

- SECURITY FORCES PHONE CALLS IN 2012 AT LBP 16.6 BILLION
- NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER
- *THE MONTHLY* INTERVIEWS MAYA MARGIE YOUNES

THE REPUBLIC OF CONCRETE

BENEFICIARIES FROM THE INCREASE
IN BUILT-UP AREAS (2000-2014)



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ZIRYAB AND IBN RUSHD

What have we achieved in Egypt, in today's so-called Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan and last but not least in the Arab Peninsula, since the collapse of the Ottoman rule?

Certainly, one can go back to the glory of Sumer, Byzantine and the dawn of Islam; one can also extol the glories of Al-Andalus and speak highly and proudly of unmatched milestones in medicine, engineering, mathematics and astrology; one can indulge in eloquent rhetoric and poetry but what's the use? What of today? What of all those lean years?

Oh, what has become of us after the poetry of Mutanabbi (965)? What has become of us after Ibn Rushd (1198) and Ibn Arabi (1240)? What has happened to linguistics after Ebn Manzur's all-time work of reference *Lisan Al-Arab (The Tongue of The Arabs- 1290)*? What has befallen us after Ibn Khaldoun (1492)? Oh, what has befallen us after the sublime architecture of the great Kairouan mosque (670)? What after the Gate of Barakiyyah in front of Al-Azhar (970)? What after Granada (889-1333) and Aleppo's Al-Firdaws Madrasa (1236)?

We can speak out against Mongols and Crusaders and condemn their invasions of our land; we can speak out against the Ottomans, Israel and the US. But what about those parties, kings and rulers that reigned over this land? What environment have they created? What legacy have they left? Is there even a need to look south of the border at the booming universities and research centers to realize our decline?

Are we still the same people who once built the majestic city of the sun, Baalbeck? Did we truly invent the alphabet? Were we truly the ones who built Beiteddine, Deir El-Kamar and the Citadel of Aleppo? Some may exalt the Aswan Dam (1960-1970) or give praise to the Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University (2008) or the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha (2008); others, each according to their beliefs and views, may pay reverence or express admiration to King Abdul Aziz, Jamal Abdul Nasser, Hassan Nasrallah, Antoun Saadeh, George Habash, Nizar Qabbani, Adonis, Khalil Hawi, Al-Yaziji and Al-Boustani to name but a few. But our environment contrasts sharply with theirs and a careful observation of the difficult circumstances under which they toiled is sufficient to unveil the extent and severity of our present degradation. It even brings a term widely used by the UN and the World Bank into the equation and keeps us wondering about the "sustainability" of their output.

What have we invented? What have we developed? What have we offered to our environment and antiquities? How have we evolved industrially, intellectually and agriculturally? In fact, it is difficult to identify eminent and sustainable innovations in our land and nothing worthy of mentioning comes to mind except the Rahbani musical legacy, the celestial voice of the singing Diva Fairuz and the Lebanese and Levantine cuisine, unless, of course, we wish to thrust our long-standing tribal and sectarian frames within the narrow circle of sustainability.

Had it not been for the riches of our cuisine and the Rahbani works and Fairuzian songs, we wouldn't have had a single feather to put in our cap. To see a whole generation absorbed in Twitter and living on Ecstasy pills, with little if any admiration to towering musical figures such as Assi Rahbani and Fairuz is not only a major disappointment to our society but also raises serious concerns over our artistic taste. He, who today does not know Fairuz, Khalil Hawi and Ahmad Fares Chidiac, did certainly not hear about the music of Ziryab and Ibn Rushd's (Averroes) *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*.

Jawad N. Adra

THE REPUBLIC OF CONCRETE

BENEFICIARIES FROM THE INCREASE IN BUILT-UP AREAS

Through relevant departments at the Urban Planning Authority and municipalities, the Lebanese government lays out plans for residential use in towns and cities and in other areas for industrial, commercial and agriculture activities. It also specifies exploitation factors with a view to organize the structure of every region and the life of its citizens as well as to prevent population pressure and random urban sprawl. However this planning does not apply to everyone, and every now and then, the Cabinet issues decrees that allow encroachments, especially by increasing the Ground Exploitation Coefficient¹ and the Total Exploitation Coefficient² under the pretense of encouraging investment. In practice, this leads to undermining of government plans and causes higher population density and injustice. The same region would thus have two adjacent plots with different exploitation factors, simply because one of the two owners of the plots of land happens to be a privileged man of power and wealth. This preferential treatment is not restricted just to few cases; dozens of such plots of land are authorized higher exploitation factors as illustrated in Table 1. Between 2000 and 2014, the Cabinet has issued 102 decrees amending exploitation factors for various plots of land across Lebanon, most of which were assigned to build hotels or public facilities and a minority to construct private buildings.

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Beirut	2477 February 6, 2000	Msaytbeh 5022	Raising the GEC from 40% to 60% and the TEC factor from 2.5 to 5. The area added as a result of the increase thus becomes 2277 m ² for the purpose of building a hotel
	2522 February 23, 2000	Msaytbeh 4511	Raising the GEC from 40% to 58% and the TEC factor from 2 to 4 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	3500 July 25, 2000	Ras Beirut 191	The maximum TEC factor goes up from 4 to 5.
	3671 August 21, 2000	Ras Beirut 687-688	The GEC goes up from 40% to 59% and the TEC factor from 2.5 to 5 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	4024 October 10, 2000	Msaytbeh 5000	The GEC becomes 60% and the maximum TEC factor 5 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	4108 October 16, 2000	Ain El-Mrayseh 733	The GEC becomes 47% instead of 40% and the maximum TEC factor 5 instead of 2.5
	4331 October 25, 2000	Ras Beirut 1090	The GEC becomes 58% instead of 40% and the maximum TEC factor 5 instead of 2, for the purpose of building a hotel.
	4441 December 14, 2000	Several buildings in Downtown, Beirut	The Higher Urban Planning Council exempts a number of buildings in Downtown Beirut from certain construction requirements.

¹ The maximum percentage footprint of a plot of land that a building can occupy.

² A multiple of the whole plot that defines the maximum construction area on the site.

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Beirut	4906 February 13, 2001	Marfaa 448	Increasing the total area of construction allowed to 4153 m ² .
	5985 July 30, 2001	Ras Beirut 616- 617	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building from 4.8 to 5.
	6113 August 30, 2001	Mazra'a 5394- 5870	Increasing the GEC of a hotel building from 40% to 50% and the TEC factor from 2.5 to 5.
	6359 September 19, 2001	Ras Beirut 2914	Increasing the GEC of a hotel building from 40% to 60%. A previous decree numbered 10097 had raised the TEC factor to 5.
	9121 November 28, 2002	Msaytbeh 2055	Excluding the plot in question from the prescribed construction regulations and excluding the heritage construction area from the TEC factor and the maximum height allowed on the plot.
	9744 March 6, 2003	Ras Beirut 1089	Increasing the maximum TEC factor of a hotel building from 2.5 to 5.
	14225 February 25, 2005	Mina El-Hosn 1421	Amending the requirements of plot development.
	14687 June 20, 2005	Mina El-Hosn 1421	Amending the requirements of plot development so that the maximum building height becomes 140m instead of 120.
	14802 June 20, 2005	Ashrafieh 5226	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building to 5%.
	14811 June 20, 2005	Marfaa 646	Excluding the plot in question, which belongs to the Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association, from the general requirements set for Downtown Beirut, permitting an extra 642 m ² to be added to the existing building and exceeding the TEC factor set at 5.
	14814 June 20, 2005	Msaytbeh 3678-3688	Excluding the two plots and the planned tourist project from the height requirements set at 5.5 meters.
	14829 June 28, 2005	Ras Beirut 483	Approving the increase of the TEC factor of a hotel building from 4 to 5.
	14878 July 1, 2005	Mazra'a 3673- 3649	Approving the increase of the GEC of a hotel building from 50% to 60% and the TEC factor from 3.5 to 5.
	447 June 20, 2007	Ras Beirut 2718	Permitting the increase of the TEC factor from 2.5 to 5.
	533 July 10, 2007	Msaytbeh 4762-2227	Excluding the two plots from the construction regulations approved pursuant to Decree no. 6285 dated September 11, 1945 and its amendments by doubling the GEC from 20% to 40% and the TEC factor from 1.25 to 2.5.
717 September 8, 2007	Mazra'a 5976	Doubling the TEC factor of a hotel building from 2.5 to 5.	

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Beirut	764 September 29, 2007	Msaytbeh 3799	Excluding the Oman's embassy premises from certain construction regulations.
	995 November 24, 2007	Ras Beirut 1331	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building on an area of 2493 m ² from 3.5 to 4.88.
	1610 March 21, 2009	Mina El-Hosn 1418	Amending construction regulations for the purpose of constructing a hotel.
	5674 February 7, 2011	Msaytbeh 4233/ Beirut	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations and rebuilding floors 6, 7 and 8 as they were before demolition.
Baabda	2255 January 27, 2000	Baabda 5055	Increasing the TEC factor to 2.8 for the purpose of building a hotel. The area added as a result of the increase thus becomes 2998 m ²
	2303 February 10, 2000	Shiyyah 1642	Increasing the GEC to 60% in the ninth division of the Hadath Boulevard and to 40% in the division under the area zoned 'B'. Increasing the TEC in the first division to 0.6% and in the second to a factor of 3.91. The additional area thus becomes 6280 m ² for the purpose of building a hotel
	17535 August 14, 2006	Shiyyah 86- 3255	Approving the increase of the GEC from 0.25 to 0.5 and the TEC factor from 0.9 to 1.8.
	83 February 23, 2007	Baabda 5096	Permitting the increase of the TEC factor to 3.082.
	666 November 7, 2008	Baabda 833	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so that the GEC becomes 45% instead of 40%, the TEC factor 2.4 instead of 1.04, the maximum height 45 instead of 17 meters and the maximum number of floors 10 instead of 4. The relevant building belongs to the Ministry of Finance.
	1724 April 9, 2009	Qernayel 64-65	Excluding the plots in question from construction regulations for the purpose of establishing the Al-Jabal Al-Jadid Hospital.
	2053 May 26, 2009	Tahouitet El-Ghadeer 391	Raising the authorized building height to 415 meters for the purpose of constructing a Flight Simulator Training Center
	3342 February 23, 2010	Shiyyah 3016	Exempting from road setbacks for the purpose of establishing a Qatari embassy.
	3743 April 1, 2010	Tahouitet El-Ghadeer 391	Raising the maximum height authorized from 41.5 meters to 43 meters for the purpose of erecting a building.
	6854 November 17, 2011	Hadath 443	The GEC becomes 55% instead of 50% and the TEC 2 instead of 1.65 for the purpose of building a new public school.
	7306 December 28, 2011	Shiyyah 1554	Subdividing the plot in question into 3 sections.
	7846 March 23, 2012	Shiyyah 6925	Excluding the plot in question from the provisions of the annexation and subdivision decree issued in 1997.
	8155 May 18, 2012	Bourj El-Barajneh 2891-2892	Excluding the plots in question from the provisions of the annexation and subdivision decree issued in 1997.
	8767 August 27, 2012	Shiyyah 1548	The GEC becomes 94% instead of 50% and the TEC 5.7 instead of 1.65 for the purpose of building public garages.

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Kesrouan	2283 January 25, 2000	Sahel Alma 837	Increasing the TEC factor to 2.993 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	3248 June 20, 2000	Kfaryassine 546	The GEC becomes 30% instead of 20% and the TEC factor 1.99 instead of 1 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	5165 March 31, 2001	Sahel Alma 249	The GEC becomes 47% instead of 40% and the TEC factor 4 instead of 2. The area added as a result of the increase thus becomes 2054 m ² .
	8072 June 21, 2002	Mouaisrah 1187	Excluding a school building from the prescribed number of floors.
	10054 April 15, 2003	Halat 46	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building from 0.4 to 0.8.
	14826 June 27, 2005	Haret Sakhr 1279	Approving the increase of the TEC factor from 1.5 to 3.
	14830 June 28, 2005	Kfaryassine 605	Approving the increase of the TEC factor of a hotel building from 1.5 to 3.
	14832 June 28, 2005	Haret Sakhr 1419	Approving the increase of the TEC factor to 3.
	16797 April 28, 2006	Ghazeer 3335	Permitting the increase of the TEC factor from 1.2 to 2.4.
	548 July 18, 2007	Harissa 226	Permitting the increase of the GEC from 30% to 48% and the TEC factor from 1.2 to 2.4 as well as the construction of a second basement to use as parking..
2285 June 17, 2009	Ghosta 329-1819	Amending the classification for the purpose of establishing a convent.	
Tripoli	2478 February 16, 2000	Tripoli 2372	Increasing the TEC factor to 5 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	3274 June 26, 2000	Tripoli 502	The maximum TEC factor becomes 5 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	14807 June 20, 2005	Tripoli 6670	Adding a building to the hospital existing on the said plot so that the TEC factor becomes 1.2 instead of 0.8.
	14806 June 20, 2005	Tripoli 608	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations.
	532 July 10, 2007	Bsateen 3898-3900	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so as to double the TEC factor from 1.2 to 2.4 and increase the maximum building height from 18 meters to 30 meters. The building that would be constructed is also to be exempted from basement setbacks and from the provision of parking areas for the hall planned to be constructed on plot no. 3900.
1366 May 5, 2008	Zaytoun 755	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so as to increase the GEC from 20% to 25%.	

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Tripoli	3339 February 23, 2010	Tripoli 4004	The GEC becomes 45% instead of 30%, road setbacks 3 meters instead of 6 the maximum height authorized 30 meters instead of 18 for the purpose of constructing a church.
	6801 October 16, 2011	Tripoli 3802	Exempting the plot in question from construction regulations so that the GEC becomes 35% instead of 30%, the TEC 1.8 instead of 1.2 and the maximum height authorized 24 meters instead of 18, for the purpose of building headquarters for the physicians of the north.
Aley	4068 October 13, 2000	Choueifat 575- 1173	The GEC becomes 30% and the TEC factor 1 for the purpose of constructing a hotel named "Beirut Palace".
	5405 May 10, 2001	Sawfar 203	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building from 1.2 to 2.4.
	14831 June 28, 2005	Al-Qebbeh 1183- 564- 563	Approving the increase of the TEC factor and the GEC to 60% and 30% respectively. .
	17998 November 1, 2006	Souk El-Gharb 473- 477- 478	Permitting the increase of the TEC factor to 0.4 and the GEC to 11%.
	29 February 22, 2007	Aley 6987	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so that the TEC factor becomes 0.63, the number of floors 7 including the open basement and the maximum height 26.6m. The increase is approved for the purpose of establishing a public school. .
	79 February 23, 2007	Bhamdoun 1072	Permitting the increase of the TEC factor to 2.38.
	9222 November 1, 2012	Majdel Baana 1470	The minimum subdivision plot area becomes 800 m ² instead of 1200 m ² , the GEC 13.33% instead of 20% and the TEC factor 0.267 instead of 0.4.
Matn	3165 June 5, 2000	Sin El-Fil 2482	Increasing the GEC to 34% and the TEC factor to 2.4 for the purpose of building a hotel.
	3288 June 27, 2000	Broumana 109	The GEC becomes 60% instead of 40% and the maximum TEC factor 2.4 instead of 1.2.
	6362 September 19, 2001	Ras El-Matn 2234	Exempting the plot in question from the road setback requirement (the distance which a building is set back from the boundaries of adjacent roads).
	9247 December 16, 2002	Sin El-Fil 2331	Allowing the doubling of the CEC and the TEC (Metropolitan City Center)
	1004 April 15, 2003	Qornet El-Hamra 2167	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations by adding an extra floor to a nursing home for the elderly.
	14808 June 20, 2005	Sin El-Fil 277	Excluding the plot in question from certain provisions for construction so that the TEC factor becomes 2.5 and the GEC 37 %. (The two coefficients were increased earlier in 1999 when the TEC was put at 2.4 and the GEC at 31.2%).

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors (2000- June 2014)

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Shouf	6426 September 28, 2001	Jiyyeh 2	Increasing the TEC factor of a hotel building from 0.4 to 0.5014. The area added as a result of the increase thus becomes 4389 m ²
	9232 December 12, 2002	Deir El-Qamar 1480	Amending the construction regulations in the plot in question.
	9399 January 15, 2003	Deir El-Qamar 2568	Excluding the plot in question from the prescribed construction regulations so that the number of authorized floors becomes 5.
	9799 March 18, 2003	Ammatour 874	Excluding the plot in question from the requirements of construction on parts of the mains roads in the Shouf Qada'a and subjecting it to the code of non-classified areas.
	16019 December 23, 2005	Deir El-Qamar 1878	Excluding the plot in question from the maximum building height allowed in the area.
	3379 February 27, 2010	Jiyyeh 3021-2514	Amending the distance which a building is set back from the waterway axis to enable the Council for Development and Construction to establish a wastewater treatment plant.
Akkar	11073 October 3, 2003	Mhammara 573	Excluding the plot from the construction regulations set for the area.
	14810 June 20, 2005	Rahbi	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations for the purpose of building a hotel school.
	14805 June 20, 2005	Rahbi 3310- 3901	Excluding the two plots from the requirements established in the region's master plan , thus allowing the construction of a main hotel building, several chalets and a sports club.
	7240 December 22, 2011	Qoulaya'at 2-136-137	Excluding the plots in question from construction regulations to establish a technical institute for the University of Balamand, standing 12 meters high instead of 10.
Koura	951 November 21, 2007	Ras Masqa 2993	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so as to allow the construction of a hospital with two basements, a ground floor and four floors by increasing the TEC factor from 1.8 to 2.79 and the building height to 22.6 meters.
	1374 May 5, 2008	Ras Masqa 78	Excluding the plot in question from construction regulations so that the GEC becomes 35% instead of 30%, the TEC factor 1.5 instead of 0.9, the maximum height 40 meters instead of 20 meters. The decree also allowed the erection of a 60 meter-high installation.
Mennieh Dennieh	3742 April 1, 2010	Mhammara 6-7-8-21	Increasing the GEC from 20% to 30%, the TEC factor from 0.4 to 1, the maximum height from 10 meters to 12 meters and the maximum number of floors from 2 to 3. UNRWA premises are the beneficiary of this amendment.
	5124 October 1, 2010	Sayr El-Dennieh 1398	The maximum height authorized becomes 16 meters instead of 9 meters for the purpose of constructing a public school.
	8533 July 18, 2012	Zouk Bhannine 63	Doubling the maximum height from 10 meters to 20 meters for the purpose of building a mosque.

Decrees stipulating increase in ground and total coefficient factors

Table 1

Qada'a	Number and date of the decree	Real estate zone-Plot number	Remarks
Zahle	10661 August 14, 2003	Jdita 2162- 2211- 2189	Exempting the plots in question from the road setback requirements (the distance which a building is set back from the axis and sides of international roads).
	11857 February 11, 2004	Chtoura 472	Permitting the settlement of the occurring violation.
	4861 August 27, 2010	Hawsh El-Oumara 180	Amending the maximum authorized height of a factory tower from 13.5 meters to 31.5 meters.
	8905 September 21, 2010	Hawsh El-Oumara 231	The GEC becomes 46.2% instead of 40%, the number of floors 7 instead of 3 and the maximum height authorized 21.5 meters instead of 13.5 meters.
	8531 July 18, 2012	Construction code for Qebb Elias	Amending the maximum height from 12 meters to 14 meters.
Baalbeck	8064 May 4, 2012	Arsal 1250	The maximum height authorized becomes 12 instead of 6.5 meters and the number of floors 3 instead of 2 for the purpose of establishing a public school.
Bsharri	895 November 8, 2007	Bsharri 6453-6454	Increasing the TEC factor from 0.25 to 0.5 and the GEC from 15% to 20%.
Saida	4169 October 18, 2000	Adloun 1121	Amending exploitation conditions to allow for the establishment of a fish farming facility.
Tyre	5298 October 28, 2010	Deir Qanoun El-Nahr 1217	Amending plot classification.

Source: Decrees published in the Official Gazette, noting that no decrees on amending exploitation coefficients were issued in 2013 and 2014 (June 2014).

The table above reveals that the plots that benefited the most from increasing exploitation coefficients were predominantly in Beirut (28 beneficiaries) followed by Baabda (15) and Kesrouan (11). There were 9 beneficiaries in Tripoli, 7 in Aley and 6 in each of the Qada'as of Matn and Shouf.

Striking observations can be deduced from the table above. For instance, in 2000, out of 18 decrees, a minimum of 15 reported the construction of hotels as the reason for increase in exploitation coefficients. If this surplus of hotels has increased employment rates and benefit the hotel industry in general is doubtful. What is evident though is the pressure the surplus has imposed on the environment, traffic and population densities.

Furthermore, a considerable portion of the decrees authorized the construction of public schools in larger built-up areas at a time when Lebanon is known for its excess school space, regardless of the quality of this space. Against the backdrop of declining enrollment in public schools, would it not have been wiser to invest in bettering the existing buildings or improving curricula instead of straining infrastructure and natural resources with extra concrete?

Amongst the other ironic observations is the issuance of two decrees amending exploitation coefficients to allow for the erection of a church in Tripoli and a mosque in Mennieh. This, along with the decree facilitating the construction of premises for the physicians in the north, calls into question the feasibility of and need for built-up area expansion and makes investors as well as civil and religious institutions partners in environmental crimes. ●

SECURITY FORCES PHONE CALLS IN 2012 AT LBP 16.6 BILLION

Granting thousands of members of the military and the security forces access to mobile phones to better perform their functions has become a widely observed trend in the past few years with each military administration paying for the calls of its respective members.

Number of mobile phones

Informed sources report that the expansion in distributing mobile phone numbers has assumed an indiscriminate character, unwarranted by the needs and demands of military service, noting that the Cabinet issued in 1995 and 1999 two decisions banning public servants from using mobile phones at the expense of the state. According to the preliminary statistics *The Monthly* was able to obtain, there are more than 8000 mobile phone numbers put at the disposal of the military as illustrated in Table 1. The Ministry of Telecommunications settles the bills of this mobile usage pursuant to a decision issued in the Cabinet but no data on the actual cost of these bills was made available to us. The provision of the mobile network is extended on an annual basis.

Number of mobile phones at the disposal of the military		Table 1
Security apparatus	Number of mobile phones and date of provision	
Lebanese Army	1500 mobile phones on August 24, 2006 (the number has risen in the years that followed and is currently estimated at more than 4000)	
Directorate General of the Internal Security Forces	1000 mobile phones on September 15, 2006 1500 mobile phones on February 20, 2007 250 mobile phones on July 14, 2010	
Directorate General of State Security	We failed to obtain the number of mobile phones assigned to the State Security	
Directorate General of General Security	500 lines on August 8, 2011	

Source: Cabinet proceedings in the respective dates

Cost

According to the 2012 draft budget law, the estimated cost stands at roughly LBP 16.6 billion (roughly LBP 32 billion), while the actual figure might be twice as much given the high cost of calling from mobile phones. Table 2 illustrates the cost of calls forecast by the 2012 draft budget.

Cost forecasts according to the 2012 draft budget law by security apparatus		Table 2
Security apparatus	Cost of mobile phone calls (amounts in billions of LBP)	
Lebanese Army	10	
Directorate General of the Internal Security Forces	4	
Directorate General of State Security	1.3	
Directorate General of General Security	1.2	
General Secretariat of the Higher Defense Council	LBP 3 million	
Airport Security	LBP 93 million	
General Directorate for Administration- Lebanese Army	LBP 15 million	
Total	16.611	

Source: 2012 draft budget law

LEBANON'S SECURITY AND MILITARY FORCES

ROLES AND DUTIES: COMPLEMENTARY OR OVERLAPPING?

Lebanon has six military and security apparatuses. Their personnel are authorized to carry weapons to ensure order and stability and apply the rule of law all over the country. Each apparatus is assigned a specific role and assumes a number of functions stipulated by its act of formation. Sometimes, two or more apparatuses may share similar or common responsibilities, thus requiring close coordination and collaboration between them. Because of the lack of joint efforts, a conflict in roles arises, reflecting negatively on the performance of each entity. Sometimes, duties even overlap within the same apparatus.

In this article, we will shed light on the role, functions and capacities of all six military and security apparatuses listed below:

- Lebanese Army
- General Directorate of Internal Security Forces
- General Directorate of General Security
- General Directorate of State Security
- Parliament Police Force
- Customs Police Force

Internal Security Forces

According to Law No. 17, dated September 20, 1990, the Internal Security Forces are public armed forces operating under the Ministry of Interior and Municipality with jurisdictions covering the entire Lebanese territory as well as the territorial waters and air space. Its missions in the fields listed below break down as follows:

Administrative Police

- Keeping order and security
- Ensuring public stability
- Protection of individuals and possessions
- Protection of freedom within the framework of law
- Execution of the legal rules and regulations

Judicial Police

- Fulfilling the functions of the Judicial Police
- Executing letters rogatory
- Carrying out warrants and verdicts

Others

- Supporting public authorities in their duties
- Guarding public administrations and institutions, as decided by the relevant authorities
- Guarding and running prisons when needed
- Guarding the diplomatic missions in Lebanon

General Directorate of General Security

Article 1 of Legislative Decree No. 104, dated November 3, 1983 defines the General Directorate of General Security as a public armed force falling directly under the Minister of Interior and Municipalities. Its powers are stipulated by Article 2 as follows:

- Collecting and examining information related to the state security.
- Fighting and probing into espionage and all other activities endangering the state security.
- Escorting and protecting Lebanese and non-Lebanese officials and statesmen.

- Issuing passports and travel-related documents and delivering transit passports and residence permit cards.
- Regulating the stay of foreigners in Lebanon and monitoring their movements.
- Monitoring media activity and all audiovisual broadcasts.
- Regulating and facilitating the movements of both Lebanese and non-Lebanese travelers to and from Lebanon as well as contributing to the protection of land, aerial and maritime borders.
- Keeping public administrations and institutions in the loop regarding state security matters relating to their civil servants and to applicants to public posts and advising on permits and licenses related to the safety of the state.
- Coordinating with other security services, such as the General Directorate of General Security, the Internal Security Forces and the Army Intelligence Directorate, matters concerning inquiries and information exchange.
- Drafting periodic reports to inform the Higher Council of Defense about the security and political situation and making appropriate suggestions regarding internal and external dangers. The Head of the Higher Defense Council and his deputy shall always be informed about the latest political and security developments.

Official authorities are all bound to submit to the General Directorate of State Security the information required regarding whatever jeopardizes the internal and external security of the state.

Article 103: Functions of the Judicial Police Commander

In addition to the joint tasks of the chiefs of corps stipulated in Article 6 of this decree, the Judicial Police Commander retains exclusive control over certain tasks and responsibilities. Those include:

- Collecting information concerning internal state security by the means of special networks covering all Lebanese territories, in order to verify, investigate and analyze them or remit them to the relevant authorities.
- Monitoring foreigners by investigating any action that may jeopardize the state security and overseeing the relationship between Lebanese nationals and foreign entities with regard to the state security.
- Engaging in counter-espionage and fighting hostile activity of any form.
- Opening preliminary investigations into acts that jeopardize internal and external state security. The investigations shall be made by at least one squad delegated by either the Internal Security Forces or the General Security, or even by both of them. The squad, which is affiliated with the General Directorate, shall carry out its duties in the Judicial Police capacity according to the Constitution and the current laws in force.
- Receiving information related to major crimes and offences from different ISF units and referring such information to the relevant corps after unifying and arranging them, either automatically or upon instructions.
- Monitoring crime rates by conducting regular studies and statistics and devising special anti-crime plans.
- Keeping up with the latest scientific strategies to fight crime and proposing the steps necessary to adopt them.

Article 107- Functions of the Criminal Investigation Department

This department is responsible for tracking and deterring the following crimes:

- Crimes that tamper with the state security, such as those aimed at instigating terror and unrest and compromising national unity.

General Directorate of State Security

This security service is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- Financial crimes such as counterfeiting, currency forgery, bankruptcy fraud, dummy corporations, illicit speculations and trademark imitations.
- International thefts arranged and executed by international networks or gangs such as vehicle and artifact thefts.
- Crimes deemed important in terms of the methods used or the significant impact they have on the public.

Explosives' Bureaus

- Meeting the demands of all ISF units in terms of inspecting all the localities and vehicles where the presence of explosives is suspected.
- Transporting, defusing or detonating explosives, if any.
- Drafting detailed reports on every intervention made and submitting them to the relevant authorities.

Tracing Bureaus

- Meeting the demands of all ISF units in terms of tracking criminal movements.
- Collecting and lifting evidence from the crime scene with the means available at their disposal.
- Drafting detailed reports on every intervention made and submitting them to the relevant authorities.

Article 124- Functions of the Embassy Security Regiment

- a. Guarding the headquarters of diplomatic missions as well as the facilities associated with them.
- b. Protecting all members of the diplomatic missions and their families and guarding their residences.
- c. Guarding Arab and foreign institutions.
- d. Escorting heads and members of diplomatic missions during their movements.
- e. Transporting documents related to the missions.
- f. Escorting and protecting foreign figures.

Article 125- The protection and security centers mentioned in Article 124, paragraphs a. and b., are established pursuant to a decision taken by the Director General according to the need and upon the request of the head of the diplomatic mission, after seeking the opinion of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the regiment's commanding officer.

The centers and services pointed out in paragraphs c, d, e and f of the above Article 124 are established by a decision taken by the regiment's commanding officer, upon the request of the diplomatic mission chief.

Article 126- Functions of the Legislative and Executive Bodies' Security Regiment

The below corps are responsible for guarding and protecting the legislative and executive bodies:

Parliament's Guards

- Guarding the surroundings and vicinity of Parliament
- Guarding the Speaker's residences
- Watching over the Speaker and his family
- Escorting the Speaker during his movements

Premiership Guards

- Guarding the surroundings and vicinity of the Cabinet
- Guarding the Premier's residences
- Watching over the Premier and his family
- Escorting the Premier during his movements

Reservists

Guarding the executive and legislative entities not mentioned above.

Article 127- Functions of Public Administrations' Security Regiment

This regiment, excluding the Airport Security, is tasked with:

- Guarding the premises of public administrations
- Guarding museums and tourist and archeological sites
- Protecting the state's moveable property

The centers of security mentioned under this article are established pursuant to a decision taken by the Director General, upon the request of the relevant minister and after approaching the regiment's commanding officer. The protection of movable property is carried out pursuant to a decision taken by the Regiment's commanding officer upon the request of the head of the respective administration.

Article 128- Functions of the Beirut Airport Security Unit

The company commander of the Beirut Airport Security Unit is associated with the Airport Security Commander as far as operational matters are concerned but reports to the Commander of the Public Administrations' Security Regiment when it comes to administrative and financial matters. The functions of this unit are established by the legal and regulatory provisions relating to Beirut Airport Security.

Article 129- Functions of Investigation Units

The regional scope of the investigation units within the Embassy Security Regiment and the Public Administrations' Security Regiment includes all of Lebanon. These units are responsible for collecting and investigating security information concerning their respective regiments. They are also required to carry out special tasks dictated by the Director General after seeking the advice of the regiment's commanding officer.

Article 130: Functions of Reserve Units

Each of the reserve units is required to provide those urgent and internal services stipulated under the functions of the apparatus, which are defined by the ISF regulatory act.

Functions of the Traffic Division

This division is in charge of all the matters related to traffic within the regional scope defined by the regional gendarmerie unit.

Functions of the Prison Division

This division is in charge of all the administrative and financial matters related to prisons and inmates.

Customs Brigade

Decree No. 1802, issued in 1979 defines the Customs Brigade as a public armed force within the Lebanese Customs. It falls under the Minister of Finance and its powers are stipulated as follows:

- Monitoring land, aerial and maritime borders as well as all those areas falling under the supervision of the Lebanese Customs so as to implement all the customs regulations and provisions concerning the importation and exportation of goods.
- Investigating and verifying smuggling operations according to the provisions stipulated by the Customs Act and other regulations as well as setting up checkpoints and inspecting suspicious individuals.
- Assisting all the public armed forces and administrations according to the provisions established by the laws in force.

Conflicts and Overlaps

Although the Lebanese Army is tasked with defending the country and protecting its borders, the internal requirements of this mission appear to be overlapping with the work of other security bodies. In the past, the Deuxième Bureau (Army Intelligence) carried out several duties that were beyond its jurisdiction and had nothing to do with the security and safety of the country. The Army Intelligence was a tool manipulated by men of power to weaken their rivals.

One example of the conflicts and overlaps within the armed forces is that the General Security collects and examines information related to the State security while the Directorate General of State Security collects information related to internal security. This is proof that the security bodies are running similar security tasks, yet with different administrative aspects. Each body thus seems to be working to outperform its counterpart, which raises the possibility of merging the said bodies or the establishment of a coordination entity dedicated solely to harmonize work between different bodies. ●

HOLDERS OF LEBANESE PASSPORT ALLOWED VISA-ON-ARRIVAL ENTRY TO 31 COUNTRIES

Obtaining visas for certain countries is governed by several factors, including the country's economic policy and its security situation. Upon the outbreak of the Civil War, doors of foreign countries were wide open for the Lebanese fleeing the violence. Yet, a few years later, this hospitality, particularly in European countries, started to decline, caused either by internal considerations or by security reasons. Obtaining visas became an arduous task tied to lengthy bureaucratic paperwork that, even when properly submitted, was not guaranteed to allow entry. As the options were narrowed down, the Lebanese strived to find countries that would welcome them with minimal restrictions. But the countries that exhibit leniency in granting visas happen to be far away with modest resources that fall short of satisfying the promises of wealth and well-being that the Lebanese aspire to.

Visa upon arrival at the airport

The number of the UN member states reached 192 in 2014. Of those, the Lebanese citizen can only enter 31 without obtaining advance visas, meaning that for the remaining 161 countries, a strict visa application process must first be completed. The conditions for obtaining a visa differ from one country to another. Some of them are simple and may be realized with ease such as the submission of a valid passport, an affidavit of residence, a copy of a criminal record and a small bank account; some are stricter while others are almost impossible to meet, and even when met, the applicant is not guaranteed to get the visa. Noteworthy is that Lebanon does not apply the principle of reciprocity as we will highlight in the following.

Most of the 31 countries that grant the Lebanese entry visas upon arrival at the airport are relatively far from Lebanon, stretch across a small area and do not present a major attraction due to their lack of wealth and resources. The six countries that are situated in proximity to Lebanon and that may be of interest to the Lebanese are:

Syria: to enter, the Lebanese are required to only carry their IDs with them, without the need for a visa or a passport, a measure that has been in force for decades.

Turkey: from 2010, Turkey started granting free entry visas to the Lebanese upon their arrival at the airport.

Jordan: free entry visas have been given to the Lebanese since June 2005.

The Sultanate of Oman: the Lebanese can obtain entry visas upon arrival at the airport in exchange for a sum of money determined according to the duration of the visit. This has been the norm since 2000.

Malaysia: free entry visas have been given to the Lebanese since 1994

Iran: granting the Lebanese free entry visas upon arrival at the airport began by the end of 2011.

The following Table 1 illustrates the 25 remaining far-away countries the Lebanese can enter with a visa upon arrival.

The 25 remaining far-away countries the Lebanese can enter with a visa upon arrival					Table 1
Country	Geographical location	Area (km ²)	Population	Average annual per capita income (USD)	General feature
Cape Verde	Western coast of Africa, 500 km from Senegal	4033	600,000	3500	Poverty and massive water shortage
Comoros Islands	In the Indian Ocean, closest to Tanzania and Mozambique	1862	900,000	1000	Poor agricultural country
Djibouti	On the western coast of the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. Bordered by Eritrea and Somalia.	23,000	900,000	1200	Nearly quarter of its population live under the poverty line of 1.25 dollars a day
Madagascar	In the Indian Ocean, off the coast of southeast Africa	587,041	15,000,000	900	Two thirds of its population live under the poverty line of 1.25 dollars a day
Mozambique	In Southeast Africa. Bordered by the Indian Ocean to the east	801,590	25,000,000	500	One of the poorest countries around the world.
Togo	In West Africa. Bordered by Ghana to the west and Benin to the east	56,783	7,300,000	400	Poor agricultural country
Seychelles	In East Africa. Bordered by the Indian Ocean.	455	100,000	7500	Tourist destination
Uganda	In East Africa. Bordered by South Soudan on the north.	236,040	36,000,000	520	Poor agricultural country
Bolivia	In South America. Bordered by Brazil to the North and East.	1,098,581	10,500,000	1730	Despite its oil and natural gas fields, it still ranks among the poorest countries
Dominican Republic	In the Caribbean region in South America.	48,442	10,500,000	4,600	Developing economy and high income in South America.
Ecuador	In south America. Bordered by Columbia to the North.	283,520	16,000,000	5,300	Quarter of its population live in abject poverty. Its new status as an emerging oil-rich country might help it surmount poverty.
Haiti	In the Caribbean region right below Cuba.	27,750	12,000,000	750	Most houses in Haiti are cottage-like and diseases are widespread across the country.
Saint Kitts and Nevis	In the Caribbean region.	261	50,000	10,000	A country so small in terms of area and population with high income levels thanks to tourism.

The 25 remaining far-away countries the Lebanese can enter with a visa upon arrival**Table 1**

Country	Geographical location	Area (km ²)	Population	Average annual per capita income (USD)	General feature
Azerbaijan	In the Caucasian region in Eurasia. Bordered by Iran to the South and Russia to the North.	86,600	9,500,000	7900	Strategic location and abundant oil and gas resources.
Bangladesh	South East of Asia. Bordered entirely by India.	147,570	170,000,000	620	One of the poorest countries around the world.
Cambodia	South East of Asia. Bordered by Vietnam to the east and south.	181,035	16,000,000	775	An agricultural country that has suffered from war and has recently discovered new oil resources.
Laos	South East of Asia. Bordered by China to the north.	236,800	7,000,000	880	One of the poorest countries of South Eastern Asia.
Macao	Southern coast of China	29.2	600,000	36,000	A casino gambling hotspot
Maldives	An Asian island in the Indian Ocean, near Sri Lanka	298	40,000	4500	Tourist island
Nepal	In the Himalayas and bordered to the north by China and to the south, east and west by India.	147,181	32,000,000	450	Poor agricultural country
East Timor	In Southeast Asia, near Indonesia, 640 km from Australia	15,410	1,100,000	550	Wars and deadly conflicts
Kosovo	In Southeastern Europe in the central Balkan Peninsula	10,577	2,500,000	2,400	Modern state that has witnessed appalling massacres.
Tuvalu	In the Pacific Ocean, midway between Hawaii and Australia	26	10,500	3500	One of the world's smallest countries in both population and land area
Cook Islands	Off the Eastern coast of New Zealand in the Pacific Ocean	240	25,000	9000	Agricultural island obtaining aids from New Zealand
Micronesia	In Oceania near Philippines and Indonesia.	702	120,000	900	Natural attractions whose touristic potential is not exploited

Source: Prepared by Information International based on a report issued by the consular section at the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Those allowed entry into Lebanon

Lebanon does not respond to the strict measures imposed by certain countries with respect to visa processing with reciprocated action. As a matter of fact, citizens of 86 countries may obtain their visas upon arrival at the airport or at border crossings, including Syrians who only need to show their IDs to cross into Lebanon.

Citizens from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait Oman, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Qatar (Gulf countries) get a free visa and a residence permit for three months that may be renewed up to a year. Domestic workers, drivers and bodyguards enter under the same conditions, provided that they obtain a valid residence permit in the country of their patron.

The other countries are: France, Estonia, Finland, Britain, Germany, Japan, Portugal, Poland, USA, Yugoslavia, Venezuela, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentine, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Canada, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Singapore, Romania, Russia, Panama, Norway, Montenegro, Montenegro, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Serbia, Saint Marino, Iran, Moldova, Italy, Georgia, Greece Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan, Liechtenstein, Sweden, Tajikistan, Slovakia, Slovenia, Samoa, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Macedonia, Malta, Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Peru, Korea, Spain,

Turkey and Jordan. Nationals of the above countries obtain a free visa to Lebanon for a period of one month.

Those denied entry into Lebanon

The countries whose citizens are denied visas upon arrival at the airport in Lebanon total 57 and are generally poverty-stricken and labor-exporting countries. They are the following:

Egypt, Angola, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroun, Central Africa, Tchad, Tibet, Comoros Islands, Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Kenya, Malawi, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, North Korea, Mozambique, New Guinea, Niger, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Namibia, Mauritius, Zambia, Vietnam, Honduras, Thailand, Uganda, Tanzania, Pakistan, Rwanda, Philippines, Paraguay, Palu Island, Trinidad and Tobago, Seychelles, Somalia, El-Salvador, South Africa, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Suriname, Zimbabwe.

Only 31 countries, mostly poor and located far away, welcome the Lebanese without a strenuous visa application process, while Lebanon opens its doors to citizens from 86 countries, some of which are stringent in granting the Lebanese entry to their territory. On the other hand, Lebanon imposes strict visa requirements on nationals from 58 countries, of which 20 receive the Lebanese with few if any conditions. ●



EMBEZZLEMENT OF FUNDS AT THE EMBASSY OF LEBANON IN CAIRO

USD 1.4 MILLION

The cases of corruption, the squandering of public funds and administrative laxity abound in the Lebanese administration. As a matter of fact, these cases are no longer restricted to Lebanon itself but have sneaked into the Lebanese embassies and consulates overseas. One such case is the embezzlement of funds from the Lebanese embassy in Cairo which dates back to 2001, yet remains under investigation to date, laying bare the blatant apathy of diplomats towards their tasks.

Start of embezzlement

On December 7, 1998, Egyptian national Yasser Refaat Ouweis was appointed as assistant accountant at the Lebanese Embassy in Cairo. Hisham Dimashqiyah served as Lebanon's ambassador to Cairo at the time. Later in 2001, the new ambassador, Sami Qronfol, asked the National Bank of Egypt, where the embassy's account was, to transfer the consular revenues for the first quarter of 2001 to the Lebanese State treasury. The bank transferred an amount worth USD 222,000 but it turned out that there were roughly USD 6500 missing from the funds deposited at the bank and those transferred to the treasury. In 2003, a sum worth roughly USD 13,000 also appeared to be lacking.

Ambassador Qronfol reported difficulties in converting the revenues from Egyptian Pound to US Dollar in order to carry out the transfer to the order of the Lebanese treasury. He suggested the payment of the consular services in USD but his proposition was greeted with discontent from Egypt's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. When Abdul Lateef Mamlouk took office as Ambassador to Cairo in September 2013, he moved the embassy's account to Jammal Trust Bank, which expressed willingness to transfer the funds in USD without any complications or delay.

Ongoing embezzlement

Evidence of fraud was also found in 2004 when USD 11,000 were transferred from the embassy's expenditure dollar account to its account in Egyptian pounds, but the statements showed that no such transaction ever occurred. Other amounts in Egyptian pounds worth USD 33,000 and USD 75,000 respectively were stolen in the same manner.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs transferred sums totaling USD 29,000 to the embassy's expenditure account

to cover Lebanon's contribution to a number of Arab organizations, all of which also went unpaid. Similarly, a transferred amount of USD 61,000 was found missing from the expenditure account and the income account recorded a shortage of 368,590 Egyptian pounds, translating roughly to USD 60,000 in 2005 and 2006.

Check fraud

In addition to embezzlement operations, the assistant accountant committed cheque fraud, by altering letters and digits in certain cheques signed and approved for cashing by the head of the mission. Statements indicated that the assistant accountant had obtained USD 102,000 from five cheques which actually were worth only USD 4,235, thus withholding fraudulently roughly USD 98,000.

Unlawful operations went on for four years until the officials at the Embassy finally found out about them in 2007 and initiated legal action against the employee who was charged with embezzlement.

Total funds embezzled

Embezzlement investigations conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants revealed that USD 240,000 and EGP 7.5 million (roughly USD 1.2 million in total) were appropriated fraudulently between September 1, 2003 and May 8, 2007, i.e. a total of USD 1.440 million. Fraud was committed for four consecutive years under three different ambassadors and a chargé d'affaires who all share part of the responsibility for failure to practice auditing and accountability. Public funds have gone with the wind and with it the verdict sentencing the corrupt employee to three years in prison after he paid a bail of 10,000 Egyptian pounds. ●

NATIONAL ARCHIVES CENTER

THE KEEPER OF NATION'S RECORDS

We rarely hear about the National Archives Center and most of us are unfamiliar with the role and function it assumes, probably because there is no direct relationship between this entity and the general public. Today, thirty-six years after its creation, it may be useful to take a closer look at Lebanon's National Archives to better understand its tasks and objectives.

Establishment and Role

The government of President Elias Sarkis and PM Salim El-Hoss issued on January 17, 1978 Decree no. 832 stipulating the formation of a public institution called the National Archives Center with a clear objective to regulate and manage national archives and records of any type or form.

Later, Law no. 162 dated December 27, 1999 defined national archives as being a collection of records and documents relating to areas of national intellectual, technical, literary, political, media and administrative heritage that were produced, obtained, collected and preserved by any natural or legal person, public or private, whatever the date, form or content. These archives may be either public or private.

'Records and documents' means any written or photocopied document, photograph, film or microfilm, audio or visual recording, whether on tape or on magnetic or optical disks, picture, map or any other material that attests to a certain activity and constitutes a tangible and undisputed reality. When the National Archives Center finds out about heritage-related documents in the possession of any country, international organization, individual, museum or any private or public library, it should take all measures necessary, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to purchase, recover or obtain copies of these documents.

Decree no. 16527 dated March 8, 2006 abrogated the foregoing Decree no. 832 and stipulated the reformation of the institution under the custody of the Prime Ministry. The National Archives Center was thus classified as a public investment institution responsible for:

- Organizing national records and documents of any type or form, particularly those written material and compilations resulting from the activities of the state, in both private and public sectors, and those of individuals as well as any documents that express the heritage of Lebanon.
- Establishing and keeping a register of publications.
- Issuing an annual bulletin containing a generic overview of every publication.
- Spreading, printing and distributing heritage-related material.

Structure

The National Archives Center is governed by a seven-member board of directors. Members are appointed pursuant to a decree for a three-year term of office. By convention, all major sects should be represented in the board, which is chaired by a full-time Grade 1 Director General who according to the customary norm was also agreed to be Maronite.

The Institution's General Directorate consists of:

Administrative and Financial Department

- Administrative Office
- Financial Office
- Legal Office

Storage and Safekeeping Department

- Storage Office
- Safekeeping Office
- Technical Office

Studies and Documentation Department

- Studies and Heritage Office
- Library and documentation Office
- PR and Publishing Office

Staff

The National Archives Center staffing structure includes 76 jobs distributed on the following grades:

- Grade 1: 1 post
- Grade 2: 4 posts
- Grade 3: 19 posts
- Grade 4: 39 posts
- Grade 5: 13 posts

Budget

The National Archives Center is allocated an annual budget falling under the budget earmarked for the Prime Ministry. This budget stood at LBP 1 billion in each of 2010, 2011 and 2012.

The functions entrusted with the National Archives Center are much more important than most of the Lebanese could imagine (collecting all written records and documents of both public and private sectors). However, its limited financial means cripple the institution's ability to realize its full potential and to keep the memory of the Lebanese from being damaged and lost.

Access to documents and archives

The law defined the means by which one may access the national archives as follows:

Those public archives that were accessible to the public before they were deposited at the Center may still be accessed without any restrictions. Regarding the remaining public archives, the Center shall specify a time period during which accessibility would be permissible depending on the type of the archival records, except for the following archives, which may not be accessed until after the expiry of the prescribed time frames:

- Fifty years for those documents carrying information undermining the safety of the nation or relating to private and personal citizen affairs.
- Forty years from the date of verdict delivery or the date of filing or dismissing lawsuits for documents of personal nature.

For purposes of scientific research, the National Archives Center may allow accessibility to public archives before the expiry of the periods established by the law. This can only take place after consulting those who produced the material in question, provided that no harm is caused to public order or to the life of individuals.

Taking into account the content of the foregoing, any person who has been allowed access to the public archives may obtain copies of these records at his/her own expense, provided that he/she does not use them for sheer commercial purposes and that this use does not turn out to be to the detriment of the records. The National Archives Center is also entitled to provide replicas of the requested documents after the Director General approves the authenticity of such replicas. This task may be delegated to a Grade 2 employee. ●

KHALIL SALEM

SAYING 'NO' TO FINANCING WAR MILITIAS COST HIM HIS LIFE

Thousands of kidnap operations and murders took place in Lebanon during the Civil War. These acts of violence claimed the lives of innocent civilians who committed no other crime than that of happening to be in areas with different sectarian identities than their own at a heated moment of wild sectarian frenzy. The victims of war were not only citizens; violence took a severe toll on those state officials whose stances and actions constituted a major hindrance to the expansion of militias and the abuse of public funds and rights. Dr. Khalil Salem (1928-1976), Director General of the Ministry of Finance, is an example of those who were killed for refusing to bend to the will of militias. Who was he and why was he killed? *The Monthly* commemorates him on the 38th anniversary of his assassination.

Birth

Khalil Ibrahim Salem, son of Ibrahim Salem and Mserra Aboud, was born on December 23, 1928 in Bterram, in the El Koura district of northern Lebanon.

Education and career

Khalil began his elementary education in Aba National Laic High School and graduated in 1946 from Tripoli's National High School. The family was not able to afford his college fees so Khalil worked as a teacher in an elementary school for one year, and then enrolled at Aleppo Junior College, a two-year American institution.

In 1948, after completing his freshman year, he accepted a one year clerical position with the Iraq Petroleum Company (I.P.C.), which he joined again in 1950 after his graduation from Aleppo Junior College. In 1951, he joined the American University of Beirut and accepted a part time job with the United States Information Services (U.S.I.S.) which made him very interested in the financial problems of Lebanon and thus he decided to study economics. He received his B.A. in 1953, and entered the graduate school at AUB and worked as an economic analyst for the American Embassy in Beirut. In 1955, he graduated with an M.A. in Economics, and in the fall of 1958 he entered the graduate school of Vanderbilt University in the United States. Khalil returned to Lebanon in 1960, and in addition to his full time job as a senior economic analyst at the American Embassy, he worked as an assistant professor at AUB. Khalil returned to Vanderbilt in 1961, and his Ph.D. dissertation was entitled Credit and Economic Growth in Lebanon.



Khalil Salem

After finishing his Ph.D., Khalil wanted a position which would allow him to be more creative and make full use of his academic ability. So, in 1962 he started at the American University of Beirut as a professor of economics, the post he retained until 1967. He had great knowledge in the field of economics and finance, and his qualifications as an expert were manifested by his many publications, among which were: *The Economy of Lebanon*, *Basic Data and Information*, *The Credit System and Economic Growth in Lebanon*, to name a few.

He was appointed Director General of Economy in March 1966 and Governor of the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development on August 15 of the same year. After

two case studies he organized a comprehensive new tax which was later rejected by the Lebanese Parliament.

Khalil who was very keen to make all his decisions according to law and not on the basis of political power, was able in a relatively short time to generate a new spirit and set in motion a process which turned the Ministry of Finance into a modern and efficient administration, where he built an outstanding relationship with his subordinates. Local newspapers referred to him as “The Honest Guardian of Public Funds”. When the Civil War broke out in the summer of 1975, and the country became divided and scattered, Khalil continued to move between the scattered fighting regions, and acted as a link between different sides, as he was especially respected and trusted by all. Also, he managed to ensure a loan from the government to AUB to prevent its closure after the financial crisis it suffered during the war. At that time, the Ministry of Finance was the only government department functioning properly.

On Friday, July 30, 1976 at about 9 am., while Dr. Khalil Salem was driving his Peugeot across the Jeanne d’Arc Street on his way from his Clemenceau residence to Banque du Liban, four gunmen clad in civilian attire in an anonymous car intercepted him. Two of them jumped into Salem’s car and the other two followed them in another car. Efforts undertaken to set Salem free were futile and he was found killed in the trunk of his car on Monday, August 2, 1976.

Colonel Antoine Dahdah had information that Salem might be abducted and even terminated and warned him about the threat two months before the incident. Yet, Salem refused to leave western Beirut as per Dahdah’s advice, insisting to be a messenger of love between the western and eastern areas.

Fingers were pointed at the Lebanese Arab Army under Ahmed El-Khatib who was backed by Palestinian organizations. Having refused to pay the salaries of those LAA members who defected from the Lebanese Army, a decision to abduct Salem was taken in a bid to pressure him to reimburse the salaries. Yet, Salem showed no willingness to compromise, which is what reportedly led to his termination. Although the accusation remains uncertain, there is no doubt that the Palestinian organizations and their allies shoulder the responsibility of the fate he encountered, given that they were in control of western Beirut at the time.

On the factual data surrounding the incident, MP Raymond Eddé, Head of the Lebanese National Bloc, reported in a press conference held on Tuesday, September 7, 1976 that he used to follow up on a daily basis with the factions and armed groups in the region to disclose information on the fate of Salem but to no avail. When the body was found, he embarked on a new pursuit to identify the murderers. Head of the PLO, Yasser Arafat visited him on August 18 with information that could help him disclose the criminal’s identity in 48 hours. At the end of the prescribed period, Eddé called Arafat and learned from him that “handing in the murderer would yield massive repercussions.”

“...From the very moment we heard about the abduction that targeted the martyr, we spared no efforts to rescue him, by all means possible. Yet, those heartless criminals serving as agents for the enemy’s intelligence finished him off before the hand of justice could smash them down”, Arafat said in the condolences’ telegram he dispatched to Salem’s family.

Funeral

“Khalil Salem sacrificed his life to keep Lebanon unified,” said Bishop Ghafrail Salibi during the funeral Mass held at the Greek Orthodox Sayyidat Al Niyah Church in Hamra’s Makhoul Street on Tuesday, 3rd of August 1976. Afterwards, the procession headed from Western Beirut- as the area was called during the war- towards Al-Mathaf. Salem was switched to another car after entering Eastern Beirut area and the procession headed to Saint Nicolas Church in Ashrafieh where President of the Republic Elias Sarkis stated “I have lost you... I have lost a friend... Lebanon has lost you.” Khalil Salem was afterwards laid to rest in Btorram.

Part of the Statement ex-Premier Salim El-Hoss said about Khalil Salem:

“When the administration was torn to shreds, and the legal government was non-existent, he was there executing the duty to the fullest...I shall always remember Khalil as a most faithful friend, a most conscientious, honest, hard working and devoted civil servant. His greatest bequest was the example he set as a responsible citizen and a high-ranking government employee”.

The life of Khalil Salem in the city and the high-ranking positions he assumed failed to erase his hometown, Btorram, from his memory. He used to spend his time practicing agriculture and his interest in the education sector motivated him to fulfill his childhood dream of establishing a new school providing free education to the youth in his town. ●

SWITZERLAND

A UNIQUE EXAMPLE OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Switzerland, the cradle of the Red Cross and a globally recognized banking hub, is best reputed for its strict policy of neutrality, which has sheltered it from political turmoil. This has also set it apart from its European neighbors, making this landlocked mountainous country an important mediator in many international conflicts. Unlike any other country in the world, Switzerland does not have a full-time Head of State. Instead, it is ruled collectively by a seven-member Federal Council where presidency is rotated among ministers on an annual basis.

Under Switzerland's unparalleled system of direct democracy, the will of the people is the final national authority and thus people have the final say in their affairs. Yet, important political decisions are made in the bicameral Swiss legislature known as the Federal Assembly.

Federal Assembly

The Swiss Federal Assembly consists of two chambers:

- The 200-seat National Council representing the people.
- The 44-seat Council of States representing the cantons. A fixed number of seats is apportioned per canton, two for each of the 20 full cantons and one for each of the six half-cantons.

Term of Office

Elections to the National Council occur every four years.

Voting and Candidacy Age

The minimum age established by the law for voting in Switzerland is 18. In one canton, Glarus, it has been reduced to 16. Swiss citizens living overseas who are older than 18 are also allowed to vote on federal matters and, in some cantons, on cantonal matters. For these voters, registration through the local or nearest Swiss Consulate is compulsory. All citizens, 18 or older, have the right to run for office in national, cantonal, and communal elections unless individually disqualified.

Voting System

Members of the Council of States are elected directly in each canton by a majority voting, while the National Council members are elected under a system of proportional representation, depending on the population of each canton. Under this system seats are allocated



to the parties in proportion to the votes received. Only afterwards do the candidates with the highest number of votes take up the seats won by the parties

However, being a direct democracy, the ultimate political power resides with the people. Through referendums, citizens may decide to pass or veto legislation if they gather 50,000 signatures against the law within hundred days. They may even propose amendments to the Constitution through popular initiatives (citizen-proposed laws), provided that a double majority of people and cantons is provided.

Swiss legislation

Swiss legislation is passed in four steps:

- Draft by the administration
- Formal consultations that result in comments, demands modifications and sometimes alternate positions.
- Parliamentary debate and final version passed
- Possibility of a referendum: Strong parties may call for a referendum if their demands are not met. ☛



Dr. Hanna Saadah

FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a common and mysterious disorder that causes body to ache; affecting twice as many women as men. The mysterious body aches, which can vary in their severity and location, are aggravated by the slightest touch or pressure and are relieved either by rest or heat. Besides body aches, this disorder also causes profound fatigue, limits physical activity, disrupts sleep and mood, and thus restrains normal living.

Patients with fibromyalgia do not appear ill to casual observers and, therefore, are often misunderstood and mislabeled. They wake up hurting and the pains get worse as the day progresses, forcing them to take frequent rest, and limiting their physical and intellectual activity to a mere few hours per day. The patients feel as if they were carrying a heavy weight, causing their bodies and minds to become exhausted, in spite of their willingness to go on.

Fibromyalgia, which affects between 2% to 8% of the world's population, is equally prevalent in all countries and may develop at any time from childhood to adulthood to old age. Most patients report a lifelong history of pain and are prone to many other types of pain besides body aches. They often complain of headaches, painful menstruation, bowel and bladder pains, back and neck aches, chronic fatigue, constipation, diarrhea, anxiety, and depression.

The fibromyalgic pain is generated both peripherally and centrally. Recent, preliminary evidence suggests that the small, distant nerve endings suffer from what is medically known as a small-fiber peripheral neuropathy. More traditional evidence also suggests that the brain pain sensors are miscalibrated to feel more pain. This dysfunctional, central-pain-amplification, or allodynia, combined with hypersensitive peripheral nerve endings, are two cardinal features of the fibromyalgia syndrome. The word allodynia comes from Greek and means the other pain, i.e. the pain caused by things that should not cause pain, such as touch, slight pressure, or normal movement.

Family members of patients with fibromyalgia are eight to nine times more likely to complain about different types of chronic pains, thus suggesting a strong genetic predisposition. Twin studies suggest that genes and environment determine the risk of developing fibromyalgia and other functional pain disorders equally. Situational stressors, traumatic experiences, certain infections, arthritic disorders, and physical trauma can all trigger or worsen fibromyalgia. Unlike normal people, the brains of fibromyalgia patients show abnormally heightened activation of their pain centers in response to mild provocation with touch and pressure.

The diagnosis of fibromyalgia is clinical and based on having multiple body aches, a heightened sensitivity to applying physical pressure on muscles and soft tissues during the physical examination, experiencing inappropriate pain when the blood pressure cuff is inflated or when blood is drawn or when an injection is given, and

finding that all appropriate laboratory and radiological investigations are essentially normal. Extensive testing may be harmful because incidental abnormalities may provoke more anxiety and lead to more invasive, potentially risky procedures.

The fibromyalgic aches involve different body sites at different times and wax and wane with rest, stress, sleep, activities, and work load. They commonly involve the soft tissues of arms, legs, shoulders, neck, back, hands, and feet. Pains in the joints may also occur, but the joints do not show signs of inflammation such as swelling, heat, or redness. Squeezing, pushing, or pressing on the skin, muscles, ligaments, or joints provokes more intense and longer lasting pain than anticipated by the examiner. A small, accidental bump incurred during normal activity may provoke a great amount of pain and the pain may last much longer than usual.

Therapy for fibromyalgia requires a team approach. A combination of appropriate medication by an experienced physician, cognitive behavior therapy, exercise therapy, family and social support, scheduled periods of rest, different types of physical therapy, trigger point injections, acupuncture, electric nerve stimulation, and patient education can all be utilized to optimize response. Commonly used pain medications such as arthritis or analgesic pills, narcotics, and steroids are usually ineffective. Narcotics may even worsen the pain and thus drugs commonly used to reverse narcotic effects such as naltrexone may actually help the pains, reinforcing the notion of a disturbed central-pain-processing system.

Patient education emphasizes that the symptoms of fibromyalgia are not due to inflammation and that the disease does not lead to muscle and joint damage. Empowering patients through education and self-help may do more good than medication. A University of Michigan fibromyalgia education and self-help site is highly informative and may be accessed at: <https://fibroguide.med.umich.edu>.

Patients who have other painful conditions such as arthritis, neuralgias, peripheral neuropathy, and degenerative disk disease, may also suffer from fibromyalgia, which can amplify and worsen their primary pains. In such cases, management of the primary disorders may not provide enough relief unless the patients' fibromyalgia is addressed and treated separately. ●

BEST HOMEMADE TAN

Maya Nahhoul



Do you feel you need a tan? We all need that warming, energizing, mood lifting effect of the sun.. We can barely wait to get out of our clothes and let the sun do its magic on our skin. The sun possesses measurable health benefits, as it enhances the body's absorption of calcium and stimulates the production of vitamin D from the body's cholesterol stores. Because of these health benefits, ten to twenty minutes (depending on skin type) of unprotected sun exposure daily can in fact be relatively positive. Saying that, we should not forget that too much sun has its own dangers as well starting the appearance of dry and wrinkled skin and skin cancer. The sun's UVA and UVB rays can cause the skin to dry and age prematurely. By making your own suntan oil from natural ingredients, found in your pantry, you can minimize the bad effects of prolonged sun exposure.

Follow these steps to prepare your own unique suntan depending on your skin type:

For normal skin:

- 4 tbsp. sesame oil
- 4 tbsp. wheat-germ oil
- 8 tsp. hazelnut oil
- 8 tsp. walnut oil
- 10 drops of lavender essential oil

For dry skin:

- 4 tsp. avocado oil
- 4 tsp. hazelnut oil
- 4 tbsp. sesame oil
- 4 tsp. walnut oil
- 4 tsp. wheat-germ oil
- 6 drops of calendula essential oil
- 4 drops of patchouli essential oil

Mix all the ingredients together in a small bottle. It is important to shake the mixture well before each use as well, since the oils will separate when allowed to stand for long periods of time. Store the suntan oil in a cool, dry place out of direct sunlight.

For better results, you can exfoliate the skin before heading to the beach to remove dead cells and prepare your skin for better tanning.

Tips:

- Natural suntan oils will keep for about 2-3 months. Refrigerate for maximum freshness. Do not use oils that smell rancid or sour, as they have lost effectiveness.
- Do not add citrus essential oils to your suntan oil. They can cause brown spots to develop after sunbathing that can last for years or even a lifetime.
- Natural suntan oil is not waterproof, so be sure to reapply after swimming.
- If you are fair-skinned, stay out of the sun between 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 P.M., when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Stay hydrated and aim to drink 8 to 10 cups of water daily

Ingredients benefits:

- Hazelnut oil nourishes: The fast-penetrating, extremely light oil is one of the best oils for cosmetic use. It is high in vitamin E and unsaturated fatty acids, which nourish the skin.
- Walnut oil provides a golden glow: This oil enhances tanning while helping to protect the skin from UV damage.
- Avocado oil conditions and protects: Oil from the fleshy part of the avocado is very beneficial for dry skin, as it contains high levels of vitamins, lecithin and unsaturated fatty acids.
- Wheat-germ oil smoothes the skin: This light, golden-yellow oil has large amounts of vitamin A, D and E, which help to smooth the skin by protecting it from tiny dry lines and wrinkles, as well as from loss of elasticity.
- Sesame oil protects against harmful rays: Sesame oil, obtained by pressing the seeds of the sesame plant, provides the highest sun protection of all the natural oils. It is also very effective for softening and smoothing the skin.
- Coconut oil protects against harmful rays: Provides protection from damaging effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun. ☀️



Dr. Michel Nawfal
MD Mental Health Professional

PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES DURING PREGNANCY

Pregnancy is a challenging and changing experience for any woman. It is a sensitive time of growth for both herself as a mother-to-be and her baby. Even though all pregnancies share general similarities, each pregnancy is unique. Special shifts in the body, hormones, expectations, and attitude towards cultural pressures are what make pregnancy differ between women. Throughout the stages of pregnancy, a common ground among mothers-to-be is the experience of different psychological states.

The psychological changes that occur are mostly normal and expected, considering most pregnant women endure them, of course, to diverse extents. Every milestone of pregnancy triggers psychological changes in women. Mothers-to-be start facing psychological changes as soon as they discover that they have conceived. They may react to the news with joy and anticipation if, for example, the pregnancy was planned and desired. On the other hand, an unexpected pregnancy may bring upon chaotic emotions and thoughts.

During the first trimester, pregnant women often experience rapidly altering emotional states. In this stage, a woman's normal emotional highs and lows are heightened and magnified. Issues that normally seem insignificant may become irritating, depressing, and tearing for pregnant women. These mood swings are evident in some mothers-to-be more than others. The alternating mood usually depends on the woman's personality structure, emotional support, hormones, and environmental stress. Further, the first trimester is accompanied by a miscarriage risk of about 20%. This risk may induce the pregnant woman with feelings of worry and anxiety about whether or not the pregnancy will continue.

The intense emotions of the first trimester become lighter as a woman approaches the second trimester. During the fourth and sixth months of pregnancy, the fears of miscarriage and the physical discomfort of the first three months usually disappear. The sex drive of women may enhance at this stage, due to the increased vaginal lubrication and blood flow to the pelvic area. On the other hand, the second trimester may provoke women to worry about their weight gain. The extra weight put on often makes mothers-to-be feel unappealing and heavy. As a result, women may feel anxious about whether or not their partner still feels physically attracted to them.

Feelings of anticipation increase as mothers-to-be reach the third trimester. Expectant mothers start getting ready both physically and emotionally for childbirth. By this time, ambivalent feelings towards pregnancy are usually

settled. First time mothers may often feel concerned and worried when it comes to giving birth. They may also feel anxious about entering motherhood. The care and attention from the partner, family members, and friends tend to reassure expectant mothers. As a result, the last month of pregnancy makes many women feel special.

The psychological states induced by pregnancy may significantly affect the mother's well-being, along with the development of the child she is carrying. As the fetus is developing, it constantly receives messages from the mother. Studies have shown that a fetus gets chemical signals through the placenta, some of which include signs about the mother's mental state. Some research shows that babies of stressed mothers tend to be born prematurely, thus, making them in need of specialized medical care.

A recent study conducted to understand how a mother's psychological state affects the development of a fetus, screened pregnant women for depression before and after delivery. They also assessed how well the newly born babies were developing. Interestingly, their findings showed that what mattered to the babies' development was the consistency of the environment before and after birth. This means that infants that developed best were those who either had mothers that were constantly healthy or constantly depressed before and after birth. Consequently, what was shown to slow the babies' developing was actually the mother's alternating mental health (mothers that were healthy before birth then became depressed after, or vice-versa).

The nine months of pregnancy are psychologically demanding to every mother-to-be. Seeking advice from an appropriate professional such as a gynecologist or psychologist can help expectant mothers understand what they are going through. In order to cope better during this phase, a pregnant woman can look for support provided by her partner, family, and friends. It is vitally important for mother-to-be not to disregard her psychological well-being, for both her sake and her soon-to-be son or daughter. ●

THE MONTHLY INTERVIEWS

MAYA MARGIE YOUNES

HEAD OF MARKETING GROUP AT THE BLC BANK

How do you summarize your journey at BLC after more than a decade of work?

Years pass by in the blink of an eye. I came to BLC's Marketing Group twelve years ago. The team was too small back then, that included myself and only one assistant, and our scope of work was limited to project development and communication. Today, the team has grown to include twenty-four members and the functions have expanded to cover brand management, enterprise risk management and 24/7 call center services. The structure has also seen changes. I am currently Head of Marketing Group and a member of the BLC's management committee, which consists of twelve members, of whom only three are women. I climbed the ladder from the very bottom and I am happy to have worked my way upwards although my hard-won accomplishments were at times at the expense of my family and personal life.

To what extent are you capable of balancing between work and family?

I have recently participated in the Women in the Lead Conference in the presence of 150 women in leading positions and this matter has gained considerable attention as we were exchanging perceptions and experiences as working mothers. Personally, I believe that the concept of balancing family and professional responsibilities is a myth. Balance implies equal allocation of time and attention to both your home and your workplace. It requires you to give yourself equally to your office and family. But spending twelve hours a day in the office cannot be done without prejudice to your household and it will automatically put your family at an unfair disadvantage and give you zero time for yourself. I hardly ever get the chance to sit back and rest or exercise or enjoy a well-deserved vacation. Women in senior and advanced positions cannot rid themselves of the guilt they feel for failure to fulfill their obligations towards their families. I do not pretend to balance between the two; I try to manage, if I may say so, and to make it up to my children by spending quality time with them. I doubt



Maya Margie Younes

that my children would have been better off if I had been a stay-at-home mom. And I am not saying this to undermine the worth of stay-at-home mothers. On the contrary, I believe that the stay-at-home mother is a woman with a full-time job and huge responsibilities. I consider it a noble sacrifice to choose to stay out of the workforce to care for one's family. Yet, employed mothers can also serve as role models for their children and set an example for them in diligence and perseverance. They instill into their children's minds, from early age, that life is a laborious path and that excellence can only be reaped through hard work and dedication.

Speaking of women, can you provide more insight into the WE Initiative launched by BLC two years ago? Who first conceived the idea of extending outreach to women and what did the initiative hope to achieve?

The WE Initiative has transformed the internal culture at BLC and made it a pioneer in women empowerment by spearheading initiatives aimed to develop women's businesses and providing banking services and products tailored specifically for female segments. The initiative was inspired from our bank's general vision to support economy. Given that SMEs (small and medium enterprise) account for 90% of employment in the private sector, we deemed it wise to start by supporting this sector for

targeting SMEs would automatically translate into higher GDP and therefore push us closer towards fulfilling our vision. We worked under the SMEs umbrella to target women in business in particular and women from different walks of life in general. The idea also stemmed from the fact that women constitute an underserved segment in our society so we realized that empowerment should not only be extended to entrepreneurs and executives but to employees and stay-at-home mothers as well. Women alone make up around 51% of the population and are therefore a huge missed economic opportunity. International studies have shown that by bridging the gap between male and female employment, we can boost GDP by up to 22% in some cases. To this end, we partnered with a team of consultants from the World Bank's International Financial Corporation and leveraged on their expertise to conceptualize the banking services that would assist SMEs, run mainly by women.

We conducted a nationwide market research to assess the needs of women from different backgrounds and profiles. Focus groups helped us collect the needed data and develop a better understanding of the needs, challenges and frustrations of women in the male-dominated business world. We then submitted our business case to top management and this is how it all began. Since then, the initiative has been revolutionizing the traditional mindset on women entrepreneurs and women in general and it has become a mainstreamed culture inside our bank. We debunked the traditional image of banks as providers of loans and products and provided women, not only with funds, but also with a full-fledged program including education, training, networking opportunities and mentorship.

We also improved the performance of our banking service and adopted a more over-arching approach. When a woman seeks a service at a certain bank, she is often confronted with questions about her husband's job and assets rather than her own, as if the male shadow is always hovering around her. In our training, we made it a priority to alter this outlook and eliminate those gender-based biases, which we called unconscious biases, for they are the result of decades-long fallacies and stereotypes on the role and value of women. These were passed on from fathers to children until they became embedded and rampant in all societal contexts. We are not feminists or women's rights activists nor are we here to campaign for equality and condemn injustice. All we want is to grant women economic empowerment by creating equal opportunities of development and growth.

Did your initiative receive positive feedback?

The WE Initiative has received international recognition and BLC was widely acclaimed for being the first bank to be awarded a Vice Chairman seat at the Global Banking Alliance, presided by Tania Mousallem, Head of Strategic Development and Financial Management Group. The GBA consists of international banks and financial institutions working within both common and private initiatives to empower women and facilitate their inclusion in the business world and the financial platforms. Every year, we partake in the GBA summit to share experiences and expertise and highlight the mechanism we used to overcome bottlenecks and mainstream modern conceptions about women in business. We are both speakers and panelists in many international conferences and carry out study tours to teach best practices.

At local level, we have seen a significant transformation in the prevailing norms and the initiative has helped generate more publicity for BLC. Our program has awakened a sleeping giant, creating a new market trend. Our social media presence is faring well. Statistics have also shown that women are increasingly turning to BLC as their bank of reference, which is exactly what we had set our eyes on. In 2014, we embarked on the 3rd edition of our Brilliant Lebanese Awards with two categories, the 'Business of the Year' and the 'Woman Entrepreneur of the Year.' During the first two editions, we have received more than 260 applications, half of which are of women entrepreneurs.

What sets women apart from men and what are the skills that they must have to gain a competitive edge and reach excellence in the business industry?

Historically, men have always been domineering in the business world and women have arrived a little late to this sector. We have been to Australia, New York, Washington, Turkey and many other places, and this phenomenon is acknowledged everywhere. Our societies are riddled with stereotypes confining women within narrow frames such as education, poetry, fashion, etc. But the reality is far from this underestimation and women have earned preeminent positions across all sectors including business, banking, engineering and medicine. There's a quote, from an unknown source, which says it all 'Women don't do different things in business; they do the same things differently'. By nature, women have the tendency to be risk averse, to ensure the safety of their family and surrounding. Most of them need perseverance and confidence. They must have faith in their potential and there must be a conducive and incubating environment that helps them take their first strides despite all biases and barriers. ●

THE ANTELIAS CULTURAL MOVEMENT

Throughout its history, Lebanon has seen the emergence of several initiatives, activities and councils that presented themselves as devoted platforms aimed at fostering culture and intellectual thought. The Antelias Cultural Movement spearheaded such initiatives, ranking relatively high on Lebanon's cultural scene and toiling consistently to promote national cultural activities and commitment to social justice and human causes, without submission to narrow political and sectarian alignments.

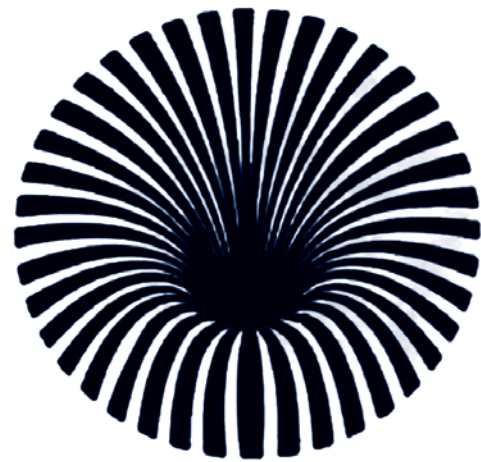
Establishment

The movement arose in 1978 as an outcry against the terror and extremism that riddled the Lebanese Civil War. It gained official recognition as a non-profit cultural organization in 1984 and Dr. Issam Khalifeh serves currently as its Secretary General. Although nestled within the Maronite Monastery of Saint Elias, the movement does not operate in the capacity of a religious or partisan movement or club, but rather with an autonomous secularist orientation.

The Antelias Cultural Movement aims to provide a favorable cultural climate that establishes the grounds for open and civilized dialogue between all segments and movements in various fields with a view to consolidate national unity on the basis of independence, prosperity and openness as well as to promote the values of democracy, freedom, peace and human rights. Providing knowledge of a quality that befits educated men is what the Movement hopes to achieve by bringing together all societal segments.

Activities

Functioning on several fronts and relying on the concerted action of its members, the Antelias Cultural Movement organizes several conferences, lectures and activities, all of which have cultural focus. At the forefront of its fixed annual cultural events is the most-anticipated Festival of Lebanese Books, which ranks highest in significance. The Festival is held on the first Saturday of March and hosts a wide range of activities over two consecutive weeks. Of these activities we mention the following:



الحركة الثقافية - انطلياس

The Antelias Cultural Movement

The Antelias Book Fair

This exhibition is an opportunity to celebrate litterateurs and writers and revive the role of books in broadening knowledge and opening new horizons. The event is central to the publishing year and it encourages both public and private sectors to exert all efforts necessary to publicize the book industry and inculcate reading habits. Proceeds from the fair are the sole source of income that guarantees the financial survival of the Movement and the financing of other activities (conferences, book signings, honorary celebrations, etc.).

Particular attention is paid to school and university students through different morning activities and the Fair becomes a stage for encounters between student communities and famous names in sports and arts. In addition to its educational, social and psychological discussions, the exhibition features a number of plays, holds general knowledge quizzes and displays its latest publications on different stands.

Honoring cultural gurus

Faithful to a long-established tradition, the Festival pays tribute to Lebanese towering cultural figures in due recognition of the literary, scientific and intellectual contributions they have offered to our cultural heritage over the past decades. Honorary seminars are held to celebrate them and their biographies are documented and featured in a yearly booklet entitled Lebanon's Cultural Gurus.

Not long ago, the Movement decided to add Arab high achievers to its list of celebrated figures, thereby saluting a number of Arab historians and authors in a symbolic gesture that reiterates the commitment of both the Cultural Movement and Lebanon to Arabism and to cross-cutting Arab issues. The Movement's 33rd Festival concluded this year with a tribute evening commemorating the late unforgettable music icon, Wadih Safi, in the presence of an elite of artists and intellectuals.

National Cultural Conference

Every year, the Antelias Cultural Movement holds a national conference on major Lebanese issues and invites members of the intelligentsia, including academics, writers and researchers from Lebanon and the region, to join the discussion and debate the subject in a sound and scientific manner.

Future plans

Despite the difficulties it faces, particularly financially amid the clear decline in revenue from books, the Movement is planning to issue the Lebanon's Cultural Gurus encyclopedia, stressing once again the significance of such publications in documenting

the intellectual and cultural contribution of Lebanese thinkers and innovators.

Challenges

The Movement bemoans the declining cultural presence in the Lebanese life and the apathy of the new generation towards cultural and intellectual areas. This, coupled with the decrease in the Book Fair's proceeds and the failure to find sufficient funding resources, jeopardizes the survival of the Movement. Members of the Movement ascribe these drawbacks to the ailing economy and the difficulties of providing adequate subsidies, the lack of which reduce the frequency of people's visits to the fair. This, in turn, affects the involvement of publishers and limits their production. ●●



US TRIP

From Barcelona, we moved to Gibraltar then the Azores, where we made a short stop. Remaining on board, we admired from a distance the beauty of multi-colored oleanders. To us, they seemed like islands covered with flowers. Soon afterwards, we departed from those islands while the mighty sea was still quiet. A few hours later, a severe storm blew upon us: lightning, thunder, heavy winds and high waves! I felt that we were going to see death in the Atlantic. A small ship manipulated by tides; its bow sinks under water then floats again on its surface. Each time the front of the ship sank into water, something inside would tell me that it won't drift afloat anew and I would start to pray and solicit forgiveness as regrets eat me up inside. Severe seasickness hit me. I was carried to my room where I gave myself up to death and recalled my mother's farewell words: 'I will see you again, deary son.'

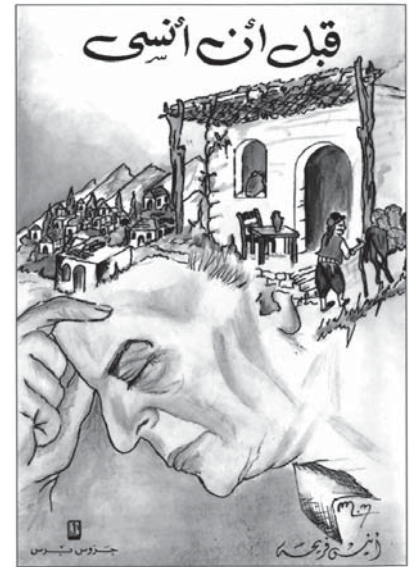
No, I will not see your face again, mother. I will die here. I remained bed-ridden for more than one day and stopped eating and drinking. I was awaiting death.

The storm calmed down and Roma survived the sinking. I thanked the Lord for his generosity and two days later we asked: 'How long do we still need to arrive? We are tired of traveling by sea.' They said "two days."

No sooner had the dawn of the day of arrival to shore broke than I was all dressed and on board. I could not see the Statue of Liberty as we were sailing down a stream with land to both our left and right. 'Where are we?', we asked the sailor. 'On our way to Providence, capital of Rhode Island.'

'What about New York?' We inquired. 'You will get there by train. It leaves this port at 9:00 am.'

As I started to look at the signs and banners posted on the sides of the stream- whether it was a bay or a river, I could not tell- a large board reading 'Hot Dogs' drew my attention. What could it possibly be? Another board read 'Lucky Strike'. What could that possibly mean also? Are they welcoming us? ●●



ARE EIGHT GLASSES OF WATER A DAY A NECESSITY?

Myth

For years we have all heard and abided by the recommendation to drink 8 glasses of water a day.

Fact

The health benefits of water are uncontested, but how much is the 8 glasses rule a necessity to our diet?

Our doctors have always stressed the importance of staying hydrated, most of them suggesting that 8 to 9 cups would do the trick. This amount of water has also been recommended by every diet. Not only does water help our bodies lose weight, it gives us better skin, and prevents urinary tract infections. But none of these benefits have any scientific evidence to back them; nor does the suggestion that the amount of water required by our bodies on a daily basis is 8 cups.

The necessity of water to our bodies can never be underestimated. However, the amount that is required depends on a number of factors. Physical activity and environment are strong determinants. During exercise the body's need for water is exacerbated by sweating, and weather conditions such as heat and dryness also have the same effect. The amount of water present in our food also makes a difference, as foods rich in sodium are likely to make us dehydrated. Other foods, like fruits and vegetables help hydrate the body and decrease our need for water. Finally, illnesses and pregnancy also increase the need for water.

In an attempt to debunk the myth of the 8 glasses per day, a Scottish physician, Dr. Margaret McCartney, highlighted that efforts to encourage people to drink more, such as the Hydration for Health initiative that campaigns the health benefits of water, is sponsored by the French food company Danone, which is itself the producer of the bottled waters Volvic and Evian. Her argument is that the increased hype about drinking water could be driven by companies in search of profit. Regardless of the validity of this claim, it is important to note that drinking too much water beyond a certain extent, can even be harmful. Large amounts of water cause sodium levels to drop, the effect of which is borne by our brain cells, potentially leading to decreased consciousness and hallucinations.

The importance of staying well-hydrated is undeniable. But whether we actually need 8 glasses of water a day has not been proven. Hydration needs differ among people and between different circumstances. Recommendations from the Mayo Clinic indicate that water is needed by the body until it is able to replace water lost during the day. Whether this hydration is retrieved from water is not crucial as hydration from other fluids and foods also count. ●

WOMEN OF BABYLON

GENDER AND REPRESENTATION IN MESOPOTAMIA

ZAINAB BAHRANI

Women of Babylon is a sophisticated art-historical study written by Zainab Bahrani, an Edith Porada Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archeology at Columbia University. Published by Routledge in its English edition in 2001, the book was later published in Arabic in 2013 by Dar Cadmus.

Despite visual and textual evidence standing the test of time in areas such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, Iran and Syria, the historical manuscripts and antiquities that could provide insight on women and gender-related concepts in the ancient world prior to ancient Greece remained for long a neglected research area. The lack of due attention catalyzed the need for this book, which investigates feminist representations based on modern critical theories on gender, psychoanalysis and historical criticism which, all combined, provide a methodical structure that not only triggers in-depth exploration of this ancient culture but also embarks on deriving lessons from the past.

The first chapter outlines an overview of the feminist theory and how it has evolved over the past three decades in the areas of humanities and sociology. Starting her book by raising the question “what is women’s history?”, Bahrani explains that the most common definition of the term has often positioned women in the household and family space and men in the much wider space of employment and ruling, blaming androcentrism for the misconceptions that shrouded the history of women. She discusses in detail the different emphases and concerns of the three so-called waves of feminist scholarship, from the ‘60s to the present time. But she observes that the study of ancient societies presents a different set of problems than are found in contemporary societies, the focus of most feminist scholars.

The author addresses the question of how woman, gender, and femininity in a past culture are accessed through the visual record in “Envisioning Difference”. She seems critical of the application of “art for art’s sake, a view that is European and modern and that “ideologies of gender are inherent in various representations, and it is here that an engendered reading can enrich and diversify the standard focus on a coercive state ideology still preferred by Near Eastern scholarship”

Chapter 3 explores the gender structure in Mesopotamian culture through focus on the body and nudity. In Bahrani’s opinion, “It is necessary to study the body in art as a representational sign, and not as a simple reflection of real and living bodies in antiquity” (p. 40). This chapter

makes significant observations on the differences between masculine and feminine visual and literary images.

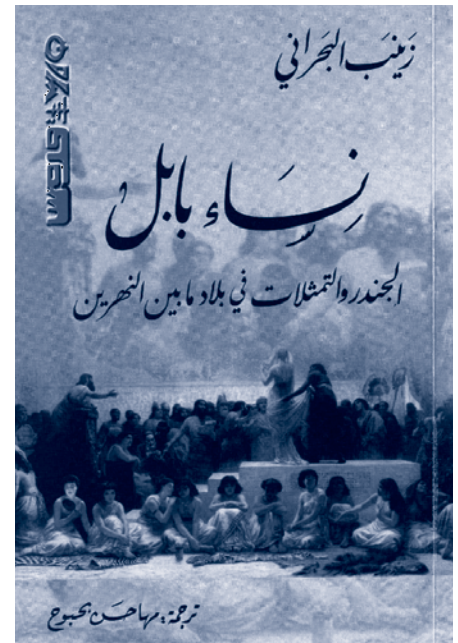
Mesopotamia’s female nudity was chiefly associated with sexual seduction. While female bodies were often displayed in frontal poses for the eye to better examine the woman’s sexual organs, masculine nudity was used for iconic purposes, sometimes to convey negative connotations such as death or defeat or positive ones such as masculine power and heroism.

Most striking in ancient manuscripts is that, despite the many terms referring to certain parts of the anatomy, the term ‘nudity’ was non-existent. And despite the depiction of the female body as a symbol of allure and seduction in Mesopotamia, the Greeks rejected this attribute staunchly. Both cultures praised the female form but each using distinct ways.

Bahrani shed light on the paramount role of myths in determining the cultural hierarchy of a certain community and it is here that the significance of goddess Ishtar in Assyrian and Babylonian culture is highlighted. A special infatuation was developed with this goddess of love and war, which possessed at the same time a sexually seductive nature and a propensity for violence. Assyriology suggested that Ishtar was hermaphroditic, but how this feature was ascribed to the goddess remained somewhat unclear and was likely rooted in her use of weapons. Bahrani criticizes the opinions that have wrongly emphasized Ishtar’s hermaphroditism and argued that her transgressions worked to clarify gender roles for Mesopotamians by delineating what constituted the boundaries of gendered behaviors.

The last chapter explores how the remarkable archaeological finds in the nineteenth century influenced the newly emerging discipline of art history.

All in all, the book is a landmark study that serves as valuable instructive reference for people wishing to gain insight into issues of women and gender in ancient Near Eastern art and literature. ●



STORIES FROM THE ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

From the story of *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, to the story of the *Fisherman and the Genie*, to *Ali Cogia, A Merchant of Baghdad* to the Little Hunchbacked, Nadine Khoury collected some of the most enchanting stories told by the vizier's daughter, Scheherazade, to King Shahryar during the legendary 1001 Arabian nights into a single book entitled '*Stories from the One Thousand and One Nights*'.

Published by Academia International in 2008, the book introduces children to the charm and enchanting mysteries of the Orient through five folk tales that have delighted thousands of readers across the globe, imprinting on their minds vivid images and faithful depictions of Oriental life and customs.

"...Once upon a time, there lived, in a distant Persian city, two brothers called Ali Baba and Qassim. Contrary to Qassim, Ali Baba was terribly poor. He gained his livelihood by cutting wood in a neighboring forest and hawking it about the town on three mules.

Ali Baba went one day to the forest, as usual, and saw from a distance a band of robbers numbering forty in all. The robbers followed their captain to the bottom of the rock, at the very spot where grew the tree in which Ali Baba was concealed. The captain slowly and distinctly pronounced these words, 'Open, Sesame!' whereupon a door in the rock opened.

As soon as the robbers were out of sight, Ali Baba used the magic words 'Open, Sesame!', which he had heard the captain of the band of robbers call out, whereupon the door flew wide open. Ali Baba was astonished to see great quantities of gold and silver coins in the cave and refused to leave before loading a fraction of the riches he found on his three mules.

A few days later, Qassim found out about his brother's good fortune and his greed and envy lead him to rush to the rock and utter the words 'Open, Sesame!'. He collected sacks of gold drew near to the door. But his thoughts were so full of avaricious schemes that he did not recollect the important words. Qassim was thus stuck inside and failed to escape the thieves who found him and killed.

Ali Baba forefelt a calamity and set out for the cave where he saw the body of his brother hanging to the right and the rest to the left of the entrance so he pulled it out of the cave. Finding no trace of the corpse, the forty thieves realized that someone had discovered their secret cave: Ali Baba. ●



FAMILIES OF HUSSRUM, BATTEEKH AND AL-TEEN

Several Lebanese families are named after fruits. Why they were fruit-inspired is uncertain but chances are the members of these families were either fruit-growers or fruit-lovers.

Hussrum: 40 Sunni members

Hussrum is an Arabic word denoting those small, green and sour round berries before they ripen into sweet grapes. It is widely used in popular sayings and verses.

The Hussrums make up a small Beirutian family, not exceeding 40 members all of whom professing the Sunni sect. They are mainly present in Dar El-Mraisseh and in fewer numbers in Ras Beirut and Msaytbeh.

Batteekh: 275 Sunni and Maronite members

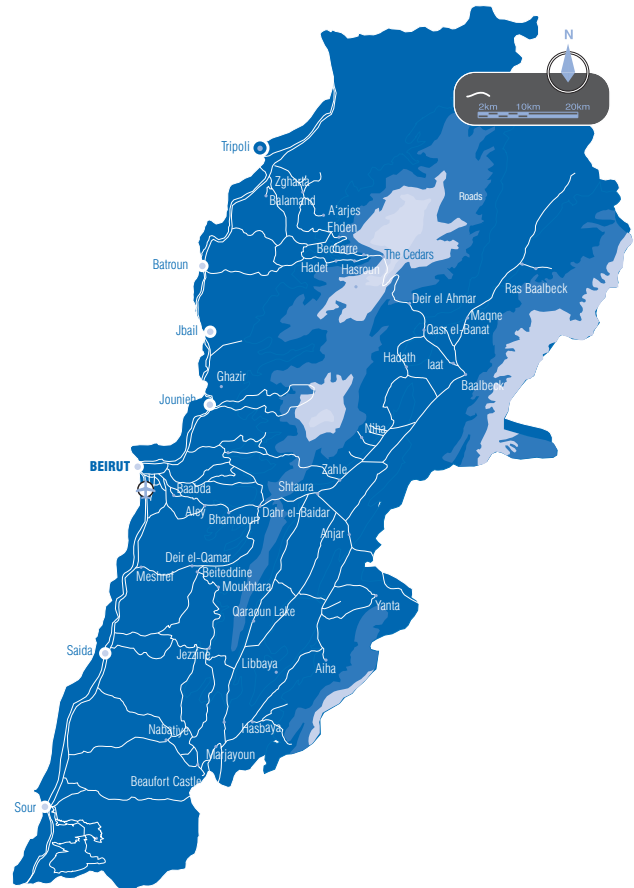
Batteekh is the Arabic equivalent of 'watermelon'. The family consists of 275 members distributed mainly in Akkar and Beirut, with Sunni constituting a majority of its members and Maronites a smaller community.

Sunni: 210 members

- Akkar El-Atiqa, Akkar: 175
- Mqaybleh, Akkar: 35

Maronite: 65 members

- Al-Qbayyat, Akkar: 45
- Mdawwar and Marfa, Beirut: 20



Al-Teen: 45 Protestant and Greek Orthodox members

In Arabic, 'Al-Teen' means figs, a summer fruit most preferred by nightingales. This family consists of 45 members only, some of whom are Protestants and some are Greek Orthodox. ●

HOKR AD-DAHIRI

ONLY A BRIDGE AWAY FROM SYRIA

Since the start of the Syrian conflict, media spotlight has been cast on several Lebanese border towns affected by the crisis. One of these is the town of Hokr Ad-Dahiri.

Etymology

Hokr Ad-Dahiri is a compound name made of two morphemes: 'hokr' or 'hakoura', meaning a small fenced area that surrounds a house. This description fits the town, which stretches across no more than 25 hectares; 'dahiri' is a morpheme named after a man from the Ad-Dahiri family who used to own the town.

Location

Hokr ad-Dahiri is located in the As-Sahl area of the Akkar Qada'a. The coastal town is 125 km from Beirut and may be reached by taking the following route: Beirut → Tripoli → Al-Abdeh → Al-Arida → Al-Smaqiyeh → Hokr Ad-Dahiri. It is situated on the banks of the Kebir River near the historic bridge that connects Lebanon to Syria and serves as a pathway for hundreds of Lebanese farmers crossing into their lands in the neighboring country.

Population and houses

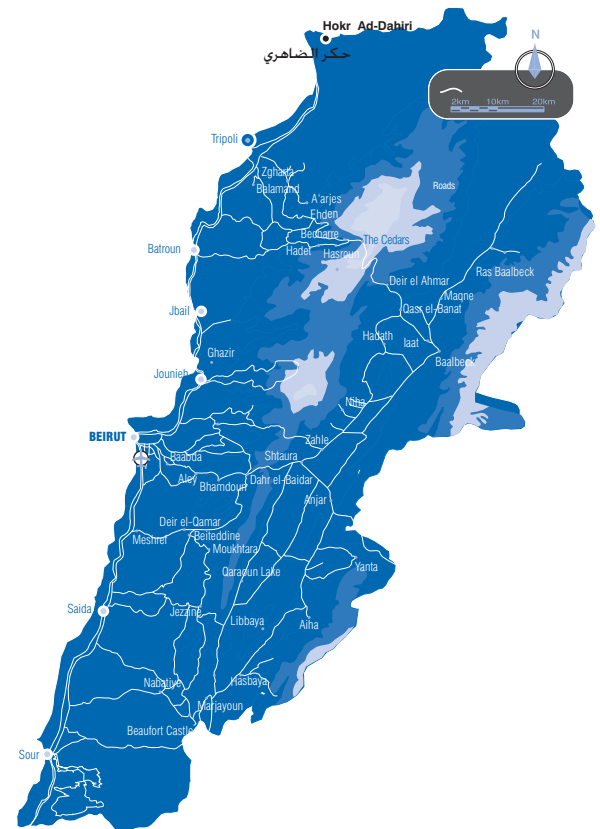
The population registered in the town's personal status records is estimated at 550. A majority of 83% is Alawite, the remaining being Sunni. There are roughly 60 houses in the town.

Voters

The number of registered voters stood at 174 in 2000, 91 of whom cast their ballots. It rose to 289 in 2005 with 195 exercising their voting right. In 2009, the number of eligible voters totaled 292 in Hokr Ad-Dahiri, 222 of whom cast their ballots. By 2013, the total number of registered voters was 330. These are distributed as follows:

Alawite voters

- Al-Ali: 72
- Ibrahim: 49
- Al-Khalil: 48
- Iskandar: 30
- Kharamandi: 18
- Hassan: 16
- Saadin: 15
- Daoud: 12
- Shama'a: 12



Sunni voters

- Ayyash: 36
- Shakish: 13
- Khaled: 8

Local authorities

There is no municipal council in Hokr Ad-Dahiri and the local government is represented by the Muktar and the Ikhtiyariah body.

Economic life

In addition to agriculture, illegal activities such as smuggling goods from Syria are the main sources of livelihood for Hokr Ad-Dahiri's residents.

Problems

Being a border town, Hokr Ad-Dahiri straddles both Lebanon and Syria, spreading across 25 hectares in the former and 285 hectares in the latter. Residents commute on a daily basis to cultivate their lands in Syria and agriculture is often hindered during crises when the Lebanese and Syrian armies tighten up transit measures. ●●

SAINT LUCIA AT A GLANCE

Boasting lush rainforest, scores of golden beaches and a multicultural population, the tropical Caribbean island of St Lucia frequently changed hands between British and French colonists until it was finally ceded to the British in 1814. St Lucia achieved independence in 1979 and is currently member of the Commonwealth.

Location and area

St Lucia is located amongst the Windward Islands in the Eastern Caribbean and is famous for its twin volcanic mountains (the Pitons). The island country covers a land area of 617 km².

Population

St Lucia has an estimated population of 178,000 (UN, 2012)

Religion

St Lucians identify themselves as members of a Christian denomination, particularly Catholicism (61 %), though there are small communities of Muslims, Hindus.

Major Language

Being a former British colony, English is the official and commercial language in St Lucia. Yet, the influence of French settlers lives on in the patois spoken in the country

Economy

Historically, the cultivation of bananas was the major source of foreign revenue for St Lucia and thousands of islanders made a living off the fruit. However, over the past 15 years, St Lucians have been lamenting the decline in the once booming banana industry, with exports dropping from 132,000 tons per year in 1992 to 42,000 in 2004 due to the loss of preferential trade agreements with the EU (BBC, August 2005). Since, tourism has replaced agriculture as a more significant contributor to economic momentum and the



island's otherworldly scenery and tropical climate have been drawing scores tourists from across the globe. Its services-based economy accounts for 80.13% of GDP.

Political System

Since independence national politics has been dominated by the United Workers Party (UWP) and the St Lucia Labor Party (SLP). The UWP were the majority party throughout the 1980s and most of the 1990s, but the SLP returned to power under Kenny Anthony, the current Prime Minister in 1997. Queen Elizabeth serves as Head of State and is represented by Governor General Pearlette Louisy. ●

JUNE 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

Suicide bombings to the forefront anew, presidential vacuum continues and the Union Coordination Committee stages strikes and urges salary scale approval. These are the major headlines that marked June 2014 and below is the digest of the month's daily events.

June 1

- During a ceremony held in Tripoli to commemorate the 27th anniversary of the assassination of Rashid Karami, Former Minister Faisal Karami stresses that the nomination of Samir Geagea for presidency brings shame on justice and democracy and torpedoes coexistence pacts.

- Maronite Patriarch Mar Bechara Boutros al-Rai returns to Lebanon after concluding his visit to Jerusalem, which drew dissenting reactions among the Lebanese.

June 2

- MP Walid Jumblat defends Patriarch al-Rai's right to visit Jerusalem and slams al-Rai's critics, stressing that the boycott policy has jeopardized Palestine.

- Patriarch al-Rai meets former President of the Republic Michel Suleiman.

Speaker Nabih Berri heads back to Lebanon after a private visit to Italy.

- Minister of Education and Higher Education Elias Abou Saab adjourns official exams for five days and promises stern measures should the Union Coordination Committee refuse to participate in the exams.

June 3

- The financial public prosecutor files a lawsuit against Head of the Fund for the Displaced, Fadi Aramouni, on charges of embezzling public funds and refers him to the first investigative judge in Beirut.

- Omar Bakri Fustoq charged with affiliation to terrorist organizations.

June 4

- US Secretary of State, John Kerry, arrives in Lebanon and holds separate meetings with Speaker Nabih Berri, PM Tamam Salam and Patriarch al-Rai. Kerry also urges the election of a strong president that meets the demands of the Lebanese.

- During a visit he paid to Speaker Nabih Berri, MP General Michel Aoun, accompanied with MP Elie Ferzli, announces that he is weighing the participation in the legislative session to discuss the salary scale topic.

- Father kills his 17-year-old daughter in Bebnine following a dispute over her marriage.

June 5

- Minister of Social Affairs Rashid Derbas announces that Lebanon has stopped receiving new Syrian refugee arrivals.

- Head of the Loyalty to Resistance Bloc, MP Mohammad Raad, reiterates the need to elect a president that would cling to the resistance.

June 6

- Saad Hariri funds façade restoration works at the Syria Street in Tripoli.

- In a televised speech commemorating late scholar Sheikh Mustafa Qassir al-Ameli, Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah denies his party's alleged pursuit of tripartite power-sharing, assuring that the French were the first to raise this proposition in Iran.

- The Special Tribunal for Lebanon to resume trials against those charged with the assassination of Rafik Hariri on June 28.

June 7

- "We want to elect a President of the Republic, not to appoint a Mutasarrif", says Lebanese Force Leader Samir Geagea.

- In an interview with the Voix du Liban, Minister of Environment Mohammad Mashnouq predicts extension of the term of Parliament.

- Future Movement MPs view that holding parliamentary elections before presidential ones would be adventurous.

June 8

- Patriarch al-Rai says in his sermon that assigning the government presidential functions is dangerous violation of the Charter.

- The Lebanese Option Party commemorates the death of Hachem Salman and head of the party Ahmad Al-Asaad considers Hezbollah to be the ultimate authority in the country instead of the state.

- Investigations reveal the identity of the molester who threw the body of the 5-year-old Syrian boy Mohammad Khawli in a garbage bin after raping and killing him.

June 9

- Parliament adjourns its sixth session earmarked to elect a new President until June 18 due to lack of quorum, with only 63 MPs attending.

- The Lebanese Forces Leader, Samir Geagea, proposes agreeing on two consensual names other than himself and electing one of them in Parliament, voicing his support of the Bkerki list including Demianos Kattar, Roger Deeb and Ziad Bared.

- Minister of Education and Higher Education Elias Abou Saab reiterates that official exams will be held on time even if Parliament fails to approve the pay scale and the Educational Inspection calls on public principals and teachers to participate in the said exams or else incur responsibility.

- The Future Parliamentary Bloc reiterates that the approval of the pay scale in its current form will lead the country into bankruptcy and transform it into a failing state.

- Mount Lebanon's Judge of Summary Matters, Hassan Hamdan, issues a restraining order protecting Tamara Horeissi from the abuse of her husband Hussein Ftouni until the judiciary resolves the matter.

- The Internal Security Forces celebrates its 153rd anniversary.

- MP Walid Jumblat reiterates his rejection of the approval of the pay scale because of the uncalculated repercussions it has on economy.

June 10

- Parliament adjourns its session scheduled to approve the pay scale until June 19 due to lack of quorum.

- Minister of Education and Higher Education Elias Abou Saab agrees to postpone official exams for another 24 hours after coming to terms with the Union Coordination Committee, which will participate in the exams but abstain from correcting them before the approval of the pay scale. Speaker Nabih Berri tries to pull off a mediation settlement saying "official exams cannot be held in this climate."

- Farid Geagea, Father of the Lebanese Forces leader, Samir

Geagea, dies at the age of 96.

- In an interview with Al-Arabiya, MP Walid Jumblat reports that he will relay to Saad Hariri his intention not to elect Michel Aoun nor Samir Geagea, viewing the "strong president theory" to be a faulty theory.

- Al-Quds Al-Arabi cited the Future Movement Secretary General, Ahmad Hariri, as saying "it is in the interest of the Future Movement to have a strong Christian president such as General Michel Aoun", but the Movement denies that there is any truth to the rumor.

- The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs denies to have sought tripartite power-sharing in Lebanon as alleged by Nasrallah, stressing that it supports the Lebanese balance derived from the Taef Accord.

- The Maronite patriarchate denies having in its possession a list of its preferred presidential candidates, in response to what Geagea said earlier.

June 11

- Grand Mufti, Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Qabbani, slams the Future Movement and former PM Fouad Seniora during a meeting with Sunni scholars saying "I do not fear the Grand Serail nor do I fear those inside it or those protecting it." His position came in response to the meeting held by the anti-Mufti Islamic Higher council at the Grand Serail in the presence of PM Tamam Salam and former PMs Najib Mikati and Fouad Seniora who allegedly decided to take the measures necessary to isolate the Grand Mufti.

- General Michel Aoun meets MP Suleiman Frangieh who reports that the country's top Christian position cannot be filled by a powerless candidate.

- "We have not agreed on the pay scale in the first place to turn against

it and the division is not over the scale itself, but rather over the hasty policy," says former PM Fouad Seniora in response to Speaker Nabih Berri.

- MP Walid Jumblat reports that he will neither vote for the Lebanese Army Commander nor for the Governor of Banque du Liban.

June 12

- The anti-Qabbani Higher Islamic Council urges PM Tamam Salam to call on the Council as soon as possible to elect a new Mufti for the Republic.

- The Cabinet convenes for the third time since the presidential vacuum yet fails to agree on its work mechanism.

June 13

- Former PM Saad Hariri meets Minister of Public Health, Wael Bou Faour, in Morocco and the two agree on a soon-to-happen meeting between Hariri and Jumblat.

- Tripoli's Al-Salam Mosque officially reopens after it was severely damaged in a deadly blast last year.

June 14

- The town of Al-Tufail comes under shells fired by the Syrian army.

- The Agricultural Scientific Research Authority warns from heat wave and potential wildfires.

June 15

- Kuwaiti Parliament Speaker meets his Lebanese counterpart on his official visit to Lebanon and the latter bemoans the days of Sykes-Picot in his welcoming speech.

- The Lebanese Forces Leader continues to receive condolences over the death of his father. Saudi and Qatari Ministers of Foreign Affairs offer their sympathy by telephone.

June 16

- Minister of the Interior and Municipalities visits General Michel Aoun in his residence in Al-Rabiyah and assures that the dialogue with Aoun has led to political stability.
- The UNHCR reports that the number of registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon has hit 1,047,898.
- 58,678 students sit for the Brevet official exams.

June 17

- In his interview on OTV, General Michel Aoun denies having broached the presidential elections with Saad Hariri when he met him and says that he can guarantee Hariri's political security if he returns to Lebanon, through dialogue with those influencing his security.
- Baccalaureate exams start in both Life and General Science branches.

June 18

- The Special Tribunal for Lebanon launches its second work round in the presence of Bassil Fleihan's wife.
- "Hariri did not entrust Aoun with his political security," says the Lebanese Forces Leader Samir Geagea. The Future Movement MPs view that Aoun's words assure the involvement of his allies in the assassinations.
- MP Walid Jumblat meets former President Michel Suleiman in Paris.
- MP Suleiman Frangieh reports that parliamentary elections can be held without a president.

June 19

- Former President of the Republic Michel Suleiman meets his French counterpart Francois Hollande at the Elysees Palace and stresses that he will continue to practice politics either through a centrist bloc or by establishing a political party.

Suleiman also voices fears over the presidential vacuum dragging longer than two months.

- Parliament will remain in open sessions after failure to approve the pay scale due to lack of quorum amidst boycott of sessions by the March 14 Forces and the Union Coordination Committee proceeds with its ongoing strike.
- Israeli sources suggest that the Abdallah Azzam Brigades is plotting a potential assassination at the Ain el-Helwi camp. The plot reportedly targets the Director General of Lebanon's General Security Major General Abbas Ibrahim.

● The Special Tribunal for Lebanon listens to arguments from the defense counsel.

PM Tamam Salam inaugurates the Arab Economy Forum assuring that the efforts are under way to elect a new president and stressing that his government will not allow manipulation of Lebanon's stability and security.

● The Syndicate of Private Hospitals reveals that the outstanding funds owed by the official social security entities to hospitals have exceeded LBP 1200 billion.

June 20

● A suicide bomber blows himself up in a car laden with 35 kilograms of explosives at an ISF checkpoint in Dahr el-Baydar killing an ISF member and injuring 33 other people, both civilians and members of the military. The Director General of Lebanon's General Security Major General Abbas Ibrahim reports that he was the target of the bombing, an allegation refuted by the Director General of the Internal Security Forces.

● The Intelligence Branch and the General Security crack down on two

Hamra hotels and arrest a number of terror suspects.

- The Amal Movement cancels its first National Conference for Mukhtars scheduled at the UNESCO building in Beirut amid security warnings of terrorist plots targeting Speaker Nabih Berri.
- PM Tamam Salam chairs a security meeting at the Grand Serail to stay abreast of the latest security developments. The Lebanese Army Commander, General Jean Qahwaji, reassures that the security situation is under control.
- MP Walid Jumblat meets former PM Saad Hariri in Paris.

June 21

- Patriarch al-Rai cancels the commemoration mass of Nabil El-Alam.
- Mahmoud Jamaledine, the ISF Lieutenant killed in a suicide bombing that targeted a checkpoint in Dahr El-Baydar, is laid to rest in his hometown Saadnayel.
- Gunmen, reportedly affiliated to an official security apparatus, track the Minister of State for Administrative Development in the Beqa'a town of Ablah.

June 22

- PM Tamam Salam returns to Lebanon after his one visit to Kuwait where he met the Kuwaiti Head of State and a number of officials. A ministerial delegation accompanied Salam during his visit.
- Sheikh Mohammad Ali Al-Jouzou says Hezbollah has become a symbol of terrorism in Lebanon and Syria, and soon in Iraq and the entire world.
- The Lebanese Army arrests Omar Al-Satem, cousin of terrorist Qoutayba Al-Satem, at a checkpoint in Hrabta, Al-Labwi.

June 23

- A suicide bomber blows himself up in Chatila at midnight killing a member of General Security member and slightly injuring twenty other people.

- “No matter how costly, the investment in security remains less costly than the loss of innocent lives,” says Speaker Nabih Berri before Mukhtars at his residence in Ain el-Tineh, calling for the recruitment of 5000 security members and reiterating that Lebanon survives all tornados.

- MP Walid Jumblat calls on the protection of the Lebanon proclaimed by the French General Henri Gouraud before it is too late.

- The office of religious scholar Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah declares Saturday the first day of the holy month of Ramadan and Dar El-Fatwa calls on Muslims to sight the Ramadan Crescent Friday.

June 24

- The Lebanese Forces Leader Samir Geagea says after meeting Patriarch Al-Rai that nobody has the right to disrupt the country in favor of their presidential chances.

- The Abdallah Azzam Brigades claims responsibility for the bombings in both Dahr El-Baydar and Chatila.

- MP Suleiman Frangieh reports that the presidential elections won't take place and that Lebanon is heading in the direction of extending Parliament's term.

- French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, receives former PM Saad Hariri at the Ministry.

June 25

- A Saudi Suicide bomber detonates himself during a security raid in the Duroy Hotel on western

Beirut's seaside Raouche, injuring a number of security members.

- MP Samir Jesr urges the residents of Tripoli not to be lead astray by the delusions of self-security.

- STL President Judge Sir David Baragwanath continues his tour of Lebanon tour and meets a number of Lebanese officials.

- The Lebanese Army arrests a terrorist cell in Tripoli's Qalamoun which was planning to assassinate a security leader in Tripoli.

June 26

- The Cabinet agrees over a mechanism to govern its work and to approve and sign decrees by consensus under presidential void. PM Tamam Salam says that the agenda will be distributed to ministers four days prior to the session and asserts that Lebanon will continue to grant Gulf citizens visas upon arrival at the airport because preplanned visa processing does not prevent terrorist acts.

- Information discloses the involvement of Lebanese citizen Mounzer Khaldoun Hassan in supplying terrorists with suicide vests. Hassan who originates from the town of Bezbina in Akkar is also suspected of driving two cars laden with explosives.

- Saudi Ambassador to Lebanon Ali Awad Osseiri reiterates the Kingdom's cooperation with Lebanon in fighting terrorism, stressing the Saudi suicide bomber was wanted by the Saudi Police.

- Former PM Saad Hariri meets US Secretary of State, John Kerry, in Paris and the two reiterate the need for stability, urging speedy election of a new president.

June 27

- Former PM Rashid Solh dies at 86.

- Jezzine's MP and Change and Reform Bloc member Michel Helou dies at 66 after a battle with illness.

June 28

- Lebanon bids farewell to former PM Rashid Solh in an official funeral. Grand Mufti Sheikh Mohammad Rashid Qabbani leads the prayers in the presence of PMs Tamam Salam, Najib Mikati and Fouad Seniora.

- Michel Helou is laid to rest in his hometown, Jezzine.

June 29

- Speaker Nabih Berri voices in a press interview his opposition to the extension of Parliament's term and his support for the 1960s electoral law.

- The Amal Movement cancels all its Ramadan Iftars due to security reasons.

- The Higher Islamic Shia'a Council and Dar El-Fatwa declare separately Sunday as the first day of Ramadan.

June 30

- In a press conference attended by the Free Patriotic Movement ministers and MPs, General Michel Aoun proposes what he called an initiative to rescue the republic. His proposition suggests holding direct presidential elections over two rounds. In the first, Christian voters should choose two candidates and then in the second round, all Lebanese citizens would choose between them. March 14 Forces reject the suggestion arguing that it would compromise the Taef Accord.

- MP Walid Jumblat meets French President Francois Hollande and former Lebanese President Michel Suleiman in Paris. ●

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY- LEBANON

THE ELECTION OF FRANGIEH: DECIDED BY A ONE-VOTE MARGIN

Suleiman Frangieh was elected President of the Lebanese Republic on August 17, 1970 as successor of the outgoing President Charles Helou. The presidential elections that yielded his victory were highly crucial, reinforcing sharp divisions among the Lebanese especially as the winning candidate defeated his rival Elias Sarkis, the Governor of Banque du Liban, by an extremely narrow margin of one vote.

Pre-elections

The presidential elections of 1970 were affected directly by a number of preceding events including the following:

1. The parliamentary elections held between March and April 1968 which were divided between Chehabism and the Tripartite Alliance. Chehabism was a movement supportive of former President Fouad Chehab, the Army and the Deuxième Bureau, while the Tripartite Alliance comprised former President Camille Chamoun, Sheikh Pierre Gemayel and Raymond Eddé. The fierce electoral battle resulted in the victory of the Tripartite Alliance, particularly in three Christian Qada'as of Mount Lebanon: Baabda, Matn and Kessrouan, which was deemed a discouraging prelude for the Chehabists to the presidential battle that was two years away.
2. The Soviet attempt to hijack a Lebanese Air Force Mirage in September 1969 by luring Pilot Mahmoud Mattar, which the Lebanese Army intelligence thwarted by setting up a trap for the Soviet Secret Service, and thus infuriating Egyptian President Jamal Abdul Nasser and Moscow's ally, Kamal Jumblat.
3. The Cairo Agreement signed in November 1969, which resulted in the expansion of the armed Palestinian presence in Lebanon as well as their gradual interference in the country's domestic affairs, thus arousing the rancor of Christians. The dismissal of Army Commander General Emile Boustany who drafted the accord in Cairo raised the ire of Egyptian President Jamal Abdul Nasser who reportedly wished to see Boustany in the presidential seat.



Suleiman Frangieh

Election preparations

Numerous names were on the table: Fouad Chehab, Camille Chamoun, Raymond Eddé, Pierre Gemayel, Abdul Aziz Chehab, Farid Dahdah, Suleiman Frangieh and Jamil Lahhoud. The actual electoral battle began at a meeting held at the Carlton Hotel in Beirut when the 19 attendees decided to nominate Fouad Chehab for presidency, a move that was deemed both a challenge and a provocation to Chehab's opponents. In response, President Camille Chamoun and MP Raymond Eddé, at the forefront of other Chehabi rivals, espoused the

nomination of Sheikh Pierre Gemayel for presidency in order for him not to support the Chehabi candidate. Speaker Sabri Hamadeh set July 30 as the date for the election but then adjourned it on July 28, two days before the set date. However, in view of the numerous developments that had arisen in Lebanon and the region in the past few years and after two major Lebanese leaders, Kamal Jumblat and Pierre Gemayel, turned away from him, Fouad Chehab announced that he would not run as candidate reportedly saying: “people expect miracles from me at a time when miracles have become impossible. They will not demand the same from Elias Sarkis and they will help him out.”

The Deuxième Bureau men were thus instructed to get ready for the battle. MP Kamal Jumblat had nominated Major General Jamil Lahhoud, father of the former President of the Republic Emille Lahhoud, for president, without demonstrating opposition to Suleiman Frangieh, who was Minister of National Economy upon his election, nor to Jean Aziz should the Centrist Bloc decide to nominate any of them. Camille Chamoun voiced support to Frangieh as did Raymond Eddé, leaving open the possibility of agreeing over the candidate approved by the Centrist Bloc.

PM Rashid Karami headed for Cairo to gauge the position of President Jamal Abdul Nasser on the elections as did Kamal Jumblat who was inclined not to vote for Elias Sarkis in reprisal for the Deuxième Bureau’s reaction to the Mirage incident, which had offended the Soviet Union.

Egyptian President Jamal Abdul Nasse was an advocate of Chehabism and had great influence on a number of Lebanese MPs and politicians. He was not thrilled about the nomination of Sarkis and told Sami Khatib upon his visit to Egypt to seek support for Sarkis “I do not know the man and I prefer if Chehab himself would go back to the presidency given the cruciality of the stage,” adding that eventually he would rather maintain neutrality in these elections.

The candidacy of Suleiman Frangieh shuffled the cards of the Deuxième Bureau. Kamal Jumblat divided the votes

of his 6-member bloc, granting those of the Progressive Socialist Party MPs (Kamal Jumblat, Azizi Aoun, Anwar Al-Khatib) to Suleiman Frangieh and allowing the remaining three non-partisan members (Fouad Al-Touhaini, Salem Abdul Nour, Bahij Takieddine) the freedom of choice, which ended up favoring Sarkis.

Session proceedings

At 5:00 pm on August 17, the security forces blocked all the roads leading to Parliament. Captain Antoine Saadeh, who was in charge of security oversight, allowed hundreds of gunmen coming from Zgharta, both his and Frangieh’s hometown, to access Parliament vicinity. Some accounts suggest that they even reached the premises of Parliament.

All 99 MPs attended the session in the first round of elections which yielded 45 votes for Elias Sarkis, 38 for Suleiman Frangieh, 10 and 5 votes for Pierre Gemayel and Jamil Lahhoud respectively and one vote for Adnan Al-Hakim. Given that none of the candidates received a majority of votes in the first round, a second electoral round was held. 100 votes were cast, exceeding the number of MPs by one. Some reported that Zgharta’s pro-Sarkis MP, René Mouawwad, cast two votes in order to spoil the electoral process and repeat the election thus improving the winning prospects of Sarkis. Others suspected that Raymond Eddé had cast the two votes.

A third round was thus scheduled and concluded with 50 votes for Frangieh against 49 for Sarkis. Speaker Sabri Hamadeh deemed the election illegal as none of the candidates had gained a majority of votes and decided to adjourn the session to hold deliberations, at which point Frangieh stood up and waved threateningly at Hamadeh saying “I am the President of the Republic whether you like it or not.” As Parliament’s security guards drew their guns to defend Hamadeh, Zgharta’s gunmen showed up and encircled them and the mounting tension was about to culminate in a massacre. It was reported that Hamadeh quickly called former President Fouad Chehab who asked him to announce the results. Frangieh thus became President of the Lebanese Republic by a margin of one vote. ●

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY AT THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

HOSNI MUBARAK GOES ON TRIAL

Caged and bed-ridden, the President of the Republic of Egypt appeared in the Cairo Criminal Court on August 3, 2011 for his first hearing since he was ousted from power by a popular uprising that swept Egypt earlier that year. After 30 years in power, the Egyptians finally saw their ruler behind bars.

Mubarak came to power on October 14, 1981 as the fourth Head of State since the 1952 coup d'état against the monarchy after Muhammad Naguib, Jamal Abdul Nasser and Anwar Sadat. He was re-elected to office by presidential referendum four consecutive times- in 1987, 1993, 1999 and 2005- thus becoming one of the longest-serving rulers in the Arab World, until the revolution broke out on January 25, 2011 and forced him to step down in February of the same year after his Vice President Omar Suleiman announced in a brief statement that Mubarak has decided to step down from office and had tasked the high council of the armed forces to run the affairs of the country. The Egyptian opposition- the April 6 Youth Movement, Kefaya and the 'We Are All Khaled Said' movement- chose the National Police Day to be the start of their revolution, protesting over adverse living, political and economic conditions and over what has been viewed as corruption and police brutality under Mubarak's rule.

The revolution claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent youths, some of them killed at the hands of the police and others by the National Democratic Party's henchmen. The Minister of Public Health in the caretaker Cabinet reported that until February 2011, death toll was roughly 365 while domestic sources estimated it to be at least 500. On the fourth of April, an official source at the Ministry of Health announced that the fatalities recorded in the hospitals and directorates under the Ministry totaled 384.

On Wednesday, August 3, 2011, Mubarak appeared for the first time behind bars at the Police Academy in Cairo on charges including crimes against humanity, killing demonstrators during the 25 January Revolution, squandering public funds and undermining the Egyptian economy by exporting natural gas to Israel at cheap prices. The trial soon became a court of justice chaired by Judge Ahmad Refaat. The ousted president appeared lying on a gurney bed inside a metal cage surrounded by his two sons, Alaa and Jamal, former Interior Minister Habib Al-Adili and a few associates. More than 300 people from the families of those victimized during the protests attended the hearing along with Mubarak's defense, prosecutors and a number of media figures and journalists. The trial was aired exclusively on the state-run Egyptian television.

The appearance of Mubarak in court for his first trial has set a first-of-a-kind precedent in the Arab World, for he was the first Head of state to ever stand before a non-exceptional court. Hearings and investigations into the case are ongoing.

Mubarak was handed a life sentence by the Cairo Criminal Court on Saturday, June 2, 2012; however, the Cassation Court accepted the appeal filed by the defendants against the sentence on January 13, 2013. He was placed under house arrest at a military hospital in Cairo after a court ordered his release on August 21, 2013 because he had served the maximum term of pre-trial detention. ●

ON THE BELIEFS AND PLOTS OF AL-QAEDA (5)

HOW DOES AL-QAEDA THINK: POSITION ON ASSAULT

Disclaimer: The views expressed in the article below are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of *The Monthly*.

How does Al-Qaeda deal with its enemies and adversaries and what is the plan it adopts to confront them at the political, military and media levels?

“The premise that drives enemies into action is a material premise. The infidels’ ideology of conflict is for the most part a material and earthly ideology and their mundane motives are often eclipsed by false and pretentious religious or civil ones. Despite its being regarded by ignorant followers as a strong driver, the traditional ideological factor is not the sole factor that leads enemies into battle. Their action is in fact fueled both by material interests and the desire to survive. They are fighting for that and they do not accept just any kind of survival; they want the survival that ensures them an unruffled life of luxury and welfare and guarantees that their allies and advocates will maintain their alliance as long as interests are derived from this alliance. We should be fully aware of that.

Their most paramount political principle is therefore the principle of interests, which is devoid of all ethical values. It rather controls all other values. Friendship or enmity... peace or war... they are all decided based on interests.

Politicians of the West have summed it up in a slogan that reads “In politics, there does not exist permanent friends or enemies; only permanent interests.” The conflict of interest between them has thus triggered the bloodiest wars. However, this does not distract us from the fact that common hostility towards Islam constitutes a common ground for cooperation between infidels and apostates of every denomination. But we may also say that their ideological alliance against Islam is both fragile and limited as to the ceiling

of the material interests assigned for each party. For this reason, we should devise our military and political plans only after a sound understanding and estimation of the ceiling of interests that undermines the action of each of our enemies and we should work towards expanding the gap of interests between adverse parties. The map of interests must be clearly perceived by the minds of our leaders, for it is as important as the military maps.

These are some attributes of the political position of the enemies, which affect directly the conflict between Islam and its enemies. Regarding different Islamic movements, *Al-Moujawiroun*, their approach is predicated on a mixture of Islamic politics and the same principles espoused by the enemies, particularly the principle of interests, with an alteration of the texts aimed at deluding people into believing the legitimacy of their mixture. Undoubtedly, some might be taken aback by their ability to exercise political maneuvering and make deals while no military force is available at their disposal. But reflective observers come to realize that their manipulation stems from those staggering numbers of youths they have and which can pose a threat only in one case: when leaderships fall owing to their lack of true worth and the youths disintegrate, the enemy will be fearful that those members might join the jihadist ranks. What we care to elucidate here is that the most paramount principle for which *Al-Moujawiroun* are maneuvering and the highest interest for which they would sell out religion and dispose of all religious interests is survival... survival... survival.

Of course, all that preceded is a set of signs. The Command and the bases should expand as much as possible to deepen their comprehension of the policies of both parties. Their study should alienate from the stereotype suggesting that the enemy is driven by religious impulses, especially when they find out that the religious motive is of secondary and even dwindling importance for numerous enemy members. The researcher who will qualify to join the political committees alongside his military tasks should perform profound history readings and have the ability to scrutinize. He is expected to have readings in psychology and to study sociology with special focus on the role of tribes and clans in our Arab and Islamic World as well as on the difference between commendable and reprehensible tribalism and the changes that the modern Jahiliyyah has made to tribal structures by dismantling tribes, either by blending them into modern civil institutions or by swerving them into the tribalism of Jahiliyah.

It is insufficient for the Muslim political leadership to be at such a high level that allows it to take superior political action, for Islamic bases should also enjoy a high degree of knowledge and awareness and engage in political decision making.

Highest among the benefits of political studies is the determination of reactions towards any step we plan to take then the pressing ahead with this step or its postponement until the circumstances are favorable or conditioning the circumstances so that they become favorable. This includes for example the identification of which enemy categories we are to start with, which requires every group to draw up a list of all the targeted enemies within its scope.

I have drawn attention to the significance of understanding the political game of the enemy and Al-Moujawiroun and of mastering politics. However, it is equally important not to overlook the perusal and understanding of religious policy while dealing with the ranks of Mujahideen or with those enemy members who choose to join the Islamic ranks and sometimes even the Jihadist ranks all at once. We

should learn how to act if there ever comes a day when, among us, emerge kharijites, rebels, infidels, seekers of senior positions, voices demanding work-regulating statutes at odds with religious provisions, calls for membership in the United Nations, liquor drinkers or whatever needs to be halted. All such types are expected especially since our work is based on turning our Jihad into a Jihad of the nation rather than a mere movement. The manifestation of these types during the battle yields highly sensitive and complex situations and addressing such situations cannot be realized through the religious evidence of a stable state, but through an accurate religious policy inspired from the approach of our Prophet, peace and prayers be upon him, and the course of his companions.

The human structure of the enemy is frail in terms of combat, a disadvantage compensated for by the use of equipment, which cannot always be relied upon either. The false media halo and the use of media cunning and distortions throughout every move and in the face of any Jihadist operation are also ways to make up for weak manpower. This is why it is highly important to understand and cope with the information policy of one's foes in order to gain both the military and the political battle. Central to the success of our information policy is the transmission of information material to their targeted recipients. Some media committees have been reproached in previous stages for their failure to reach out to the targeted segments particularly the public and our materials of information were reaching only the elite at a time when many non-Islamic movements succeeded to communicate their statements and content with every household and age group. This point should not be missed out because we want to transmit clearly to people our religious military and political stances and the reasonable and legitimate justification that makes them in the interest of the nation. To that end, a group should be formed, tasked with driving home the messages that we wish to impart to people, even if that would mean its exposure close to the danger of a combat operation. ●



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REAL ESTATE PRICES- JUNE 2014

Contrary to the same period last year, the real estate market has maintained the modest recovery experienced in recent months. Despite the persistent conflict in Syria, the return to the wave of car bombings and the entry of Lebanon into presidential void amid poor living conditions, the sector did not lose momentum. The potential reasons for the recovery are uncertain but could be ascribed to cash flow availability and non-interrupted foreign transfers or to despair over the possibility of a détente in the near future. No price fluctuations were seen, except for those few small plots whose prices increased by 1% to 3% due to high demand. Table 1 and 2 illustrate the prices of some estates and apartments sold in June 2014.

Prices of some estates sold in June 2014			Table 1
Region	Area (m ²)	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Burj Abi Haidar	830	4,150,000	5,000
Ashrafieh (Charles Malek)	530	8,745,000	16,500
Hamra	800	12,000,000	15,000
Baabda			
Ain Roummaneh	450	2,700,000	6,000
Matn			
Broummana	850	2,125,000	2,500
Jal El-Deeb	1200	6,000,000	5,000
Monteverde	750	750,000	1,000
Aley			
Dhour Al-Abadiyeh	2,000	450,000	225
Sawfar	1,560	280,800	180
Kessrouan			
Ashqout	1,100	264,000	240
Ballouneh	950	399,000	420
Kfardebian	800	240,000	300

Source: Compiled by Information International

Prices of some apartments sold in June 2014			Table 2
Region	Area (m ²)	Price (USD)	USD/m ²
Beirut			
Burj Abi Haidar	140	322,000	2,300
Ashrafieh (Gemmayzeh)	160	560,000	3,500
Ashrafieh (Saifi)	120	336,000	2,800
Jamee Abdul Nasser	170	340,000	2,000
Ras El-Nabee	160	344,000	2,150
Verdun	170	765,000	4,500
Baabda			
Hazmieh	250	350,000	1,400
Hazmieh	180	423,000	2,350
Yarzi	285	798,000	2,800
Baabda	300	750,000	2,500
Haret Hreik	200	300,000	1,500
Hadath	150	225,000	1,500
Matn			
Mansourieh	110	198,000	1,800
Beit Meri	250	425,000	1,700
Roumieh	150	240,000	1,600
Jal El- Deeb	200	400,000	2,000
Dbayeh	170	280,500	1,650
Broummana	230	414,000	1,800
Awkar	220	312,400	1,420
Aley			
Bshamoun (Yahoudiyeh)	200	300,000	1,500
Bshamoun (Madares)	180	279,000	1,550
Khaldeh	170	238,000	1,400
Doha Aramoun	150	180,000	1,200
Choueifat	125	125,000	1,000
Aley	190	161,500	850
Kessrouan			
Ballouneh	170	246,500	1,450
Ajaltoun	200	240,000	1,200
Shaileh	180	360,000	2,000
Zouk Mosbeh	140	189,000	1,350
Jounieh (Ghadeer)	200	300,000	1,500

Source: Compiled by Information International

Blood donations statistics around the world

According to the World Health Organization:

- **3100** is the median annual donations per blood centre in the low- and middle-income countries, as compared to 15 000 in the high-income countries.
- **75** countries report collecting fewer than 10 donations per 1 000 population. Of these, 40 countries are in WHO's African Region, 8 in the Americas, 7 in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 6 in Europe, 6 in South-Eastern Asian and 8 in the Western Pacific. All are low- or middle-income countries.
- **30%** of blood donations are given by women and 70% by men.
- **6%** of blood donors are under 18 years of age; 27% are between 18 and 24 years of age; 38% are between 25 and 44 years of age; 26% are between 45 and 64 years of age and 3% of blood donors are older than 65.
- **73** countries collect over 90% of their blood supply from voluntary unpaid blood donor.
- **72** countries collect more than 50% of their blood supply from family/replacement or paid donors.
- **25** countries are not able to screen all donated blood for infections.



Beirut International Airport

Rafic Hariri International Airport Traffic - May 2014

The Rafic Hariri International Airport passenger traffic recorded in May 2014 a decrease by 5.8% compared to April 2014 and by 0.9% compared to the same period last year.

The airport handled 3,311,139 passengers in the first five months of 2014.

Rafic Hariri International Airport traffic in May 2014 compared to April 2014 and May 2013

Table 1

Traffic	April 2014	May 2014	May 2013	% of change April/May 2014	% of change May 2013/2014
Arriving airplanes	2,490	2,557	2,600	+2.7	-1.6
Departing airplanes	2,532	2,542	2,594	+0.4	-2
Total no. of airplanes	5,022	5,099	5,194	+1.5	-1.8
Arriving passengers	269,279	261,192	256,160	-19.7	+1.9
Departing passengers	271,799	248,631	258,308	-8.5	-3.7
Transit passengers	1,475	1,212	1,337	-17.8	+9.3
Total no. of passengers	542,553	511,035	515,805	-5.8	-0.9
Imported goods (per ton)	5,177.2	5,135.6	5,251	-0.8	-2.2
Exported goods (per ton)	2,999.5	3,605.1	4,688	+20	-23.1
Total amount of goods	8,176.7	8,740.7	9,939	+6.9	-12

Source: Information International based on the Civil Aviation Directorate General

- **LBP 11 billion** are the credits assigned by the Lebanese government to subsidize feedstock farmers and cow growers.
- **LBP 300 million** are the credits allocated as travel expenses to delegation members that accompanied President Michel Suleiman in his travel prior to his term expiration.
- **USD 111.2 billion** is the total deposit amount in both foreign and local currencies recorded by active Lebanese banks in April 2014, up by USD 5 billion from the same period last year.
- **LBP 4.2 billion** is the state contribution through the Ministry of Tourism to International Tourist Festivals committees, which are often chaired by individuals close to political authorities.
- **LBP 500 million** is the financial contribution of the Ministry of Public Health to Yadouna.

Publications by Information International (in Arabic):

- 1- Salaries and Remunerations in the Public Sector
- 2- Public Seaside Properties
- 3- Lebanon's Parliamentary History 1920-2000
- 4- Taxes and Fees
- 5- Lebanon in Figures 1992-2002
- 6- Lebanon in Figures 2003-2004
- 7- Lebanon in Figures 2005-2006
- 8- Lebanon in Figures 2007-2008
- 9- Lebanon's MPs and Lebanese Parliamentary Elections 1960 - 2009
- 10- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-North District
- 11- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beirut District
- 12- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Mount Lebanon District
- 13- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-Beqa'a District
- 14- 2009 Parliamentary Elections by ballot box, candidate and confession-South and Nabatiyeh District
- 15- Municipal Elections 2010

Publications by INMA (in Arabic):

- 1- "I am Responsible, All of Us are Responsible"
- 2- "Our Environment is Our Home"
- 3- "My Society is My Responsibility"
- 4- "My Society is My Responsibility" Workbook
- 5- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building"
- 6- "I am a Student, I am a Citizen: Ways Towards State Building" Workbook
- 7- "Lebanon Wars, why?"
- 8- Discrimination in Lebanon

Publications by Kutub (in Arabic):

- 1- May Ziadeh, Evolution of a Free Female Thinker
- 2- Mission in Hijaz - Lion Roche
- 3- Aleppo Cuisine
- 4- From An-Nabk to Florida
- 5- Institution of Aesthetic Discourse -Saad el-Kassab
- 6- Al A'mal Al She'rya Al-Kamila -Kamal Keir beik
- 7- Majhoulat Gibran
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INMA AND THE ISF TOGETHER AGAINST DRUGS

On the occasion of the International Day against Drug abuse and Illicit Trafficking, held on the 26th of June every year, the Internal Security Forces Drug Control Office joined hands with the Social and Cultural Development Association (INMA) and Med Bank to print and distribute 25,000 flyers raising awareness about the risks and consequences of drug abuse. This initiative intends to mainly target the youth most affected by this epidemic.



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