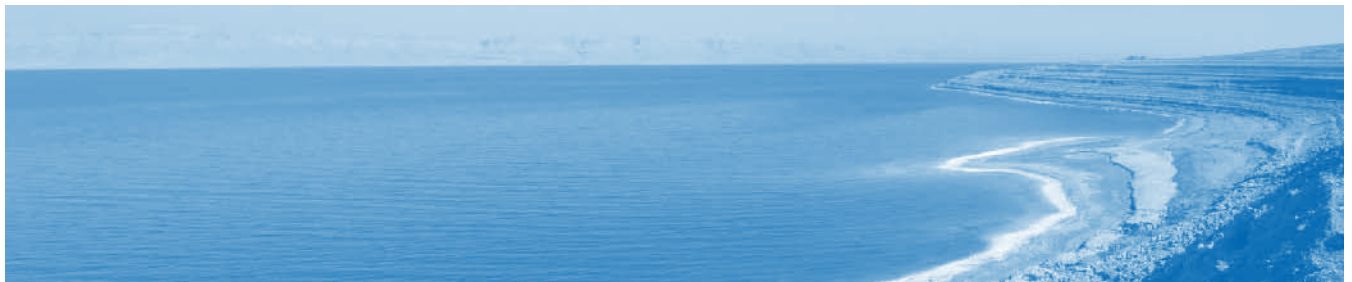
The significance of this library is not only its historical content, but also the extent of its organization. Texts were organized into different rooms according to categories and each of the rooms had a tablet hung up by its entrance to indicate the subject matter of its contents. Moreover, each group of tablets came with a citation that revealed their content to readers. Ashurbanipal's library was home to texts related to subjects ranging from history, geography, and religion, to poetry, magic and science. The library also contained texts that described the findings of spies who worked for the kingdom and a comprehensive list of rulers from that period of time. Since their discovery in the 1850s, these tablets added important knowledge to the study of the ancient civilizations. Most of them are in the possession of either the British Museum or the Iraq Department of Antiquities.

Of the approximately 30,000 cuneiform tablets that were found in Ashurbanipal's library, 1,200 remain to be studied. Perhaps the most significant discovery was the "Epic of Gilgamesh". Also found among the tablets is the "Epic of Creation"- also called the Enuma Elish- or how the Babylonians believed the creation of the world to have taken place. The god Marduk slays the goddess of the Ocean, or the goddess of salt water, Tiamat. From her slain body he creates the world. Man, on the other hand, was created from the blood of Qingu, another mythical god, the son of Tiabat, who was also slain by Marduk. His blood was mixed with the earth to create the first man.

The University of Mosul, in a joint project with the British Museum, has picked up plans that it had put to a halt before the 2003 invasion of Iraq to recreate this library. As it is probably the first library to which the characteristics of a modern library could be attributed, its legacy is definitely worth preserving. With much of Iraq's heritage destroyed during the US invasion, the preservation of museums, ruins, libraries and historical documents should be granted worthy attention. What Iraq lost of its heritage during the war may not be retrievable, but one can learn from this experience to initiate a new approach to heritage preservation. Conservation efforts should be all-encompassing and not only limited to times of conflict, without undermining the need for increased security. ●

DEAD SEA LIVING UP TO ITS NAME

A regional wonder, the Dead Sea has fueled tourism for years and, along with being the supplier for a wide range of chemical and cosmetic products, has constituted an important source of revenue for Jordan and Israel. The main tributary is the Jordan River. The sea, notorious for its high salt content does not harbor any wildlife but is an important source of minerals. Hotels and resorts line its shore on both sides. But the continuous extraction of minerals from a closed body of water is bound to drain this historic site of its benefits. In addition to the arid climate conditions of the region, mining practices are contributing to an unprecedented decline in the level of the water, causing the sea to shrink gradually.



According to the Yale Environment 360 magazine, the level of the sea has fallen by 1.3 meters on average per year. Between 1993 and 2009 this was at average of 1.15 meters per year. This is a shockingly high level considering the size of this sea. Minimal rainfall and malpractice are only expected to intensify the decline in the sea level. The main source of water into the sea is the Jordan River, and the abuse of this source is the major reason that is damaging the Dead Sea. Diverting water away from the river for use in Jordan and Israel means that the flow into the sea has become minimal. Apart from this river there is not an alternative source of water that feeds the Dead Sea.

Another main factor is the continuous mining of minerals from the Dead Sea for the production of cosmetics and fertilizers. Industrial companies actually pump out water in order to facilitate the extraction of minerals. On the Israeli side, the overexploitation of these resources is also coupled with restricting Palestinian access to the shores and other natural resources, while keeping it open to settlers who directly profit from the Dead Sea and add to the exploitation.

One of the proposed solutions for this problem is diverting water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea, what is known as the Red-Dead plan. This would entail creating a network of pipes and tunnels that would transport water from the Red Sea into the Dead

Sea. But the unique composition of the latter does not make this a feasible option. Initial studies have shown that mixing seawater would pose a number of risks. In the first instance mixing these types of water in large amounts would damage the growth of microorganisms. Changing the chemical composition of the Dead Sea – a site known for just that – beats the point of a rehabilitation project. This project may fix water levels, but it would take away all the benefits that the sea has provided.

The Red-Dead is also not feasible because it would entail a very large budget for a massive undertaking that would not even solve the source of the problem. The system that feeds the Dead Sea, along with extraction practices, is what needs to be addressed. Managing the resources of the Jordan River, on both Jordanian and Israeli sides, is vital for the preservation of this water system. Unfortunately this may be too late. The low levels of water have already resulted in a large number of sinkholes in the area. On the other hand, both Israeli and Jordanian governments need to limit the works of industrial companies. These companies, though not the sole cause of the problem, gravely add to it. The controllable factors to this problem are the ones caused by human hand; diverting the Jordan River, and extracting products from the Dead Sea. Limiting these alone could have a significant impact on the extent of the decline of water levels. ●

REAL ESTATE PRICES- AUGUST 2013

The real estate transactions in August 2013 featured a state of stagnation, characterized by limited land sales. The momentum in the selling and buying of apartments failed to live up to the expectations that had been projected for the summer. Those poised to repay bank loans or close their real estate deals before they travelled had to sell their property at lower prices. A decline was also evident in the demand from the Syrians as most Syrians were looking to rent rather than buy apartments. The following Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the prices of some apartments and estates sold in August 2013.

Prices of some estates sold in August 2013			Table 1
Region	Area m ²	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Ashrafieh/ Hotel Dieu	330	2,211,000	6,700
Baabda			
Hazmieh	840	1,848,000	2,200
Araya	1,100	1,100,000	1,000
Matn			
Broumana	1,500	585,000	390
Bekfaya	1,000	400,000	400
Jdeideh	700	2,100,000	3,000
Mansourieh	2050	1,742,500	850
Monteverdi	9,00	1,125,000	1,250
Aley			
Bshamoun/ Madares	950	475,000	500
Bhamdoun	650	162,500	250
Kessrouan			
Kfardebian	1,500	450,000	300
Ajaltoun	1,000	400,000	400
Ballouneh	1,150	575,000	500
Adma	970	1,746,000	1,800
Ashqout	1,200	288,000	240

Source: Compiled by Information International- August 2013

Prices of some apartments sold in August 2013			Table 2
Region	Area m ²	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Sodeco	145	406,000	2800
Ashrafieh/ Sioufi	200	500,000	2,500
Ashrafieh/ Rizk	140	420,000	3,000
Batrakiyeh	230	437,000	1,900
Sanayee/ Malla	130	351,000	2,700
Saqiyat Janzeer	230	759,000	3,300
Tariq al-Jadidah	150	255,000	1,700
Tallet al-Khayyat	250	975,000	3,900
Ras Nabee/ French Embassy	160	464,000	2,900
Baabda			
Hazmieh/ Mar Taqla	210	399,000	1,900
Yarzi	240	576,000	2,400
Jomhour	190	323,000	1,700
Hadath	120	156,000	1,300
Ghoubeiry	170	170,000	1,000
Mrayjeh	130	130,000	1,000
Matn			
Awkar	160	246,000	1,650
Broumana	150	180,000	1,200
Monteverdi	200	660,000	3,300
Jal el-Dib	180	279,000	1,550
Ain Saadeh/ Antelias	190	342,000	1,800
Mansourieh	200	340,000	1,700
Aley			
Doha Aramoun	160	176,000	1,100
Doha Hoss	200	300,000	1,500
Bshamoun/ Yahoudieh	170	170,000	1,000
Kessrouan			
Ajaltoun	175	280,000	1,600
Ballouneh	160	227,200	1,420
Adma	300	510,000	1,700
Shaileh	250	337,500	1,350
Adonis	170	238,000	1,400

Source: Compiled by Information International- August 2013

Same-Sex Marriage around the World

- The Netherlands was the first nation in the world to legalize same sex marriage in 2001, followed by Belgium in 2002, Canada and Spain in 2003, South Africa in 2006, Norway in 2006 and Sweden in 2009.
- Argentina, Iceland and Portugal legalized same-sex marriage in 2010 and Brazil followed suit in 2011.
- Denmark has been a pioneer in gay rights since 1989, when it became the first country in the world to grant legal recognition to same-sex unions. A new law allowing gay couples to get married was passed in 2012.
- England has recently passed a bill to allow same sex marriages after gaining Queen Elizabeth's royal assent. First union is expected to take place in 2014.
- Australia does not permit same-sex marriages. However, a bill aimed at legalizing same-sex marriages is being debated in Parliament. The bill is staunchly supported by the Prime Minister.
- 76 countries around the world criminalize adult same sex relationships.
- Iran, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mauritania and Sudan have laws authorizing capital punishment against those who engage in homosexual acts.

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Beirut International Airport

Rafic Hariri International Airport Traffic- August 2013

The traffic of passengers (arriving, departing and in transit) at the Rafic Hariri International Airport increased in August 2013 by 25% in comparison to July 2013.

As compared to the same period last year (August 2012), the passenger traffic increased by 15.8% or 99,069 passengers. The number of passengers using the airport has reached 4,282,711 since the beginning of the year until the end of August, compared to 4,032,229 during the same period last year, that is up by 250,482 passengers or 6.2%. The following Table 1 illustrates the Rafic Hariri International Airport traffic in August 2013 compared to July 2013 and August 2012.

Traffic at Rafic Hariri International Airport in August 2013 compared to July 2013 and August 2012

Table 1

Traffic	July 2013	August 2013	August 2012	% of change August 2013/ July 2013	% of change August 2012/2013
Arriving airplanes	2,913	3,145	3,024	+7.9	+4
Departing airplanes	2,917	3,157	3,027	+8.2	+4.2
Total no. of airplanes	5,830	6,302	6,051	+8	+4.1
Arriving passengers	305,077	343,406	283,246	+12.5	+21.2
Departing passengers	275,022	382,497	341,279	+39	+12
Transit passengers	1,212	1,036	3,345	-14.5	-69
Total no. of passengers	581,311	726,939	627,870	+25	+15.8
Imported goods (per ton)	4,733	4,638	3,716	-2	+24.8
Exported goods (per ton)	4,333	3,410	3,630	-21.3	-6
Total amount of goods	9,066	8,048	7,346	-11.2	+9.6

Source: Compiled by Information International based on the statistics of the Directorate General of Aviation

- **803 000** is the number of tourists and visitors who came to Lebanon from the beginning of 2013 until the end of August 2013.
- **USD 181 million** are the monthly government transfers to Electricité du Liban .
- **USD 188 million** are the profits of the Saradar Aoude Group in the first half of 2013, compared to roughly the same amount during the same period last year. Byblos Bank profits stood at USD 75.9 million.
- **LBP 84 000 billion** (around USD 56 billion) is the value of the assets of commercial banks at Banque du Liban, which accounts for 42% of the banks' total assets.
- **1 861 000** is the number of debit and credit cards used until the end of 2012, up by 77 887 cards or 4.3% from 2011. The number of ATMs also increased from 1326 in 2011 to 1433 in 2012.

Publications by Kutub (in Arabic):

- 1- Al-Wasita Ila Ma'rifat Ahwal Malta & Kashf Al-Mukhabba'e 'An Funun Europa.
- 2- The Memoirs of Juliette El-Mir Saadeh
- 3- As-Saq 'Ala As-Saq fi ma Huwa Al-Fariaq
- 4- Rihlati Fi Al-Jazirah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Wusta, Hamad, Sammar, Qacim, Hedjaz 1878-1882. [Voyage Dans L'Arabie Centrale.]
- 5- Al-Shi'ir Ind Al-Badu (Bedouin Poetry)
- 6- Rihlati Fi Bilad Al-Rafidayn wa Iraq Al'Arab [Utazasom Mesopotamiaban és Irak-Arabiaban]
- 7- Laqatat Mughayira: Al-Tasweer Al-Mahalli Al-Mubker Fi Filasteen. 1850-1948.
- 8- Fi Khidmat Al-Watan. Mukhtarar Min Al-Watha'iq Al-Khassa Lil 'Amir Farid Shehab.
- 9- Matbakh Baytna
- 10- Antoun Saadeh Wa Al-Hizb Al-Souri Al-Qawmi Al-Ijtima'i Fi Awraq Al-Amir Farid Shehab Al-Mudir Al-'Am Li Al-'Amn Al-'Am Al-Lubnani.
- 11- Mudhakarar Dhabet 'Uthmani Fi Najd
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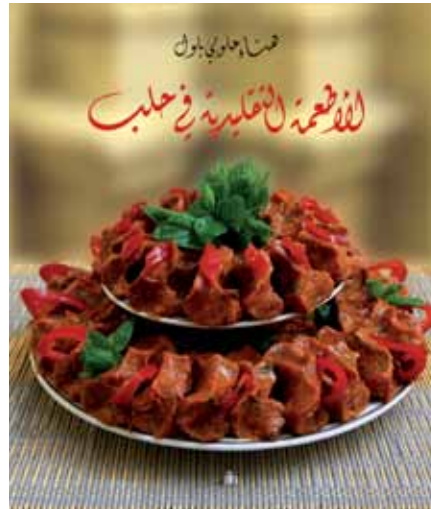
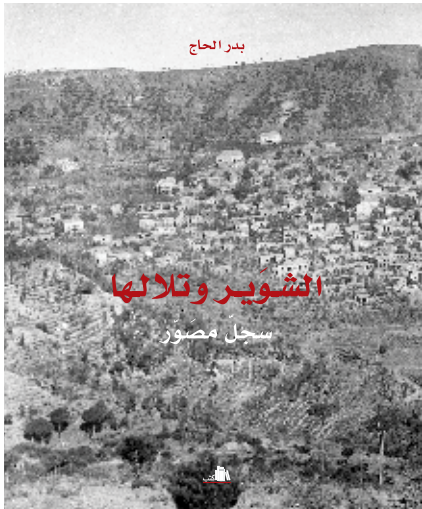
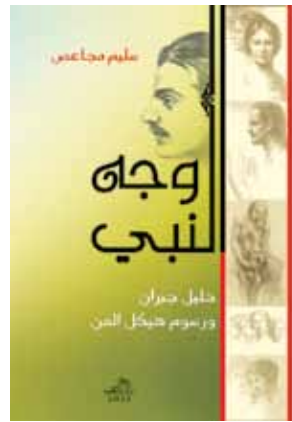
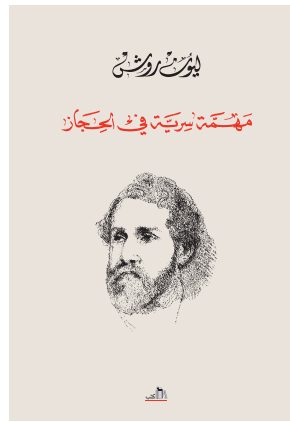
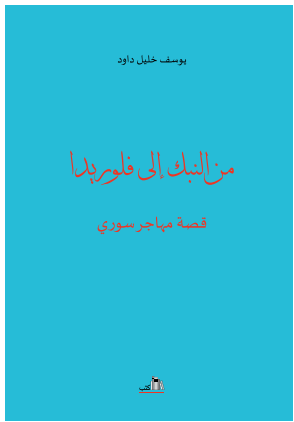
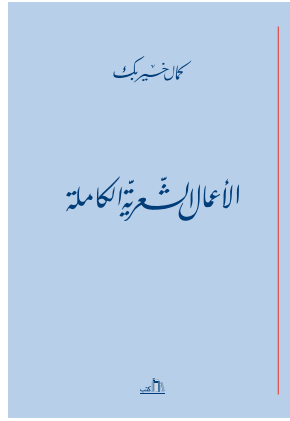
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