

The Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music

Tourism in Lebanon: Figures contradict the situation on the ground

The *Monthly* meets the Ambassador of Indonesia

Lebanon's Trap



Election
2009

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“Randa Died”



“Randa died”, whispered the four year old girl with tears in her eyes and a sobbing voice asking why? “Randa gave us books, tables and desks... Why didn’t the doctors help her? Who will be replacing her? Her children? Will the school’s name still be ‘Randa’s school?’” The name of the school is International College, but to this child, it was “Randa’s school”.

Questions difficult to answer by someone struggling to deal or understand death philosophically. How were we able to land a spaceship on Mars and fail to cure cancer?

The journey of Randa Azzam Khoury from “Chouifat School” to “Mrs Jreidini” school to “Beirut College for Women” (known today as LAU) where she graduated in 1966, to the American University of Beirut in 1968 was tough and fruitful. Randa taught at LAU for 5 years (1985 – 1990), before settling at International College where she became head of pre-school until she died in September 2008. Her journey however, started much earlier back in Haifa, Palestine, where she was born (1944) and driven out from her homeland with her family in 1948, to settle in Lebanon.

Randa Azzam Khoury, wife of Ibrahim Khoury, is a Christian from Palestine and an eternal flame in our dim gloomy space. Her life is a success story and a source of pride for the self-made hard working people in Lebanon.

Randa and her colleagues are the candles in our long ever lasting night.

It is of a profound significance to accomplish all of this having been expelled from your homeland, where the “international legitimacy” and the “west” now consider it a “rightful” place for others. Randa Khoury is a living evidence of the success of the collaboration between the true educators “here” in “the East” and true educators “there” in “the West”.

Let us imagine a four year old refugee, same age as the child posing the question, on a boat with her mother and grandmother, tossed by the waves to Beirut to join the rest of her family that came by land from Akka. Let us imagine this child praying in a church with her parents, dreaming of the day she would go back to her homeland. Let us visualize this child as a college student... and then after forty years in Beirut, as an educator for children of the same age as hers when she was first driven out of Palestine.

What a journey?

It continues yet unwritten, from Al Karmel mountain in Haifa (Palestine) where she was born, to Bta’abura (Koura - Lebanon) where her body lays today and will be until the end of time, a testimony that we are one, in Palestine and Lebanon.

“Randa died!” Two words that ought to be enough to put the whole country into a moment of silence... to stop this whole clatter for a brief peaceful moment to acknowledge the hard working great little people of this country.

Randa Azzam Khoury is a secular educator from Lebanon and Palestine, harmoniously united with the world. She is a true example of a universal citizen dedicated to the success of her society. Randa is a member in Lebanon’s “Missing Third”*.

“Where is Randa?” Nour Lyla continued...

“I don’t know. The body gets tired and disappears but the spirit is always there”...

“Where?”

“Maybe with the stars. Maybe with the flowers and butterflies but it is definitely with you... and the thousands of children like you that knew her...”

“Randa is in heaven,” they say.

Yes, Randa is at school in heaven.

Jawad N. Adra

* See *The Monthly* issue 59 of May 2007.